I.

REPORT

OF THE

ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

(A) GENERAL

The Committee met in January 2011 to consider items in its remit from the 2010 Assembly and also matters relating to the forthcoming General Assembly, in particular the following:

1. Clerks for General Assembly

The Committee noted that the Principal Clerk was due to be appointed as Moderator of the 2011 Assembly and that consequently arrangements needed to be made for the provision of Clerks for the Assembly. The Committee is recommending to the Assembly that Rev. Angus J. Howat be appointed Principal Clerk and Rev. Malcolm Macleod, Shawbost, be appointed Assistant Clerk, for the duration of the Assembly and its Commissions.

2. 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 and Perth</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow and Argyll</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness, Loch. and Ross</td>
<td>18</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 and Wester Ross</td>
<td>12</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 and W. Canada</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Moderator’s Reception

The Committee has made arrangements to hold the Moderator’s Reception at the Edinburgh City Chambers following a proposal from Councillor Jeremy Balfour. The Committee is grateful to Councillor Balfour for his help in making these arrangements. Assembly lunches for Assembly officials and delegates have been arranged in Hotel Missoni’s restaurant on George IV Bridge.

4. Assembly Programme

The 2010 Assembly authorised the inclusion of discussion sessions during the sittings of the Assembly and the Committee has sought to include this in the Assembly programme following advice from various Board and Committees as to which topics in their reports were suitable for, or required, discussion.

5. Visit of Lord High Commissioner

The Principal Clerk has been involved in the usual correspondence with the Purse Bearer’s Office to make arrangements for the visit of the Lord High Commissioner, Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, to the Assembly. This has been scheduled to take place on Thursday 26th May at 12 noon.

6. Visit of Lord Provost of Edinburgh

The Committee received a communication, through the Principal Clerk, from the Office of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Right Honourable George Grubb, requesting that the Lord Provost be given the opportunity to address the Assembly conveying the greetings of the City Fathers.

The Committee were most pleased to agree and this has been scheduled to take place on Tuesday 24th May at 2.00pm.
7. **Booklet on Report compilation and Assembly procedure**

Rev. A. J. Howat drafted a booklet on report compilation which was subsequently approved by the Committee and circulated to Committees and Boards. The Clerk prepared a similar booklet on Assembly procedure which is also to be made available to commissioners along with Assembly papers.

8. **Remit from 2010 Assembly**

The 2010 Assembly continued the remit given to the Committee as set out in Act II, 2009, and especially to appoint a Working Party comprising also members of the Strategy Committee to consider the following:

1) That there be two Plenary General Assemblies each year with a view to (a) dividing the workload and deadlines currently in place; (b) shortening the length of time each Assembly should sit; (c) holding one Assembly in Edinburgh and the other in the North; (d) the Board of Trustees, the Home Mission Board and the International Missions Board reporting twice a year, with the other smaller Boards and Committees reporting once a year; and (e) removing the need for the Commission of Assembly to meet except in urgent situations.

2) That there be a structure for dealing with business which would (a) allow routine matters to be handled without coming to the floor of the Assembly; and (b) provide a more flexible format for discussion of vital and strategic issues whilst still enabling firm decisions to be made.

3) That the systems in place for the Reports of Boards or Committees be reviewed to: (a) allow Presbyteries a regular flow of information on the matters under discussion by the Boards and Committees; (b) determine what level of information the wider church should have from the business of boards and Committees; (c) to create a mechanism to allow the wider Church to gain an awareness of the matters under discussion by Boards or Committees; (d) create a mechanism by which helpful suggestions or petitions from the wider membership of the Church can be fed into the discussion of Boards and Committees.

The Working Group met for the second time January. The remit as stated above was considered and the following conclusions arrived at in regard to each of the matters specified.

1) That there be two Plenary General Assemblies each year with a view to (a) dividing the workload and deadlines currently in place; (b) shortening the length of time each Assembly should sit; (c) holding one Assembly in Edinburgh and the other in the North; (d) the Board of Trustees, the Home Mission Board and the International Missions Board reporting twice a year, with the other smaller Boards and Committees reporting once a year; and (e) removing the need for the Commission of Assembly to meet except in urgent situations.

(a) Holding an annual Plenary Assembly would impose serious financial difficulties on many Presbyteries - for example the Western Isles Presbytery would require some £10,000 annually for this alone. With two Assemblies a year the costs would not be substantially reduced even if each Assembly were for a shorter duration.

(b) The proposed changes to alter the deadlines for reports and the frequency of reporting by Committees and Boards would also require another radical change in the timetabling of Committee and Board meetings. The group concluded that the present Committee and Board structure, revolving around an annual report to the May Assembly should be left as it is, especially in view of the fact that it has only been operating for three years. The Board of Trustees, the Home Missions Board and the International Missions Board each submit major reports annually and already have difficulties meeting the April deadline for these reports to be ready for the May Assembly. They would find even more difficulty if they needed to report twice a year even if the reports were then reduced in size and there is an undoubted advantage in having reports cover the work of a year rather than a lesser period. Other recent changes, particularly in the Church’s financial system, should also be allowed to proceed without being complicated by changes in the Committee and Board schemes of meeting and reporting.

(c) The Group also concluded that it would be very difficult for some Presbyteries to appoint a sufficient number of elders to Plenary Assemblies given that even under the current one-third representation a number of Presbyteries struggle to find enough elders able to attend.

(d) Administration costs for Plenary Assemblies would be tripled compared with the present arrangement and administrative tasks for the Clerks and Office staff would also be tripled. It was agreed that involving Presbyteries as outlined in 3 (a) below, coupled with the provisions already made for discussion sessions at the Assembly, should go a long way towards meeting the need for the Assembly to serve the interests of the Church more effectively without requiring a Plenary Assembly or an Assembly twice a year.
(e) It was thought that an annual Assembly is compatible with the General Assembly being the Supreme Court of the Church and that increasing the number of Assemblies to more than one a year would tend to diminish awareness that the Assembly carries an authority requisite to it being the Supreme Court of the Church.

(f) Consideration was given to shortening the duration of the Assembly to less than a week, to allow elders to attend without taking leave of absence / holiday. This would mean having more than one Assembly a year and the difficulties involved in this are set out in 1 (a)-(d) above. The Group discussed the issue of why this was considered by some to be a problem. It was questionable whether the major adjustments which would accompany such a change - such as changes in Committee and Board reporting, administrative changes in Assembly preparation and afterwards - was justifiable to allow for some elders to attend without requiring leave of absence. While every effort should be made to accommodate the convenience of elders, for many elders even reducing the duration of each Assembly to two days would still not result in their being able to attend seeing the nature of their work would not allow this. The group also thought that elders, who by virtue of accepting ordination were committing themselves to the service of Christ in his Church, ought to consider using a week’s holiday, on occasions, to enable them to attend the Assembly. The Group also concluded that Presbyteries should ideally aim at enthusing ministers and elders by way of encouraging them to take up a cause for which they had vision and enthusiasm and would wish to promote at the Assembly on behalf of their Presbytery. The same could be done by the Boards and Committees of the Church. In this way the Assembly itself, as fed by such enthusiastic promotion of projects and proposals, would increasingly develop a visionary outlook.

(g) The existing arrangement allows for a measure of flexibility in the Assembly programme for additional or emergency business - e.g. cases - which a briefer Assembly would inevitably lack.

(h) Regarding the proposal to remove the need for the Commission of Assembly to meet except in urgent situations, it was decided not to make any proposal about this seeing the Strategy Committee had not identified this matter as one of immediate importance.

2) That there be a structure for dealing with business which would (a) allow routine matters to be handled without coming to the floor of the Assembly; and (b) provide a more flexible format for discussion of vital and strategic issues whilst still enabling firm decisions to be made.

(a) As far as “routine matters” are concerned, the group concluded that there were few items in this category and that they did not take up much time at the Assembly, so that dealing with them from the floor of the Assembly did not take up much time. Petitions classed as “routine” are marked as such on the programme and are almost always adopted without debate. Definition of what is defined as “routine” is inevitably subjective and what might be routine for one commissioner might be of substantial importance to another. It was also noted that as the Assembly Arrangements Committee now also functions as the Business Committee of the Assembly this should result in the streamlining of Assembly business.

(b) In discussing the provision of a more flexible format for discussion of vital and strategic issues whilst still enabling firm decisions to be taken, the group noted that this had been approved by the 2010 May Assembly and would be implemented at the 2011 Assembly.

3) That the systems in place for the Reports of Boards or Committees be reviewed to: (1) allow Presbyteries a regular flow of information on the matters under discussion by the Boards and Committees; (2) determine what level of information the wider church should have from the business of boards and Committees; (3) to create a mechanism to allow the wider Church to gain an awareness of the matters under discussion by Boards or Committees; (4) create a mechanism by which helpful suggestions or petitions from the wider membership of the Church can be fed into the discussion of Boards and Committees.

(a) The group was sure that Presbyteries ought to be provided with a regular flow of information on the matters under discussion by the Boards and Committees. However, there is a structure already in place to enable this to take place in most instances, namely the fact that Presbyteries have representatives on most Committees and Boards. It was thought that Presbyteries ought to place on their agenda following each meeting of Committees and Boards an item where those representing the Presbytery gave a report on the important business conducted at these Committees and Boards. It was concluded that the Nominations Committee should seek to ensure that each Presbytery has at least one representative on the major Committees and Boards of the Church so that information on the business dealt with by Committees and Boards can be regularly conveyed. Committees and Boards should also make every effort to point out to members which items of business ought particularly to be highlighted at Presbytery in this way.
(b) The group also considered what level of information the wider church should have from the business of Boards and Committees. In addition to reporting at Presbyteries, it was felt that greater use should be made of the Free Church website. If Committees and Boards were to provide information regularly about their work to the webmasters, congregational correspondents and newsletter editors could easily keep up with what was happening in Committees and Boards and so arrange that this information was conveyed to their congregations.

9. **Authorised Version Commemoration** The Committee had received a letter from the Communications Committee seeking to have on the Assembly programme a talk by Rev. Dr Fergus A. J. Macdonald to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Authorised Version of the Scriptures. The Committee was fully in accord with the request and has arranged that this be included in the programme.

10. **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 his assistants for their supervision of the sound system and related technology, and to the students and others who share duties at the doors.

**B) ASSEMBLY PAPERS**

The 2010 General Assembly extended the remit of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to include the work previously done by the Business Committee and the Bills and Overtures Committees of the Assembly. This includes the examination of all papers addressed to the Assembly apart from the regular reports of Boards and Committees of the Church.

The Committee met on Thursday 28th April 2010 and the following is an account of items considered and conclusions arrived at by the Committee. All items being recommended by the Committee for passing into the Assembly are appended.

1. **Assembly Guidebook** The Committee approved an “Assembly Guidebook” drafted by the Clerk and agreed to recommend it to the Assembly.

2. **Overtures** The Committee was in receipt of six Overtures. As items (g), (h) and (i) were termed Petitions by those who sent them in but were effectively Overtures, they have been designated Overtures by the Committee, all addressing issues related to the decisions of the Plenary Assembly in November 2010. The list is as follows.

   (a) Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll;
   (b) Presbytery of the Western Isles A;
   (c) Presbytery of the Western Isles B;
   (d) Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth;
   (e) Knockbain Kirk Session;
   (f) Professor John A. Macleod;
   (g) Synod of North America;
   (h) Stornoway Kirk Session;
   (i) Lochs Kirk Session.

   With the exception of item (h), the Committee is recommending that these Overtures be passed into the Assembly, having been found correct in form and substance. Item (h) was found to be incompetent in that two of its clauses were overly generalised and factually incorrect. The Committee also concluded that, with regard to those Overtures of a similar content and with nearly identical craves, those who have been appointed to present these ought to confer in advance of them being taken up, so as to consider how best to present them.

3. **Petitions** The Committee was in receipt of five Petitions. Petitions, as listed below:
4. **Memorials** The Committee was in receipt of two Memorials as follows:

(a) Memorial from young people of the Church;

(b) Memorial from Office-bearers, members and adherents of the Church.

The Committee is recommending that both these be passed into the Assembly. With respect to Memorial (b) the Committee had some misgivings about some of its statements but decided that, should the document be passed into the Assembly it would then be for the Assembly itself to decide whether it be received or not. In regard to the final sentence of the Memorial the Committee noted, for the Assembly’s information, the assurance given at the Western Isles Presbytery on 29th April, namely, “that there was no veiled threat of civil action should the General Assembly not rescind all the decisions of the 2010 Plenary Assembly.”

5. **Presbytery Commissions** The Committee noted that all Presbyteries had forwarded their forms of commission to the Assembly Clerk and that all these were in order. Not all Elders’ Certificates had been received and the Clerk informed the Committee that it was normal for some certificates to come in shortly before the Assembly opened.

6. **Applications** The Committee were in receipt of Presbytery extracts relating to four applications for the Free Church Ministry. The Committee found these extracts to be in order and noted that these applications would be dealt with as separate items on the Assembly programme and that papers relating to them would not be issued by the Clerk until the time at which the Assembly decided to consider the applications.

7. **Assembly Programme** The Committee considered a draft programme for the Assembly and approved the draft. The Committee also authorised the Clerks to make minor adjustments to the programme as required in advance of the papers being distributed to Commissioners.

8. **Other** The Committee concluded that it would be of considerable benefit to Commissioners if, at times of voting, the motions being voted on could be displayed on the screens.

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

(A) **GENERAL**

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 diligence 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 welcome the visits to the Assembly of the Lord High Commissioner and of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

4. The General Assembly thank the Clerks for the production of booklets on compiling reports and on Assembly procedure.
5. The General Assembly thank the members of the Committee and the Working Group for their work. They discharge the Committee from their remit to consult with members of the Strategy Committee under the Working Group arrangements.

6. The General Assembly welcome the proposal that Presbyteries ought to place on their agenda following each meeting of Committees and Boards an item where those representing the Presbytery would give a report on the important business conducted at these Committees and Boards. The General Assembly call on all Presbyteries to take this up in practice.

7. The General Assembly recommend that Committees and Boards provide information regularly about their work to the Free Church webmasters, so that, in addition to this information being available on the website, congregational correspondents and newsletter editors may arrange that this information be conveyed to their congregations.

8. The General Assembly direct all Presbyteries, Boards and Committees of the Church to seek ways of encouraging ministers and elders to take up a cause for which they had vision and enthusiasm and which they would wish to promote at the Assembly.

9. The General Assembly thank the Committee for arranging to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Authorised Version of the Scriptures and thank Rev. Dr Fergus A. J. Macdonald for his willingness to speak on this topic.

10. The General Assembly remind Boards and Committees of the need to highlight items for discussion at the General Assembly by marking with an asterisk the relevant paragraphs in their reports.

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

12. 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.

13. The General Assembly thank 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, Mr Alistair Oliver and his helpers 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.

(B) ASSEMBLY PAPERS

1. The General Assembly approve the Committee’s recommendations anent papers to be passed into the Assembly and direct that the following papers be passed in:

   a) Assembly Guidebook

   b) Overtures from: the Synod of North America, Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll; the Presbytery of the Western Isles A; the Presbytery of the Western Isles B; the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth; Knockbain Kirk Session; Lochs Kirk Session; Professor John A. Macleod.

   c) Petitions from: Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: assessors; Glasgow and Argyll: assessors; Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: constitution of Deacons’ Court; Skye and Wester Ross: team ministry; Northern Presbytery: union of congregations.

   d) Memorials from: young people of the Church; Office-bearers, members and adherents of the Church.

   e) Draft programme for the Assembly.
II.

REPORT

OF THE

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee continued over the course of the year to maintain contact with other Churches in the Reformed Faith, fully persuaded that such Churches need not only to maintain good relations and communication but also that they need to cooperate as far as possible gospel ministry in a world where increasing secularisation and humanistic philosophies are ranged against the gospel. For Churches of the Reformed Faith it is increasingly vital that they show and exercise their substantial unity in Jesus Christ, whatever differences there may be in secondary matters. Division amongst those who subscribe to the Reformed Faith continues to be a matter which challenges our resolve and commitment to the unity for which we have been given the Holy Spirit in the bonds of peace.

In the course of the year the Committee engaged in a series of meetings, discussions and correspondence and is pleased to report the following to the Assembly.

1. **ICRC**

   The Free Church continues to relate at home and abroad to other Reformed Churches through the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). There are currently 30 Churches in membership of the ICRC and the next main conference is due to take place in Wales in 2013. The Conference which met in Christchurch in 2009 appointed a Committee of Review to report back to the 2013 Conference. The Clerk to the Committee is a member of this Committee which is tasked with reviewing the structure and operation of the ICRC, the first time this has been done since the formation of the ICRC over 25 years ago. The Committee met recently in Philadelphia and it is expected that a number of substantial changes will be recommended to the next Conference in the hope that these, if implemented, will improve the workings of the ICRC, particularly in the areas of communication and cooperation between Churches.

2. **EuCRC Conference Edinburgh**

   Under the auspices of the International Conference of Reformed Churches a fourth European regional conference is due to be held in Kiev, in 2012. Attendance at the Conference is arranged by the member Churches inviting other Churches and groups with which they have a working contact, resulting in some 80 people from more than a dozen Churches throughout Europe attending the last Conference in Edinburgh in March 2010. The practical arrangements and planning for the Conference is done by the Organising Committee comprised of representatives of the member Churches. Some progress has been made since the first conference some five years ago in the area of cooperation in theological education, with a Conference being held in Kampen, Netherlands, recently involving representatives of a number of theological institutions in Europe. The Committee is convinced that the Free Church College can play a major role in advancing the cause of theological education and training in cooperation with other Reformed institutions in Europe and is pleased that Professor John McIntosh is a member of the Organising Committee for the Conference in theological education. It is hoped that similar progress can be achieved in co-operation in evangelism. The Committee wish to commend the EuCRC Conference and all that it has set out as its objectives in theological education and evangelism to all ministers and elders within the Church.

3. **Other Church Relations**

   3.1 **United Free Church**

      Informal discussions are still in place 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. Through Mr. Meredith the Committee is kept informed of the work of Affinity and is glad to learn that in the last year Affinity has made further progress following a difficult couple of years. The Committee is happy to commend the work of Affinity to the wider Church for their prayerful and practical support.

   3.3 **Associated Presbyterian Churches**

      As instructed by the last General Assembly the Committee appointed three representatives, Rev. David Meredith, Rev. Ian MacAskill and Dr Allan MacPherson, along with Rev. Dr. Malcolm Maclean and Rev. Jeremy Ross, to meet with representatives of the Associated Presbyterian...
Churches (APC), who also had appointed three representatives. Having arranged a meeting, unfortunately for a number of reasons this meeting had to be cancelled and to date no further progress has been made in advancing these discussions. The Committee would wish to be able to bring a report with recommendations to the next Assembly in 2012.

3.2 **International Presbyterian Church** The Committee continues to be in correspondence with the International Presbyterian Church, London, through Rev. Paul Levy, Clerk to their Church Relations Committee. It is hoped that further progress can be made in the year ahead with a view to closer relations between the two Churches. The Free Churches in London City and Cobham continue to enjoy good relations with the International Presbyterian Church.

3.3 **ACTS** The Free Church of Scotland is not a member of Action of Churches Together Scotland (ACTS) by deliberate choice. The Committee, however, considers it important to maintain an awareness of ACTS and its work and responded positively to an invitation to Rev. David Meredith as Moderator of the last Assembly to attend a meeting of Church Leaders arranged under ACTS. In his report to the Committee Mr. Meredith recommended that the Committee maintain attendance at the meetings of this group but continue to stay outwith membership of ACTS. He also recommended that the Committee appoint a representative as a permanent member of the group. The Committee appointed the Clerk in his role as Principal Clerk of Assembly. Mr. Meredith’s report also referred positively to Core Mediation, who had given a presentation of their work, and recommended that Presbyteries could have some of the members trained in mediating and problem resolution by Core Mediation. The Clerk, having contacted Core Mediation to obtain an outline of courses and costs, has passed this matter to the Board of Trustees for their consideration.

3.4 **Presbyterian Church of East Africa** The Committee was contacted in the course of the year by Mr. Neil White, currently seconded from AIM International to Glasgow City Free Church to work with the African community in Glasgow and pastor to a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEAf). Mr. White had recently met with the General Secretary of the PCEAf who had indicated a desire for closer relations with the Free Church of Scotland, as had the Moderator of the PCEAf last year. The PCEAf is located mostly in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and has around five million members. The Committee resolved that, as a first step and to obtain more details, Rev. Colin Dow and Mr. White be invited to meet with Dr Allan MacPherson who would then report to the Committee it was proposed, and the Committee agreed, that it would be sufficient meantime to recognise with approval the link with Glasgow City Free Church and to refer to this in the Assembly Report.

3.5 **Argentina** The Committee was contacted by Rev. Jose Luis Podesta, designated as Moderator of the Free Protestant Church in Argentina, inquiring as to the possibility of the Free Church of Scotland working together with the Free Protestant Church in their mission work in Argentina. The Committee passed this correspondence to the International Missions Board as the more appropriate body to deal with this inquiry.

4. **Visits**

4.1 **PCA Assembly** Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean attended the 2010 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), and also promoted *Sing Psalms* on behalf of the Psalmody Committee. The Committee are grateful to Dr. Maclean for his visit.

4.2 **PCEA** The Convener, Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson, carried out visits to congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Eastern Australia on his way back from the ICRC in New Zealand in October 2009. He was given a warm reception and preached in a number of congregations. This visitation was inadvertently omitted from the Committee’s report to the 2010 Assembly. The Committee is grateful to the Convener for his visit.

4.3 **Baptist Union** The Committee is grateful to Rev. Douglas Campbell who attended the opening session of the Baptist Union Assembly, at their invitation, in Dunfermline in October 2010. The visit was profitable and had been appreciated.

4.4 **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 June 2010.

4.5 **Lausanne** Rev. David Meredith attended the Lausanne Conference in South Africa in 2010 and the Committee is grateful to him for his attendance there.

KENNETH M. FERGUSON, 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 thank the Committee for its contacts with the ICRC and they note that a major review is presently being carried out. They direct the Committee to keep the Assembly informed as to the progress of this review and any proposals which may arise out of it.

4. The General Assembly welcome the information provided in the Committee’s report concerning the EuCRC and its objectives. They welcome the news that progress has been made in the matter of cooperation in theological education and look forward to hearing of similar progress in regard to cooperation in evangelism.

5. 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.

6. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Meredith for representing the Free Church on the Council of Affinity. They commend the work of Affinity to the prayers of the Church.

7. The General Assembly thank the Committee for appointing a group to engage with discussions with representatives of the Associate Presbyterian Churches. They note that discussions have yet to take place and they direct the Committee to report on this matter with recommendations to the next general Assembly.

8. The General Assembly thank the Committee for maintaining contact with the International Presbyterian Church. They encourage the Committee to progress matters towards a closer relationship and welcome the good relations between congregations of the International Presbyterian Church and the Free Church of Scotland in the London area.

9. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Meredith for his attendance at meetings of Church leaders arranged by ACTS. They approve of the Committee’s resolve that the Free Church of Scotland remain outwith the membership of ACTS. They further approve of the Committee’s appointment of the Clerk in his capacity as Principal Clerk of Assembly as a member of the leaders’ group and they encourage him in his involvement to promote the theological stance of the Free Church of Scotland in regard to the Lord Jesus Christ alone being the Redeemer of sinners and in regard to justification being by faith alone in him.

10. The General Assembly welcome the link with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa through Glasgow City Free Church. They encourage the Committee, in consultation with Glasgow City Free Church, to maintain a close contact and to seek further ways in which the two Churches might have a closer relationship. They commend Mr Neil White and his work to the prayers of the Church.

11. The General Assembly welcome the contact with Rev. Jose Luis Podesta, Argentina, and look forward to more information in due course from the International Missions Board.

12. The General Assembly thank Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson for his visits to congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia in October 2009.

13. The General Assembly thank Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean for his attendance at the 2010 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America and for his promotion of Sing Psalms there.

14. The General Assembly thank Rev. Douglas Campbell for his attendance at the opening session of the Baptist Union Assembly in October 2010.

15. The General Assembly thank Rev. Alasdair Macdonald for his attendance at the opening session of the United Free Church Assembly in June 2010.

16. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Meredith for his attendance at the Lausanne Conference in 2010.
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 2010 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.

The UK economy continued to face considerable challenges in 2010 as it struggled to emerge from recession. The Church is not immune to the effects of these wider economic difficulties as factors such as unemployment, inflation and real reductions in wages affect the disposable income of individuals and families. Income in the year, excluding the large increase enjoyed by the Colegio San Andres, was around £110,000 lower than in 2009, reflecting the challenges faced in the wider economy. Investment income was around £10,000 lower than 2009 which in turn was substantially lower than in 2008. Congregational remittances fell by around 3% (£90,000) in 2010 compared with 2009 although the overall reduction in remittances was only 1% as a result of increased remittances from individuals and from other organisations. Legacy income was around £20,000 for the year compared to £100,000 in 2009. Against this fall in income, expenditure, again excluding the Colegio San Andres, increased by around £140,000. Before taking into account the non-cash impact of investment gains and foreign exchange gains and excluding the surplus recorded by the Colegio San Andres, the reduction in income and increased expenditure resulted in a shortfall of around £170,000.

Non-cash items have a significant impact on the bottom line figure in the accounts which show a gain of around £1m for the year. This is a reversal of the position shown in the 2009 accounts where a loss of £330,000 was recorded. The two major items at play are a substantial actuarial gain on the Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme (around £775,000) and an unrealised gain on the Church’s investment portfolio (around £300,000). The Pension Scheme gain stems from a revaluation of the liabilities of the Scheme by the Scheme Actuary which reflects improved returns on scheme assets and the use of more favourable actuarial assumptions. There continues to be a substantial overall shortfall, comparing assets and liabilities, as discussed elsewhere in this Report. The gain on investments reflects the further recovery of investment markets during the year. Improvements in the value of the Church’s investments are welcome but the Board recognises that valuations can vary significantly from year to year and therefore, they should not distract from the underlying financial performance.

While the Board records its gratitude for the support of all contributors and its thankfulness to God for his provision, it believes that it cannot ignore a situation where increases in expenditure are not matched by similar increases in income. Of particular concern is the fact that, having recorded such a shortfall in 2010, the prospects for 2011 look similarly challenging. The cost base will increase further in 2011 as a result of an increase in the salary bill of around £100,000, continued high inflation and an increase in the level of VAT. Against this, gift aid recovery will reduce by around 3% from April 2011 as a result of the removal of transitional relief. Recognising that the Church cannot sustain continued shortfalls of the level recorded in 2010, the Board is committed to working with other budget-holding committees and boards to examine carefully all the activities of the Church with a view to ensuring that any structural budget shortfalls are addressed. The Board is also committed to exploring all available avenues for increasing income to the Church.

A commentary on the first year under the new system of congregational remittances is provided in section (B) of this report.

2. 2012 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 January 2011, the level of stipend was increased to £20,500. This was lower than the target level of £21,000 proposed by the Personnel Committee. Although the Board agreed in principle with the Committee’s desire to apply a larger increase, it concluded that this was not affordable and that an increase of £1,000 on the previous level struck an appropriate balance between aspiration and affordability. The stipend level of £20,500 was included in the budgets for 2011 and was approved by the Commission of Assembly in October 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 its Finance Sub-Committee and the Personnel Committee in this area and following receipt of reports from these committees, the Board recommends that the level of contribution be maintained at its current level of 10% of pensionable salaries. The request from the 2010 General Assembly to consider increasing the level of contribution to 15% is addressed in section (B) of this report.

5. **Legacies** The Board acknowledges with grateful thanks the following legacies received during 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legator</th>
<th>Fund Credited</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor C. Graham</td>
<td>College Senate</td>
<td>17,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss H. Robertson</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>1,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss H. Sinclair</td>
<td>Asian Ministry</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18,999</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. In keeping with positive performance in markets in general, both funds recorded strong performance during 2010. The performance of each fund is noted below.

- **General Trust**
  The General Trust continued its recovery from the sharp decline in 2008 with an annual return of around 13% in 2010. At 31st December 2010, the value of the fund was £4,092,160. 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 2011 and although the economic recovery remains fragile, the Fund Managers are optimistic that this performance will be maintained throughout the year.

  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 £4.34 in 2010. 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 showed strong performance in 2010 and stood at £6,191,925 at 31st December 2010. Again, the return on the portfolio was around 13%. The Pension Fund has a similar outlook for 2011 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. Towers Watson, the Scheme Actuary, has carried out this valuation for the year ended 31st December 2010. This shows that the total assets of the Scheme (including bank cash deposits) were £6,309m, an increase of £0.382m on the previous year. The Scheme liabilities reduced during the year to £9.289m (£9.802m in 2009). The combined effect has been to reduce the deficit in the Scheme on an FRS 17 basis to £2.980m, a reduction of £0.895m in the year.

7. **Colegio San Andres** In its report to the General Assembly in 2010, the Board recorded significant progress in the fortunes of the Colegio San Andres following several years of financial difficulties. The Board is delighted to report continued improvements in performance during 2010 with the school recording a surplus
of around £120,000 before foreign exchange gains, and further increases in student numbers. While the figures are boosted somewhat by contributions from Scotland, the Board considers this to be a remarkable turnaround and wishes again to commend the school’s headmaster, Mr Clive Bailey, and his staff for their achievements.

During the year, the Board met with Mr Bailey and representatives of the International Missions Board to discuss the powers granted to personnel in Peru and the transfer of the school to a new management association. Having reflected on these discussions and having received greater clarity in relation to the potential liabilities arising from legal action taken in Peru against the Church, the school and the former headmaster, the Board was pleased to agree to proceed with the creation of the new association and, ultimately, the transfer of the school to the control of the new association. In this regard, the Board is pleased to note that the Reformed Educational Association San Andres was established on 1st February 2011 and is committed to the transfer of the school’s governance and assets to the new association in the coming months.

(B) FINANCIAL POLICY

The new system of congregational remittances and project fundraising came into operation from January 2010. The Board’s Finance Sub-Committee monitored the implementation of the new system closely throughout the year and a review is provided below. The Sub-Committee also dealt with a number of financial policy matters referred to it by the Board.

1. **New Remittance System**

One of the key aims of the new system of congregational remittances was to highlight the true cost of local ministry and to encourage congregations, where possible, to meet that cost. In this regard, the Board considers that the new system has been successful with a number of congregations responding positively and increasing their remittances to central funds in order to cover local ministry costs. A further benefit is that most congregations have attempted to meet these costs on an ongoing basis, thereby improving the overall cash flow of the Church. Many congregational treasurers are now submitting remittance forms electronically which should make completion of the forms more straightforward and simplify the processing of returns in the Church Offices.

A second objective of the new system was to raise awareness of the various projects undertaken by central committees and boards with particular reference to the projects of the Home and International Missions Boards. It was hoped that in raising the profile, additional support, including financial support, would be generated for the work of the boards. In order to raise such additional funds, congregations with higher levels of income were charged a central projects levy and the two mission boards were tasked with raising 30% of their budgets through project-led fund-raising. While the year end figures reveal that the project-led fund-raising came close to raising the target level of income, the response of Deacons’ Courts to the central projects levy was rather more concerning. The Board recognises that individual congregations can face particular financial challenges in any one year that can make it difficult to meet all commitments but it wishes to stress the importance of prioritising remittances to central funds in order that the funding of vital projects is not compromised. To that end, the Board would like all Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees to give serious consideration to making contributions over and above the minimum required of them under the new system.

Overall, the Board is satisfied that the new remittance system is bedding in well. It wishes to record its gratitude to the staff in the Church Offices, and in particular to Mrs Catriona Cazaly, the Church’s Finance Manager, for their hard work in developing the new back office structures required to ensure the smooth operation of the new system. The Board also wishes to recognise the contribution of Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees and congregational treasurers in ensuring a high level of compliance with the requirements of the new system. Any treasurers that continue to have difficulties with the new system are encouraged to contact the Church Offices where the staff will be pleased to assist. Similarly, if Deacons’ Courts or Finance Committees are still unsure as to certain aspects of the new system, and in particular, the funding of central projects, the Offices staff will be happy to provide further guidance.

2. **Pension Increases**

At the 2010 General Assembly, the Board was asked to liaise with the Personnel Committee to consider bringing forward proposals to increase the Church’s pension contribution from 10% to 15% of pensionable salaries. It was suggested that such an increase could be phased in over a period of five years.

The Board’s Finance Sub-Committee and the Personnel Committee gave this due consideration and concluded that the cost of each 1% increase in pension contribution would be around £22,500 per annum based on current stipend levels. Against this the committees set the desire to increase stipend as far as the Church’s resources would allow. Both committees agreed that while resources are limited they would prefer to prioritise increases to stipend rather than increasing pension contributions. Following this course would allow ministers to opt to make tax efficient
contributions to their pensions via salary sacrifice if they so desired.

The Board considered the recommendation from the committees and agreed with their analysis. Accordingly, the Board recommends that the level of pension contributions be kept under review but that priority be given to increasing stipend as far as possible. The Board is keen to encourage ministers to consider using a portion of any such increases to stipend to make additional personal contributions to their pensions.

3. Retirement Accommodation
During the year, the Board continued to give consideration to the options for providing retirement accommodation to ministers or their families, particularly in the case of unforeseen circumstances. A number of options were considered by the Finance Sub-Committee although in most cases, finance presented a significant hurdle. The Board also received a proposal from the Personnel Committee in this regard which sought to deal with the particular circumstances of a manse family having to leave a manse following the death in service of a minister or of a minister having to leave unexpectedly due to ill health retirement. The Committee proposed that in such circumstances, and subject to a detailed set of conditions, a property could be acquired by the Church and leased to the family concerned with rent determined on a means tested basis. The Board received this proposal shortly before its final meeting before the General Assembly and, therefore, had insufficient time to consider the detail of it. Its immediate reaction was concern over the implications for the Church’s liquid cash position. However, the Board does intend to revisit the matter in the coming months and will liaise with the Personnel Committee on the issues identified.

4. Guidance for Contributors
The Board was tasked by the 2010 General Assembly with producing guidance for contributors on tithing. The Finance Sub-Committee invested considerable time on this remit and after extensive debate produced a short leaflet which sought to provide general guidance on Biblical principles of giving. This included, but was not restricted to, comment on tithing and focused on the appropriate response of the Christian to the free gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The leaflet was circulated to all congregations for distribution to individual contributors. A more detailed paper was also produced to provide additional background material for ministers, Kirk Sessions and Deacons’ Courts to aid teaching on the subject.

5. Financial Reporting
The 2010 General Assembly also asked the Board to consider ways of presenting the Trustees’ Report and Financial Statements in a format that would be more accessible and understandable to commissioners to the General Assembly and to the wider Church. Taking into account restrictions arising from audit requirements, the Board has approved the format of a one-page summary showing simplified accounts together with a brief financial summary. If the proposed timetable for signing off the Year End accounts is met, this summary document should be available to commissioners at this year’s General Assembly.

6. Ministers Acting as Treasurers
During the year, it came to the attention of the Board that a small number of congregations had their ministers acting as congregational treasurer. The Board considered this to be poor governance practice and a highly inappropriate use of ministers’ time. The Board acknowledges that in small congregations it can be difficult to find suitable, willing volunteers for this role. However, it strongly believes that, even if it means identifying somebody from a neighbouring congregation in the short term, the role should not be left to ministers. A letter was sent to Presbytery Clerks strongly discouraging this practice and asking Presbyteries to make clear that ministers should not take on the role of treasurer and should not supervise the work of treasurers.

(C) STRATEGY

During the year, the Strategy Sub-Committee continued to consider issues of strategic significance for the Church. On the basis that most of the actions identified in the three-year plan presented to the Commission of Assembly in October 2008 are now being carried forward by others, the Sub-Committee’s focus shifted somewhat to identifying smaller scale pilot projects that could become models of best practice for the Church. The Sub-Committee did continue to monitor progress on the items from the three-year plan for which it had a specific remit and an update is given below.

1. Next Steps
The Board endorsed the view of the Strategy Sub-Committee that rather than seek to produce a new over-arching strategy for the Church backed by General Assembly legislation, it should seek to identify and implement smaller, discrete projects that might act as models of best practice for the Church. In the first instance, the Sub-Committee sought to identify pilot projects in the areas of youth, long-term planning, training and education, preaching and continuous professional development for ministers and hub congregations. These projects remain at the development stage with time being invested in ensuring that the projects are sufficiently well defined with clear objectives and the right personnel. It is hoped that, if successful, the lessons learned can be applied on a wider scale.
2. **Diocesan Ministries** Act XXVIII, 2010 reminded Presbyteries that they were directed by the Commission of Assembly in October 2008 to identify Christian agencies within their bounds that are engaged in diocesan ministries and to initiate or develop links between suitable ministries and congregations. The aim of this initiative was to share experiences and efforts with other organisations with a view to mutual encouragement and improvement in practices. Presbyteries were instructed to report to the Board in order that it could in turn report to the General Assembly. The Board is disappointed to note that only the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll and the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth provided such feedback.

3. **Effectiveness of Presbyteries** Act XXVIII, 2010 also reminded Presbyteries that the October 2008 Commission of Assembly instructed them to consult with the Strategy Sub-Committee in relation to ways of improving their own effectiveness. Although not all Presbyteries responded, the Sub-Committee prepared a summary document which collated the responses from Presbyteries and highlighted areas for consideration. Having discussed the recommendations from the Sub-Committee the Board believes that Presbyteries would benefit from giving careful consideration to the suggestions in the key areas below. It is hoped that this will enable Presbyteries to strike an appropriate balance between formal, procedural business and the overarching spiritual aims of the Presbytery.

- **Devotions, Fellowship and Pastoral Concern**
  - Two congregations could be asked for a brief report on their work and to give points for prayer.
  - A short period could be allocated to prayer in small groups halfway through the meeting.
  - Time could be allocated for a book review or short meditation from Scripture.
  - Holding an informal meal before Presbytery meetings could foster a spirit of fellowship.
  - In accordance with existing General Assembly legislation, all ministers in their first charge should be mentored, with mentors being given a clearly specified role and being required to report back to Presbytery.

- **Presbytery as a Constitutional and Operating Body**
  - Presbyteries should take ownership of decisions made at the General Assembly. In support of this, Business Committees should be tasked with giving thorough consideration to Assembly Deliverances and creating an action plan for their implementation. They should then check periodically on progress against actions identified.

- **Standing Orders and Business Procedures**
  - In order to improve time management, meetings should begin at the stated time. Unnecessary procedures should also be eliminated. For example, the calling of a roll could be replaced with a signing in sheet. The Presbytery’s Business Committee should prioritise matters in advance of the meeting and only in the most exceptional circumstances should permission be given to raise matters not on the agenda.
  - The role of the Moderator is critical in the efficient conduct of business. Standing Orders should be applied graciously but firmly in the conduct of debates, discussions and the presentation of papers.
  - Chairmanship should be of a quality that ensures that nobody feels left out of a debate.
  - Standing Orders should be reissued each year and the Moderator should be fully conversant with these.
  - Committees should be used to process much of the business in order that time is not consumed with detailed discussion to the detriment of policy matters.
  - The Student Committee should operate under very specific, written guidelines in the mentoring of its subjects.
  - Membership of committees should be rotated so that all members of Presbytery are given an opportunity of serving if they are able. Periods of service on a committee could be modelled on the pattern of service used for central standing committees and boards.
  - Notwithstanding the above, the application of a skills audit, as being developed for central standing committees and boards, should be kept in mind.
  - Committees should be set up on an *ad hoc* basis to deal with specific, non-recurring matters.
  - Where possible, the location of meetings should be varied to included even outlying places within the Presbytery. This can not only make members feel less marginalised but also give more of an appreciation of the circumstances under which some are operating.
  - Opportunities for more a more informal, discursive format should be considered in order that the basis of debate can be broadened and the likelihood of an amicable conclusion enhanced when matters are put to a vote.

- **Induction for New – and Old – Members**
  - Information sheets on functions, structures and operation of the Presbytery should be prepared for all members. These should include explanation of the Latin terms used.
  - Plain English should be used wherever possible and speakers should explain any technical terms.
  - Experienced members could “shepherd” new members. For example, a one hour class could be held for new
members and mentors could give instruction to new ministers.

- **Quinquennial Visitations**
  - A coordinator should be appointed who would ensure that all visitations are conducted in good time.
  - Action points should be highlighted in any report.
  - Responses to action points should be monitored carefully.

The Board suggests that Presbyteries should be encouraged to implement these recommendations and that they should report back to the 2012 General Assembly by responding to the following questions:

- Which of any of these recommendations does the Presbytery practise already?
- What General Assembly Deliverances has the Presbytery Business Committee been able to process?
- Which of the recommendations is the Presbytery seeking to implement?
- How does the Presbytery practise the induction of new members?
- Has the Presbytery appointed a co-ordinator for quinquennial visitation?

4. **Functioning of General Assembly**

During the year, representatives of the Strategy Sub-Committee met with representatives of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to discuss proposals aimed at aligning the work of the General Assembly more closely to the needs of the Church. The Assembly Arrangements Committee’s Report to the General Assembly will provide a more detailed account of the outcome of these meetings.

(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**

The Board was pleased to note that all committees and boards were asked by the Nominations Committee to undertake an audit of skills requirements for committee and board members. The Board believes that this is very important in ensuring that standing committees and boards have the appropriate blend of skills and experience to fulfil their remits efficiently.

In seeking to raise the profile of compliance issues around the Church, the CARM Sub-Committee provided input to the revision of quinquennial visitation forms. These now include a section seeking confirmation that relevant policies have been adopted by congregations. Other aspects of governance in respect of charity regulation and fiduciary responsibilities were kept under review throughout the year by senior staff.

2. **Risk Management**

The CARM Sub-Committee devoted a considerable amount of its time during the year to the issue of risk management. This involved a review of the work done to date and culminated in the production of a revised risk register together with proposals aimed at ensuring that risk management remained a key focus of the Board. The Board gave careful consideration to the various risks identified and the actions aimed at mitigating these risks. The Board intends to take this work forward in the coming year in consultation with other committees and boards where the action plan seeks to address risks that fall within their remits.

3. **Legal Compliance**

The Compliance Officer continued to monitor legal developments with a view to advising the Board on any that could have an impact on the work of the Church. Two of the main areas of work related to immigration and safeguarding as noted below.

4. **UK Border Agency**

During the year, the Compliance Officer provided advice to congregations as well as to committees and boards in relation to the prospective employment of workers from outside the EU. The requirements of the UK Border Agency’s points-based immigration system can be complex and therefore, the Board would like to encourage any congregation, committee or board proposing to employ such a person, to make early contact with Mrs Macleod in order that appropriate advice can be given on the steps that are needed. It should not be assumed that the issuing of a Certificate of Sponsorship by the Church, or granting of a visa by the UK Border Agency, is a simple matter. Rather, there is a presumption against employing people from outside the EU if that is seen to displace a worker from the “resident labour market”.

5. **Protection of Vulnerable Groups**

Another major area of focus during the year was the introduction of the new Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme on 28th February 2011. This replaced the old system of disclosure checks for people who work with vulnerable groups in Scotland. In preparation for the introduction of the Scheme a series of guidance notes were prepared and circulated to congregational coordinators
and to Kirk Sessions as well as being posted on the Church’s website. The CARM Sub-Committee continues to consider ways of providing training for coordinators and workers and, in the coming year, aims to draw up a revised policy on the protection of vulnerable groups.

(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 appeal in relation to the Broadford properties was heard before the inner house of the Court of Session in October 2010. Due to the unavailability of Mr Heriot Currie, QC, the Church was represented by Mr Gerry Moynihan, QC and Ms Ruth Charteris. At the time of writing, a judgment was still awaited.

A hearing was set for early May in relation to the attempts by the Partick congregation to recover its properties and funds. The date of the hearing had been set with a view to allowing time for reflection on the judgement in relation to Broadford since there is a clear overlap in the principle issues and arguments. However, in the absence of a judgement in the Broadford case, it is expected that the Partick hearing will be delayed further.

The Board understands that some local discussions with FCC congregations are ongoing with a view to resolving disputes without recourse to further legal action. In particular, the Board welcomes the return of members of the Kiltearn congregation back into membership in the Free Church and the residential supply currently being provided by their minister Rev. Calum Iain Macleod having also left the Free Church (Continuing).

2. Legal Action in Peru At the time of writing, the legal action taken in Peru against the Church, the Colegio San Andres and Mr Donald MacAulay, the school’s former headmaster, remains unresolved. The Board remains committed to exploring the possibility of resolving this matter by way of an out of court settlement and to that end is continuing to work closely with the Church’s Law Agent. The Board commends this difficult situation and all those involved in it to the continued prayers of the Church.

(F) WORSHIP

During the early part of the year, much of the Board’s time was taken up in consideration of issues in relation to the worship practice of the Church. Having arranged a plenary conference for office bearers on the matter and submitted a Report to the Plenary Assembly in November 2010, the Board believes that it fulfilled the remit given to it by previous General Assemblies.

(G) OTHER MATTERS

1. 16 North Bank Street In its Report to the 2010 General Assembly, the Board commented on the difficulties experienced in securing a tenant for the vacant premises at 16 North Bank Street, Edinburgh. The property offers excellent space but is in need of upgrading and refurbishment. Plans were outlined for an expanded bookshop and coffee shop within the ground floor accommodation and considerable work was done during the year to take this forward. Various professional advisers were engaged and more concrete plans were developed for the ground floor and for refurbished office accommodation on the first floor. All planning consents, including listed building consent and building warrant, have now been obtained. The Board believes that this is an exciting opportunity for the Church with the potential for extending its outreach in the heart of Edinburgh and it is now seeking a partner to run the coffee shop. A decision has yet to be taken on the use of the first floor accommodation although the possibility of moving the Church Offices into this part of the building is being considered. This could allow some of the accommodation within the existing Offices to be rented out.

2. London Congregations The Board understands that the Cobham and London City congregations have submitted draft constitutions to the Charity Commission for England and Wales with a view to registering the congregations as separate charities. Feedback on these is awaited from the Charity Commission.

3. Pensions During the year, the triennial actuarial valuation of the Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme as at 31st December 2009 was undertaken. The Board was disappointed to note that despite substantial contributions from the Church over the period, as a result of poor market performance since the previous review, the Scheme continues to experience a considerable deficit. Following discussion with the Pension Scheme Trustees, it was agreed that the level of contribution from the Church to the Scheme should increase by £30,000 to £345,000 per
annum in order to bring the Recovery Plan for the Scheme back into line. The Board remains committed to ensuring that the pension benefits accrued by members of the Scheme down through the years are funded adequately.

(H) JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Act II, 2010 requires the Board to bring forward recommendations to the General Assembly for new appointments to the Judicial Commission. In that regard, the Board recommends that Rev. Alex Cowie (Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll) and Rev. Iain MacAskill (Northern Presbytery) be appointed to the Judicial Commission to take the places of Rev. Kenneth Stewart and Rev. Andrew Fraser. The revised membership of the Commission appears in Section (H) of the Proposed Deliverance.

(I) CUSTODIER OF TITLES

Five Petitions for the sale of property have been received, together with four Petitions for access to funds. All Petitions have supporting documents from congregations and Presbyteries which are in order. The Petition from the Deacons’ Court of Arran Free Church for access to funds was originally addressed to the Commission of Assembly but could not be taken by the Commission as the crave involved the amendment of an Act of Assembly.

(I) Dingwall and Strathpeffer

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the petition of the Deacons’ Court of Dingwall and Strathpeffer Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the congregations of Dingwall and Strathpeffer were united by Act IV of the Commission of Assembly (October 2000) under one Kirk Session, and constituted with one Deacons’ Court by Act XIV (2002), and the congregation are responsible for the upkeep of two large late Victorian church buildings, located approximately five miles apart in the towns of Dingwall and Strathpeffer;

2. Whereas the Strathpeffer Church building and the attached hall and a small strip of surrounding land are held under the terms of the Model Trust Deed, and the congregation also own a residential property at 8 Cromartie Drive, Strathpeffer, purchased for the use of a congregational worker and also held under the terms of the Model Trust Deed;

3. Whereas a Quinquennial Visitation Report approved by Presbytery in December 2008 recognised that the Strathpeffer church building requires substantial investment to make it fit for purpose in today’s world and the Presbytery recommended that all Lord’s Day worship services should be centred in Dingwall;

4. Whereas the Presbytery recommended that the congregation assess the value of retaining the Strathpeffer building as a long term asset which might assist in evangelism in a growing village community where there is no other evangelical witness and establish costings for modest modernisation proposals such as installing a new kitchen, disabled toilets, or complete re-organisation of interior with rooms for activities, and that if the costings prove exorbitant or such a vision completely unworkable that the Congregation undertakes to sell the building;

5. Whereas only three services of public worship have taken place in the Strathpeffer Church building in the past two years and available resources have not allowed for the redevelopment of the church building, and there are several good community facilities available for hire at a modest cost for the purpose of holding meetings and events;

6. Whereas the Deacons’ Court unanimously agreed to propose that the congregation petition the General Assembly for permission to sell the Strathpeffer church property, to enable valuations and exploratory moves to be made to determine the best course of action to take in the prevailing market conditions;

7. Whereas the congregation will be notified again before any actual sale is entered upon;

8. Whereas the Presbytery recommended that the congregation refurbish the kitchen and toilets in the Dingwall church hall as finance allows, and there is a need to provide classrooms, meeting rooms and greater hall space to accommodate the work of the joint congregation, and there are insufficient funds to develop existing property or to purchase land or property for this purpose in Dingwall, and any funds released by the sale or partial sale of the church and hall or other property at Strathpeffer may provide for such developments in Dingwall and Strathpeffer;

9. Whereas the church courts and congregation remain committed to promoting the gospel in the district of Strathpeffer by all relevant and achievable means and may wish to reinvest resources from a sale or partial sale of congregational property to purchase replacement property or to refurbish any portion of the congregational property
which may be retained in any sale, or to maintain or improve upon other congregational property or purchase land or property to advance the work of the congregation, or to fund such evangelistic or pastoral work as may be agreed by the Kirk Session from time to time;

10. Wherefore the Petition of the Deacons’ Court humbly requests that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration, and grant authority to the Deacons’ Court to sell all or part of the congregational property held in Strathpeffer, the proceeds to be held by the Trustees in behalf of the congregation, and the sum lodged and any interest thereon to be available upon due application for the purpose of purchasing land or property, or for repairing or improving congregational property, or for general congregational purposes including the funding of evangelistic or pastoral work carried out under the oversight of the Kirk Session.

Or do otherwise as your venerable Court shall see fit.

And your petitioners will ever pray. John de la Haye, Clerk

(2) Knock

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Knock Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the church building at Aird, known as Aird Mission House, is in need of extensive repairs and renovation amounting to a minimum of £60,000, including the roof, windows and wiring;

2. Whereas this sum is beyond what the congregation can currently afford;

3. Whereas the building has no toilet amenities, disabled access ramp and facilities, and no car parking area apart from the adjacent main road;

4. Whereas the building has been used only once a month for the past decade, and is situated some three miles from the main church and hall at Garrabost;

5. Whereas the Deacons’ Court considers that to raise the amount of finance required in the context of the current infrequent use of the building would not be good stewardship;

6. Whereas the congregation has been duly consulted and has given approval to the disposal of the building;

7. Whereas the building is under the Model Trust Deed which requires the Assembly’s permission for disposal of the building;

8. Whereas the General Assembly has previously approved a recommendation that congregations rationalise the use of buildings when some of those they own are no longer essential;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly take these factors into their consideration and grant authority to sell the said building, and direct that the proceeds of sale be held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation, with interest on the proceeds being added to capital. The General Assembly further direct that the congregation have access to the proceeds for congregational purposes.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray. Iain D. MacLennan, Clerk

(3) Bonar Bridge

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Finance Committee of Bonar Bridge Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the manse at Migdale was sold in 2009 and the new owners have expressed a desire to purchase additional land adjacent to their property for the erection of a shed to accommodate stables, workshop, and garaging as well as wood storage;
2. Whereas the area in question is the site of former outbuildings which are now tumbled down and untidy, and the proposed development would serve to tidy up the area;

3. Whereas the disposal of this area would not interfere with the current use of the glebe for agricultural purposes;

4. Whereas careful consideration has been given to the potential future uses of the glebe and it is believed that the disposal of this area would not be prejudicial to any such uses;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly grant authority to sell the piece of land adjacent to the car park of the Old Manse, extending no further than the access gate, the transaction to be carried out under the supervision of the Church’s Law Agent, and direct that the proceeds of sale be applied to the funds of the Bonar Bridge congregation, or do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

John Forbes, Clerk pro tem

(4) Kilwinning and Saltcoats

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Kilwinning and Saltcoats Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the church building at Kilwinning is in need of extensive repairs;

2. Whereas the congregation is elderly and lacking in the resources to contribute to the ongoing maintenance work on the church building;

3. Whereas the congregation has access to an alternative place of worship thanks to a generous offer from a neighbouring evangelical church;

4. Whereas the current reserves of the congregation would be better used in different ways for the spread of the gospel in the locality;

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

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Graham Keith, Clerk

(5) Dumfries

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Dumfries Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the manse at 2 Gillbrae Court, George town, Dumfries, is considered by the Strategy Committee of the Presbytery to be inadequate in size for a minister with a family, and the Presbytery approve the deliverance “The Presbytery encourages the congregation to acquire a new manse”;

2. Whereas it will be necessary for the Deacons’ Court to determine how additional finance shall be raised for the purchase of a new manse;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly grant permission for the sale of the manse at 2 Gillbrae Court, Georgetown, Dumfries, and that the congregation be allowed access to the capital for the purchase of a new manse, or do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

John B. B. Dodds, Clerk

(6) Arran

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Arran Free Church humbly shows that:
1. Whereas the congregation presently require the sum exceeding £25,000 for the extensive repair and improvement of the Brodick Free Church and the Free Church Manse at Shiskine;

2. Whereas under the provision of Act XVII, Class II, 1995, the sum of £7691.08 from the sale of the church building, and ground and cottage at Corrie is held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation of Arran;

3. Whereas Act XVII, Class II, 1995, authorising the sale of the said buildings and ground and cottage specified that only the interest from the proceeds of sale be made available to the congregation for congregational purposes;

4. Whereas it is necessary to petition the General Assembly to amend Act XVII, Class II, 1995, for permission to access funds from the capital sum for the purpose of repairing and improving the Brodick Free Church and the Free Church manse at Shiskine;

Wherefore your petitioners humbly request the General Assembly to take these matters into their consideration and amend Act XVII, Class II, 1995, to the extent that they authorise the residue sum of £7691.08 or more to be released to the congregation from the funds realised by the sale of the Corrie church building, ground and cottage, the sum to be used for the purpose of repairing and refurbishing the Brodick Free Church and the Free Church manse in Shiskine.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may deem best. And your petitioners will ever pray.

Charles W. McAllister, Clerk

(7) Wick

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Wick and Keiss Finance Committee humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the congregation is vacant and is, at present, not in a position to support a minister;

2. Whereas the Northern Presbytery has proposed a new work in the town, led by a pioneer evangelist and supported financially by the congregation;

3. Whereas the congregation has sold three properties (the Keiss manse and church building, and the Wick manse) the proceeds of which sales are presently lodged with the General Trustees in behoof of the congregation;

4. Whereas the congregation has been granted authority to sell the Wick church building;

5. Whereas the terms of Act XXVII, Class II, 2006, granting authority to sell the Keiss church building, are as follows: “The General Assembly grant the congregation access to the proceeds of sale for the purpose of repairs and improvements to remaining congregational property. The General Assembly amend Act XVIII, Class II, 1995, thereby granting the congregation access to funds from the sale of the Keiss Manse building in 1985 for repairs and improvements to remaining congregational property;”

6. Whereas the terms of Act XL, Class II, 2009, granting authority to sell the congregation’s properties in Wick are as follows: “the proceeds...made available for the procurement of a more suitable church building and manse...They direct that any residual balance shall be held on behalf of the congregation and shall be made available for congregational purposes upon application to the Board of Trustees;”

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration and amend Act XXVII, Class II, 2006 and Act XL, Class II, 2009, thereby granting the congregation access to funds from the sale of the Keiss manse and church building, and the Wick manse and church for congregational purposes, including the support of an evangelist in Wick, as proposed by Northern Presbytery, upon application to the Board of Trustees.

Or to do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem best. Your petitioners will ever pray.

Extracted from minutes by John Laing, Clerk
(8) Callanish

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Callanish Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas Act XXVII, 2006, authorised the sale of the church building, the glebe, and the manse at Uig, Bernera, and directed that the proceeds of the sale be lodged with the General Trustees on behalf of the Congregation, with the interest being added to the capital;

2. Whereas the Congregation of Uig, Bernera and Callanish were consolidated in terms of Act XLVII, 2009, whereby the proceeds specified in Act XXVII, 2006 became the property of the consolidated charge;

3. Whereas major repairs and renovation to the church and manse buildings at Callanish are now required.

4. Whereas the funds presently available to the Deacons Court are inadequate to meet the costs of the said repairs and renovations;

5. Whereas the congregation have been duly consulted and have agreed to petition the General Assembly for access to funds held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation;

Wherefore may it please your Venerable Court to take these premises into consideration and authorise access to the funds held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation for renovation and repairs to the church and manse at Callanish up to a maximum of £30,000.

JAMES M. FRASER, Chairman

Appendix

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| Glasgow-Shettleston                     | 0      | 0      |
| Kilmorack and Strathglass               | 0      | 0      |
| Tarbat                                   | 0      | 0      |

| Ev. Presb, Church                       | 25,589 | 13,000 |
| Toronto                                 | 3,885  | 0      |
| Livonia                                 | 0      | 0      |
| Eastern Charge                          | 0      | 0      |
| Western Charge                          | 2,714  | 0      |
| Charlottetown                            | 507    | 0      |

| Total                                   | 2,982,874 | 3,058,691 | -76,187 |

During 2010, the Ministry Levy was set at £26,100.
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 in support of that work and record their appreciation for legacies received during the year.

3. The General Assembly endorse the view that steps should be taken to address any structural shortfalls in the Church’s finances and, to that end, instruct the Board to consult widely with other committees and boards to explore options for reducing costs and to identify the potential for increasing income.

4. 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 2012 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.

5. 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 continued improvement in the financial health of the school.

6. The General Assembly note the establishment of the Reformed Educational Association San Andres and endorse the Board’s commitment to transfer the governance and assets of the Colegio San Andres to the Association.

(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 progress in the implementation of the new system of congregational remittances. They are particularly encouraged by the response of congregations to the challenge of meeting local ministry costs on a regular basis. They also wish to thank the Church’s Finance Manager, Mrs Catriona Cazaly for her sterling contribution to ensuring the smooth operation of the new system.

3. The General Assembly note the concerns raised by the Board in relation to the funding of central projects. In this regard, they encourage Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees to make the levies required under the remittance system a budget priority and to give serious consideration to making contributions to central projects in addition to the minimum requirements of the remittance system.

4. The General Assembly note the work done in relation to provision of retirement accommodation for ministers and their families and recognise the financial challenges that exist. They instruct the Board to work with the Personnel Committee in exploring the merits and practicalities of making provision in certain exceptional cases.

5. The General Assembly note the circulation of guidance for contributors in relation to Christian stewardship and encourage Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees to make this widely available.

6. The General Assembly support the production of key financial information in a format that will prove more accessible to commissioners and to the wider membership of the Church.

7. The General Assembly endorse the view of the Board that it is inappropriate for ministers to act as congregational treasurers. They instruct Presbyteries to ensure that no minister is expected to take on the role of congregational treasurer, and thereby be diverted from his primary function.

(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 note the intention to develop a series of small-scale, strategic projects with a view to fostering best practice. They instruct the Board to report back on progress to a future General Assembly.

3. The General Assembly note with disappointment the lack of feedback from Presbyteries in relation to the development of linkages in diaconal ministries with other Christian agencies. They encourage Presbyteries to actively seek out such linkages with a view to mutual encouragement in Gospel work.

4. The General Assembly endorse the following recommendations of the Board aimed at improving the effectiveness of Presbyteries. They instruct Presbyteries to give careful consideration to these with a view to implementation where appropriate.

- **Devotions, Fellowship and Pastoral Concern**
  - Two congregations could be asked for a brief report on their work and to give points for prayer.
  - A short period could be allocated to prayer in small groups halfway through the meeting.
  - Time could be allocated for a book review or short meditation from Scripture.
  - Holding an informal meal before Presbytery meetings could foster a spirit of fellowship.
  - In keeping with Act XXIV, 2003, all ministers in their first charge should be mentored, with mentors being given a clearly specified role and being required to report back to Presbytery.

- **Presbytery as a Constitutional and Operating Body**
  - Presbyteries should take ownership of decisions made at the General Assembly. In support of this, Business Committees should be tasked with giving thorough consideration to Assembly Deliverances and creating an action plan for their implementation. They should then check periodically on progress against actions identified.

- **Standing Orders and Business Procedures**
  - In order to improve time management, meetings should begin at the stated time. Unnecessary procedures should also be eliminated. For example, the calling of a roll could be replaced with a signing in sheet. The Presbytery’s Business Committee should prioritise matters in advance of the meeting and only in the most exceptional circumstances should permission be given to raise matters not on the agenda.
  - The role of the Moderator is critical in the efficient conduct of business. Standing Orders should be applied graciously but firmly in the conduct of debates, discussions and the presentation of papers.
  - Chairmanship should be of a quality that ensures that nobody feels left out of a debate.
  - Standing Orders should be reissued each year and the Moderator should be fully conversant with these.
  - Committees should be used to process much of the business in order that time is not consumed with detailed discussion to the detriment of policy matters.
  - The Student Committee should operate under very specific, written guidelines in the mentoring of its subjects.
  - Membership of committees should be rotated so that all members of Presbytery are given an opportunity of serving if they are able. Periods of service on a committee could be modelled on the pattern of service used for central standing committees and boards.
  - Notwithstanding the above, the application of a skills audit, as being developed for central standing committees and boards, should be kept in mind.
  - Committees should be set up on an ad hoc basis to deal with specific, non-recurring matters.
  - Where possible, the location of meetings should be varied to included even outlying places within the Presbytery. This can not only make members feel less marginalised but also give more of an appreciation of the circumstances under which some are operating.
  - Opportunities for a more informal, discursive format should be considered in order that the basis of debate can be broadened and the likelihood of an amicable conclusion enhanced when matters are put to a vote.

- **Induction for New – and Old – Members**
  - Information sheets on functions, structures and operation of the Presbytery should be prepared for all members. These should include explanation of the Latin terms used.
  - Plain English should be used wherever possible and speakers should explain any technical terms.
  - Experienced members could “shepherd” new members. For example, a one hour class could be held for new members and mentors could give instruction to new ministers.

- **Quinquennial Visitations**
  - A coordinator should be appointed who would ensure that all visitations are conducted in good time.
  - Action points should be highlighted in any report.
Responses to action points should be monitored carefully.

The General Assembly instruct Presbyteries to send to the Board by 31st January 2012 their responses to the following questions, so that the Board may report to the General Assembly of 2012 on progress.

- Which of any of these recommendations does the Presbytery practise already?
- What General Assembly Deliverances has the Presbytery Business Committee been able to process?
- Which of the recommendations is the Presbytery seeking to implement?
- How does the Presbytery practise the induction of new members?
- Has the Presbytery appointed a co-ordinator for quinquennial visitation?

(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 note the Board’s ongoing work in assessing the risks facing the Church and identifying possible actions to mitigate these risks. They encourage the Board to work with other committees and boards where these actions seek to address risks that fall within their remits.

3. The General Assembly instruct any congregation, committee or board to make early contact with the Church’s Compliance Officer for advice when considering employing any person from outside the European Union.

4. The General Assembly instruct the Board to keep developments in the implementation of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme under review. They encourage the Board to explore options for the provision of ongoing safeguarding training for coordinators and workers and for the provision of training on the new scheme. They also encourage the Board to review the Church’s existing policy on the protection of vulnerable groups.

(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 developments in relation to court proceedings with respect to properties and funds at Broadford and Partick.

3. The General Assembly welcome the return to the Kiltearn Free Church of Scotland of those previously in membership of the Free Church (Continuing) there. The General Assembly call upon all congregations in areas where division still exists and especially where assets are in dispute to seek an amicable solution through local discussion.

4. The General Assembly note with regret the ongoing legal action in Peru against the Church, the Colegio San Andres and the former headmaster of the school. They endorse the Board’s desire to reach a mutually acceptable settlement and commend the issue to the Church as a matter for continued prayer.

5. 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 Gerry Moynihan, QC and Ms Ruth Charteris for their work on behalf of the Church.

(F) WORSHIP

1. The General Assembly note the work of the Board in fulfilling its remit in relation to the worship, discipline and unity of the Church.

(G) OTHER MATTERS

1. The General Assembly support the Board’s work in developing the property at 16 North Bank St with a view to maximising its usefulness in the work and mission of the Church.

2. The General Assembly note the position in relation to the registration of the London City and Cobham congregations with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

3. The General Assembly note the ongoing financial commitment required to finance the retirement benefits
accrued by members of the Free Church of Scotland Pensions Scheme.

(H) JUDICIAL COMMISSION

1. The General Assembly note that Rev. Kenneth Stewart and Rev. Andrew Fraser are no longer members of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll and of the Northern Presbytery respectively and therefore cease to be eligible as members of the Judicial Commission.

2. The General Assembly reappoint the Judicial Commission as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judicial Commission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr J. Macrae EP  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr D. W. Matheson EP  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. A. J. Howat GW  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. A. Cowie GW  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Mr Evan MacDonald GW  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Mr Norman Smith GW  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Gordon Mair ILR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. D. C. Meredith ILR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Andrew Murchison ILR  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Dr Gordon Fraser ILR  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Rev. K. A. Macleod N  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Rev. I. Macaskill N  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Mr David Lipp N  [3/1]</td>
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<td>Dr James Skinner N  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. John H. MacLean SWR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. D. G. MacDonald SWR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr John A. Gillies SWR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Robert MacDonald SWR  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. James Maciver WI  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Malcolm Macleod WI  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo Macleod (Lochs) WI  [3/1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo Murray (Stornoway) WI  [3/1]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Chairman: Rev. A. J. Macdonald
Clerk: (I) CUSTODIER OF TITLES

1. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Dingwall and Strathpeffer Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell all or part of the congregational property held in Strathpeffer, the proceeds to be held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation, and the sum lodged and any interest thereon to be available upon due application for the purpose of purchasing land or property, or for repairing or improving congregational property, or for general congregational purposes including the funding of evangelistic or pastoral work carried out under the oversight of the Kirk Session, the transaction to be carried out under supervision of the Compliance Officer or the Church’s Law Agent.

2. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Knock Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell the church building at Aird known as Aird Mission House, under supervision of the Compliance Officer or the Church's Law Agent, and direct that the proceeds of sale be held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation, with interest on the proceeds being added to capital. The General Assembly further direct that the congregation have access to the proceeds for congregational purposes upon application to the Board of Trustees.

3. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Finance Committee of Bonar Bridge Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell the piece of land adjacent to the car park of the Old Manse, extending no further than the access gate, the transaction to be carried out under the supervision of the Compliance Officer or the Church’s Law Agent, and direct that the proceeds of sale be applied to the funds of the Bonar Bridge congregation.
4. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Kilwinning and Saltcoats Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell the church building at Kilwinning, under supervision of the Compliance Officer or the Church’s Law Agent, and direct that the proceeds of sale be applied to the funds of the congregation.

5. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Dumfries Free Church and grant its crave. They grant permission for the sale of the manse at 2 Gillbrae Court, Georgetown, Dumfries, under supervision of the Compliance Officer or the Church’s Law Agent, and direct that the congregation be allowed access to the capital for the purchase of a new manse.

6. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Arran Free Church and grant its crave. They amend Act XVII, Class II, 1995, to the extent that they authorise the residue sum of £7691.08 or more to be released to the congregation from the funds realised by the sale of the Corrie church building, ground and cottage, the sum to be used for the purpose of repairing and refurbishing the Brodick Free Church and the Free Church manse in Shiskine.

7. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Finance Committee of Wisk and Keiss Free Church and grant its crave. They amend Act XXVII, Class II, 2006 and Act XL, Class II, 2009, thereby granting the congregation access to funds from the sale of the Keiss manse and church building, and the Wick manse and church, for congregational purposes, including the support of an evangelist in Wick, as proposed by Northern Presbytery, upon application to the Board of Trustees.

8. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Callanish Free Church and grant its crave. They authorise access to the funds held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation for renovation and repairs to the church and manse at Callanish up to a maximum of £30,000.

(J) SYNODS

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

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.
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IV.

REPORT

OF THE

HOME MISSIONS BOARD

How can the Church get noticed? Sometimes the Church gets noticed for all the wrong reasons – for internal strife or for judgemental attitudes to those outside the Church.

But how does the Church get noticed for the right reasons? Some may think the Church shouldn't get noticed. It should just get on quietly with loving our neighbours and preaching the gospel. But who says that’s going to be quiet? It wasn’t quiet around 30 AD! The Church got noticed. If the Church is going to be successful in mission, it has to get noticed. What was the secret of the New Testament Church?

These people changed the world. The apostles were used by God in the spiritual conversion of thousands upon thousands of people. They established a community that remains to this day – the church of Jesus Christ. They wrote books that revolutionised the world’s ideas. Within a generation they had brought the good news of God’s love to almost every city throughout the known world.

On one occasion Peter and John were hauled before the Sanhedrin, because they had been preaching to crowds of people in the Temple that Jesus had risen from the dead. But the reason a crowd had gathered was because they had healed a crippled man in the name of Jesus. Now, we are not able to heal in the direct way in which Jesus and the Apostles healed, but the point is that they had compassion on those in need and did what they could to help. There was a visible cure, a visible proof that their message was true. We read that their enemies could say nothing because "they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them" (Acts 4:14).

Where today is our visible cure? And if we are not seeing a visible cure, or little of it, why is that? Is it because the Apostles were very clever, academic, influential people and we are not? No, the Sanhedrin realised they were “unschooled”. Was it because they were towering theological giants and we are spiritual pygmies? No again, the Sanhedrin said they were “ordinary”, or as we would say, laymen. But one thing the Sanhedrin did notice was their courage or boldness. This is an interesting word. Its essential meaning is first “plainness of speech”, and then a fearless plainness of speech. In other words they did not become mealy-mouthed in the face of hostility.

So what was their secret? Where had they learned this plainness of speech? The Sanhedrin knew the answer: “They took note that these men had been with Jesus”. It was from Jesus they had learned this simplicity, plainness, boldness and compassion. Is it because we have not been enough with Jesus and learned from him how to preach, how to witness, how to show compassion, that there is so little visible cure?

We thank God that in many places throughout the Church there is a visible cure, the lost are being saved, congregations are being built up, and communities are being impacted by the gospel. Some congregations are simply getting on with this work, and they have the local resources necessary. However, there are other areas where congregations need help. That is where the Home Missions Board comes in. Through the work of our Development Officer, Rev. Neil MacMillan, and through schemes such as team ministry, we are seeking to give ministers and congregations the tools to do the job.

We now also have responsibility to inform the Church at large of the work we are doing and to fund-raise. Last year we had to fund-raise 30% of our subsidised budget, this year that has risen to 40%. The publicity side of this has gone well. Together with the International Missions Board we have produced leaflets, a PowerPoint presentation and, hopefully, this year a DVD, and we have visited many congregations. All of this has raised the profile of mission in the Church. However, it has proved less easy to estimate the amount that has actually come in through this fund-raising activity. Hopefully this will improve in the future.

Great thanks are due as usual to Rev. Neil MacMillan, the Development Officer, and to our Clerk, Rev. Angus Howat, and Assistant Clerk, Mr Evan Macdonald; also to our consultants: Mr Matt Ford, Mr Iain D. Gill, Mrs Irene Howat, Dr Graham Keith, Mrs Alison Macdonald, Mrs Susan Maclean, Mr Innes Macleod, Mr Tom Muir, Mr Jonathan Worthington, Miss Susan Maclean, Rev. Colin Morison (Camps Supervisor), and particularly to Miss Laura Macleod, our new Camps Administrator.
(A) CHAIRMAN

During the year the Board noted with concern that that six of the current members, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, are due to complete their term of appointment at the 2012 General Assembly.

In order to create a ‘phased retirement’ and so ensure a greater measure of continuity, Rev. Alex J. MacDonald, the present Chairman, has indicated his resignation from the Board and from the chairmanship. The Board would wish to put on record its appreciation of Mr MacDonald’s leadership since its inception in 2008. Mr MacDonald has not simply been an able facilitator of meetings, he has given the Board vision and direction during challenging days for the gospel. In the period of his service he has never refused any duty placed on him and has willingly and selflessly travelled thousands of miles to meet with struggling pastors and congregations. He has displayed vision and has maintained a positive but realistic view of the potential of the denomination.

(B) ASSEMBLY REMITS

1. **Team ministries**  
The Board was instructed by the Commission of Assembly 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’. As a result the Board presented to the General Assembly of 2010 a Draft Act on Team Ministries. This Draft Act, in the form of an Overture, has been sent to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act and has been approved by the majority as in the following Table. It now requires further approval from the General Assembly and so appears as Paragraph (A) 1 of the Board’s Deliverance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh and Perth</td>
<td>Approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glasgow and Argyll</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness, Lochaber and Ross</td>
<td>Approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skye and Wester Ross</td>
<td>Approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Isles</td>
<td>Approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes and Western Canada</td>
<td>No return</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Centrally supported congregations**  
The 2010 General Assembly instructed 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 fund-raising activities. They instruct the Board to ensure budgetary provision for potential new ministries in the next year as part of the annual budgetary review.”

2.1 The relevant figures are as follows:

2. Savings: 2009 to 2010 = £107,997; 2010 to 2011 (budgeted) = £26,435
3. Fund-raising: Clearly identifiable income from fund-raising in 2010 = £49,244

2.2 The 2010 Assembly also instructed the Home Missions Board (1) to monitor carefully and manage the number of appointments in the categories of Church Extension, Asian Outreach and Service to Overseas Students so that the budgetary provision required to support such ministries remains sustainable; (2) to limit the number of Redevelopment charges to a level that can be sustained within the current budgetary provision; (3) to reduce the number of ministries on Special Arrangements and Terminable Appointments.

2.2.1 The Board reports that the number of appointments in the categories of Church Extension, Asian Outreach and Service to Overseas Students remains as previously. Rev. Seoras MacGillivray is presently engaged in Asian Ministry in Glasgow but is employed by the International Missions Board.

2.2.2 The Board is not proposing the creation of any further Redevelopment Charges in the meantime. Of the existing Redevelopment Charges one remains vacant.

2.2.3 The Board has approved a terminable appointment arrangement for Coatbridge in view of the fact (1) that it had already committed itself to this prior to the passing of the legislation by last General Assembly; (2) that the
congregation was participating in the Team Ministry experiment for NE Glasgow and hoped to be further involved in this development. Two applications for renewal of Special Arrangements are being brought to this Assembly: in view of the Assembly’s directive the Board is recommending extension of the appointment for reduced periods in each case in the hope that this will allow their inclusion in a wider ministerial arrangement.

3. **Strategy: Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll** The Board is charged to liaise with the Presbytery and its Strategy Committee. Since last General Assembly the Presbytery has submitted a number of Strategy Reports showing consideration being given to the ministerial needs in different parts of the Presbytery area. Team ministries are being planned for Argyll, and the area north-east of Glasgow, and Mr Howat is liaising with the Presbytery’s Strategy Committee on behalf of the Board. While it would be wrong to say that a strategy programme for the Presbytery is now in place, the Presbytery is to be commended for the progress that has been made. The Board’s Executive is to meet with the Presbytery or its Strategy Committee to discuss the way forward with respect to Argyll and East Kilbride.

4. **Strategy: Northern Presbytery** The Board was instructed by last General Assembly to continue to liaise with the Northern Presbytery in order to assist them in the implementation of their strategy policy and specifically to their progress with regard to the ministerial arrangements for East Sutherland. The Presbytery reports: (1) a team ministry plan had been prepared for the far north congregations (see below); (2) negotiations had taken place with a view to uniting the congregations of Clyne and Golspie but these had proved abortive; (3) talks have taken place with both the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross and the Presbytery of Sutherland of the Church of Scotland with regard to arrangements for the congregations at Assynt and Eddrachillis, both now vacant.

The Board has received a Petition from the Northern Presbytery for the establishment of a Team Ministry in the congregations of Helmsdale and Kinbrace, Lybster, Bruan, Latheron and Berriedale, Orlig, Watten and Bower, Thurso and Reay, Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale, and Wick and Keiss, accompanied by a Schedule and Team Ministry Plan. The Petition appears as Appendix Nine to this Report. The Board is recommending approval of the Petition in the event of Team Ministries receiving the approval of the General Assembly.

5. **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’. As reported to the General Assembly last year the Board is investigating a new model of church plant involving small groups from established congregations and is at present experimenting with a pilot scheme. Full details will be found in the Development Officer’s Report in Appendix One. The Board is asking that the remit be continued for a further year.

6. **Buildings Maintainance** The Board was tasked by last General Assembly with bringing forward proposals for the more effective implementation of Act XXXI, 1988. As a result a code of Conduct has been prepared for the approval of the General Assembly which appears as Appendix Two to this Report. The Board is grateful to Mr Iain Gill for his work in preparing the Code.

(C) **CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES**

1. **Development Officer** In accordance with the instructions of last General Assembly Rev. Neil MacMillan was inducted as Development Officer with a seat in the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth last August. His account of his very varied activities on behalf of the Board will be found in Appendix One to this Report.

2. **Stipend** The stipend was increased to £19,500 in January 2010. It was hoped that it would be possible to increase the stipend to £21,000 in 2011 but because of the Church’s financial position the increase was reduced to £20,500 as from 1st January 2011.

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 12 vacant congregations authorised to appoint a minister or assistant minister compared with nine at the same time last year.

4. **Assistantships** The Board has received Petitions relating to the appointment of Assistants from the following three Presbyteries:

   - Glasgow and Argyll: Renewal of permission to appoint Assistant Minister for Dowanvale
   - Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: Appointment of Assistant Minister to Greyfriars-Stratherrick
   - Western Isles: Renewal of appointment of Assistant Minister to Stornoway
In the case of the Petition from the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross which was received after the last meeting of the Board, the accompanying Schedule, while promising the full cost of ministry, showed that the congregation of Greyfriars-Stratherrick in 2010 contributed less than the 300% of the Stipend required by Act IX, 2007, § 2. The Chairman has been informed that the congregation is committed to contributing £65,000 which would meet the requirement of the legislation. The Board is asking the General Assembly to waive this requirement in this case in view of this intention. With this proviso the Board is supporting these Petitions which appear as Appendices Three to Five of this Report.

5. **Congregations not meeting their Schedule commitment** The Board is required to report annually to the General Assembly [Act IX, 2010, § 3.10] those congregations which have failed to remit the full cost of ministry or the direct cost as promised when they were admitted to the Equal Dividend Platform. The Board has to report that the congregation of Duirinish failed to do so during 2010. The congregation and the Presbytery have been notified in terms of the Act.

The Board has pleasure in reporting that the congregations of Cumbernauld, Lochcarron and London, reported to last General Assembly, met their commitments during 2010.

6. **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. Last year a review was initiated for the congregations of Olrig, Watten and Bower, and Sleat and Strath. In both cases the Presbytery is preparing a Plan whereby the congregations can be incorporated in a wider ministry.

The Board has to report that in 2010 the congregations of Golspie and of Olrig, Watten and Bower failed to remit a sum equal to the stipend. In the former case a Review and Audit will take place by the Presbytery. The latter is already the subject of a Review from last year.

7. **Consultations with Presbyteries** No Presbyteries fell to be consulted by the Board in terms of Act X, 2009, during 2010.

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

8.1 **Cobham** The Minister (Rev. David Miller) reported that following a big decrease in 2009 the numbers continued to fall in 2010 but to a lesser degree. Three new families have settled with the congregation. The fortnightly services at Maidenhead had been discontinued for the present because of decline in support in the area. The congregation plans to increase its impact on the community in Cobham itself by distributing leaflets and are reconsidering the arrangements for their Bible Study.

8.2 **Dunfermline** The Minister (Rev. Douglas Campbell) reports that a number of people from the local area and from west Fife have started attending services. Special celebrations at Christmas and Easter attracted congregations larger than usual. The congregational target for 2010 was exceeded. The lack of buildings of its own brings difficulties: the Primary School where the morning services are held is not available during the evenings: in any case the cost for further use would be prohibitive. Various social and outreach meetings are held in the Manse. The problem of the lack of leadership, highlighted in last year’s Report, is being tackled and a leadership team reporting to the Kirkcaldy Kirk Session is likely to be set up. The Presbytery note as a cause for thanks that Mr Campbell has considerable involvement in several local schools.

8.3 **St Andrews** The Minister (Rev. A. I. Macleod) reports an increase in morning attendances during termtime. The Baptist Church, now in use for a full year, has proved suitable for their needs. Evening services are now held in Hope Park Parish Church. The congregational income has increased, enabling them to meet their target and local expenses. There is a Sunday School of nine, staffed by students. The children have established contact with a girls’ home in New Delhi and write to the children there. A mentoring scheme was begun in 2010 under the leadership of Mr Kenny Robertson, UCCF Staff Worker, who is based in St Andrews.

8.4 **South Uist and Benbecula** Although the congregation remains vacant a Report was submitted to the Board with comments by the Presbytery. Two unsuccessful approaches to ministers were made during the year. The Board is aware of the fragility of the charge and the urgent need for an early settlement. The prayers of the Church are sought for this congregation.
9. **Redevelopment charges** The Board has oversight of four redevelopment charges with settled ministries; also Gairloch and Kinlochewe which continues vacant.

9.1 **Badenoch** The Minister (Rev. Richard Macdonald) reports that after a difficult start to the year when they lost two members the congregation stabilised and a number of newcomers joined. The Lunch Club has been discontinued for the time being but a teenage café has been opened at lunchtime as an outreach to the local High School. The Minister is involved in chaplaincy work in both High School and Primary School. The Board is grateful for the small encouragements reported and thanks Mr and Mrs Macdonald for their labours in somewhat difficult circumstances.

9.2 **Elgin and Forres** The Minister (Rev. Colin Morison), reports that the recent loss of some members has been partly offset. The monthly services at Dufftown continue and a fortnightly Bible study group now meets at Fochabers. The church kitchen at Elgin has been extended and refurbished, thus facilitating more social meetings. The Presbytery would like to explore the potential of more regular services at Dufftown.

9.3 **Gairloch and Kinlochewe** During the year the Board unsuccessfully approached one minister with a view to filling the vacancy. The Board is supporting a Petition from the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross for renewal of redevelopment status for Gairloch and Kinlochewe. The Petition is found as Appendix Six to this Report.

9.4 **Glenurquhart and Fort Augustus** The Minister (Rev. John A. M. Mackay) reports that there is evidence of a greater interest in the Gospel among some of the congregation in Glenurquhart. The loss of a large family from Fort Augustus has been a source of disappointment and raises questions about the future of this part of the congregation. The Glenurquhart Church building is in the process of renovation and services are temporarily being held at Balnain. The Board noted with concern that Mr Mackay has experienced health problems and trusts that these will soon be resolved. The congregation’s undertaking to submit the stipend (a figure higher than the target for which they would otherwise be liable) had been realised.

9.5 **Harris** The Minister (Rev. Ruairidh Maclean) reported on continuing encouragements. There has been an increase of two members. The congregational givings have increased enabling the congregation to exceed its target. The new hall is now complete. A successful Discipleship Explored course had been held. A course of training for elders involving study of the Westminster Confession and matters of procedure is planned. The Board rejoices at these developments but continues to be aware that the congregation is still very fragile.

10. **Congregations on Special Arrangements** There are four congregations on Special Arrangements under the oversight of the Board.

10.1 **Arran** During 2010 the congregation contributed to central funds a sum equal to 68% of the stipend, an increase from 61.6% from last year exceeding the Board’s target of 60%.

10.2 **East Kilbride** During 2010 the congregation contributed a sum equivalent to 79.5% of the stipend, which falls short of the Assembly’s figure of 85%. The Special Arrangements lapse at this Assembly. The Presbytery is seeking renewal of the arrangement on the same basis as previously but in view of last Assembly’s injunction to the Board to reduce the number of congregations on Special Arrangements, the Board is recommending an extension of one year so that their Executive may consult with the Presbytery with a view to formulating proposals for the future ministerial arrangements for East Kilbride. The Presbytery’s Petition appears as Appendix Seven to the Report.

10.3 **Dumfries** The congregation of Dumfries remains vacant in spite of various efforts to secure a minister. During 2010 the congregation contributed a sum equivalent to 74% of the stipend, which exceeds the proportion of 60% of the stipend set by the 2010 General Assembly.

10.4 **Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside** The congregation contributed a sum equivalent to 85% of the stipend, thus attaining the proportion set by the General Assembly. The General Assembly of 2010 continued this congregation on Special Arrangements for a further year so that ministerial arrangements for the Argyll area might be formulated. This exercise has proved more difficult than was hoped and the Board is recommending the extension of the Special Arrangements for two years to facilitate the completion of a ministerial plan and to cover the period to the Minister’s 65th birthday in July 2012. The Presbytery is requesting continuance of the arrangement until the General Assembly of 2014, or until the creation of team ministry arrangements incorporating the congregation of Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside, whichever is earlier. (See Appendix Eight).

11. **Asian Outreach** During the year discussions were held between representatives of the Board and representatives of the International Missions Board over questions of mutual concern. It was noted in particular that in Glasgow there are three workers involved in Asian Outreach: one responsible to the Home Missions Board, one serving under both the Home Missions Board and the International Missions Board since his missionary work is
carried out both in Scotland and overseas, and the third working under the International Missions Board. This has led to difficulties of coordination, particularly given the role of Govanhill congregation, where two of the workers are members of the Kirk Session and the third worker attends. It was important that they were all treated consistently, for example with payment of expenses, reporting arrangements, deputation, provision of supply etc.

Both Boards agreed that it would be good to have representatives of each body meeting together to exercise a more effective oversight and to provide ongoing encouragement to the workers. They have accordingly established an Asian Outreach Committee, consisting of two representatives each from the two Boards, along with the Secretary of the IMB on the following basis:

1) The Committee will appoint its own Convener.
2) The Committee will meet as often as necessary, normally in Glasgow.
3) The two parent Boards will delegate powers to exercise the necessary oversight of the workers, including the appointment of advisers with expertise in this area of ministry.
4) Any travel or other expenses would be covered from the budgets of the parent Boards.
5) The Committee will meet regularly with the workers, either singly or together, to discuss with them, listen to their proposals and encourage them in their ministry.
6) The HMB and IMB representatives will report, as required, to their parent Boards.
7) As required by Act of Assembly, the workers will provide an Annual Report to the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll, who will transmit it to the Committee, which will then forward it to their parent Boards. The Annual Report to the General Assembly would be presented through the HMB Report.
8) Glasgow and Argyll Presbytery could meet, if desired, with this Committee, to be informed of all relevant aspects of the Asian Outreach work.

11.1 Annual Report Rev. Duncan Peters and Rev. Colin Macleod report on their ministry in Glasgow. Their work, inevitably sensitive in nature and therefore not to be reported in detail, continues with evidences of encouragement in a number of areas. Although publicity has to be limited, the Board recognises the difficult and costly demands made on the AO workers and commends them to the prayers of the Church.

11.2 The ‘City of Peace’ This meeting grew out of the House group held weekly in the home of one of the Asian Outreach workers. Since December 2010 a time of worship and fellowship attended by over twenty people including a number from non-Christian backgrounds has been held in the premises of the Well Multi-Cultural Advice Centre in Glasgow on every Sunday morning. Its inauguration was not without controversy and its future is still to be determined, but it is hoped that if the experiment shows signs of fruitfulness it may develop into a permanent work. The Board is aware that it marks a shift in the Church’s traditional policy for work in this field and it is proposed in the light of experience to bring proposals for the future of the work to the General Assembly of 2012.

12. Service to Overseas Students Rev. F. H. MacKenzie reports on the variety of activities and meetings in which he and Mrs MacKenzie engage among the overseas students in Glasgow involving links with the University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, Friends International and other organisations. During the year Mrs Fiona Mackay joined the staff of SOS working eight hours a week and assisting with leafleting, visiting, taking part in Bible studies and contacting new students. It is hoped that Mrs Mackay will be able to help with the updating of the website. The Board is grateful to the devoted work done by Mr and Mrs MacKenzie and by Mrs Mackay and commends their labours to the prayers of the Church.

13. Dundee: Pastoral Assistant Mr Bryan Kee has completed his first full year at St Peter’s, Dundee. The Board contributes to Mr Kee’s funding in the light of his commitment to the outreach / church planting work at St Cyrus / Montrose. As the services at St Cyrus have been discontinued the Board awaits the Kirk Session’s Report on their future plans for the work there.

14. Evangelism Support Working Party In March 2010 a publicity leaflet and posters were distributed to all congregations in the Church to encourage more applications for help with outreach activities. An advertisement also appeared in the April issue of The Record. The response was disappointing although this exercise did raise the profile of the role of the Working Party and the fact that there is some support available from central funds for outreach projects. A summary of the projects supported by the Group appears as Appendix Ten to this Report.

The Group is anxious to raise awareness of the assistance available from them. Congregations seeking advice or assistance should contact the Clerk, Mrs Maretta Campbell, Free Church Manse, Gravir, Park, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9QX, telephone: 01851 880283, email address: maretta@blueyonder.co.uk The ESWP Report refers to the resignation of Mrs Michelle Macdonald after five years’ service as representative for the Presbytery of Glasgow and
Argyll and Mr Neil Macdonald as representative for the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross. The Board thanks them for their service and welcomes Mrs Christine Mackenzie who replaces Mrs Macdonald.

15. **Presbytery of the Western Isles**

Last year the Assembly Arrangements Committee suggested that presbyteries might report to the Assembly through the Board on matters taking place within their bounds which they considered of interest to the wider Church. The Board have been informed by the Presbytery of the Western Isles that it has agreed to the appointment of a Presbytery Evangelism Co-ordinator with financial assistance from the Board.

16. **Quinquennial Visitation Schedules**

The new Schedules were introduced for use last summer. More recently the Compliance Schedule was updated and replaced in March 2011 to take into account the new legislation regarding the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme which came into force on 28th February 2011.

Presbyteries are reminded that completion of this Schedule is mandatory in terms of Act XVI, 2010.

17. **Church and Manse Building Fund**

During 2010 awards were made to the following congregations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirkcaldy</td>
<td>£1,490.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawbost</td>
<td>£17,987.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(D) **FINANCE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. **Fundraising**

In seeking to raise awareness of the New Remittance Scheme and its associated fund-raising objectives, last year the Board, in co-operation with the International Missions Board, completed a series of 20 meetings throughout the denomination, where representatives of the two Boards, using a specially prepared PowerPoint presentation, were able to highlight the twelve projects which had been chosen for special fund-raising efforts. Opportunities were given for Deacons’ Courts, members and adherents to ask questions about the new scheme and, on the whole, the response at these meetings was positive and helpful. In addition, both Boards produced two information leaflets about Mission at home and abroad and these were distributed to congregations in the spring and the autumn. Under the new financial arrangements, the two Boards had to raise 30% of their budgets (£150,000 for each Board) by fund-raising. For various reasons, it has been difficult to gauge how effective these fund-raising efforts have been, but it would appear that £295,000 came in for Missions, which is only £5000 short of the required target of £300,000 (£150,000 for each Board). The shortfall was made up from central funds.

For 2011, both Boards are expected to raise 40% of their respective budgets and clearly in an age of economic difficulty, this presents a huge challenge. A new four-page information leaflet outlining the three projects selected by each Board has been distributed to all congregations and a short DVD highlighting these will be available in May for congregational use. The Boards are grateful to Rev. Alex MacDonald for designing the leaflets and to Mr Colin Stone for producing the DVD.

2. **Social Responsibility**

The Board continues to support caring initiatives throughout the denomination through the Social Responsibility Grant Aid Scheme and has given modest financial assistance to Road to Recovery programmes in the Western Isles and the Inverness Lochaber and Ross Presbyteries; the Kirkcaldy Community Project; the Kirkcaldy Area Reachout Trust; and the Western Isles Youth Project.

The Board was also able to respond positively to an application from the Western Isles Presbytery for a three year grant to help support a Presbytery Evangelism Co-ordinator whose remit is to help congregations within the Presbytery engage in evangelistic outreach among adults.

(E) **YOUTH**

As a denomination we are so very thankful for all the children and young people associated with our congregations and for the large number of dedicated volunteers who teach them in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes, those who help in crèches and toddler groups, who run congregational youth clubs and Campaigners, and all who serve as leaders and helpers in our annual Camps programme. Not least we are grateful to our Christian parents who, in an increasingly secular society, bring up our covenant children in the respect, discipline and love of the Lord. How important it is that our children and young people receive teaching from the Scriptures and are provided with Christ-like role models.

1. **Sunday School and Bible Class**

1.1 **Syllabus Revision**

The four-year revision of the syllabus is nearing an end and, following a final editing process, will be fully completed by May 2012. The Board is grateful to Mrs Anne Ferrier, Dr Allan Fraser, Mrs Irene Howat, Mrs Lilian MacDonald, and Miss Helen Sharp for undertaking this work.
1.2 The Awards System: For several years, the annual Exploration has taken up the centre pages of The Instructor over the winter months. This session it was agreed to devote the whole of the September issue to it – this year on the Life of Peter – to see if that would increase the number of children participating. Sunday School Superintendents were also asked to encourage more children and young people to take part. The results of these changes were most productive. There was a significant increase in the number of children who submitted Explorations: Infant – 55 (an increase of 22); Junior – 63 (an increase of 33); and Bible Class – seven (an increase of five), giving an overall increase of 63 on the previous year. It is particularly encouraging to note that children from an additional 16 Sunday Schools participated. The template provided as an option for Bible Class students was used to good effect. The Exploration in 2011 will focus on George Müller. The Board is very grateful to Mrs Irene Howat for the originality and variety she puts in to the design and production of the Exploration.

The Board is grateful to all those who this year so willingly helped in checking and marking worksheets: Miss Sandra Bain, Mrs Janie Currie, Mrs Anne Ferrier, Miss Mary Gillies, Mrs Alison MacPherson, Mrs Robina Miller, Mrs Elizabeth Murchie, Mr Innes MacLeod and Miss Kirsti Paterson. Special thanks go to Mrs Muriel Amey who has helped with marking and collating for several years and who has now decided gracefully to retire! Thanks are also due to Mrs Murdina Skinner and Mrs Mary Macdonald who helped in the production of infant Gaelic worksheets.

2. The Instructor: At this year’s Assembly Mrs Irene Howat will have completed three five-year terms as editor. The Board is very thankful that the church possesses such a willing and able servant and is very grateful to her for the loving, caring and thoughtful way she has gone about her task over the past 15 years. The Board is delighted that Mrs Howat has expressed her willingness to serve for a further five years, although she has indicated her intention to stand down, if re-appointed, at the conclusion of a fourth term.

The monthly circulation of the magazine stands at just over 1,200 and this includes 38 individual subscriptions. Six people contribute articles and artwork on a regular basis, some of them providing material as much as a year in advance.

In 2010, the Youth Project, which is administered through The Instructor, raised £5,582 for the work of London City Mission in Greenwich. Over the last 14 years Youth Projects have raised the magnificent sum of £128,833 for missionary work in India, Kenya, Peru, Cambodia, Southern Africa, Moscow, Uganda, Tearfund’s relief work and now London. The sum raised in 2010 was about £2,500 less than the previous two years. In 2011, the Youth Project will raise funds to help Christian Witness to Israel produce a Hebrew translation of the Old Testament for children.

Membership of Friends of The Instructor stands at over 70 and the Editor is most grateful to them for their prayerful and financial support. Miss Anna Macdonald, Edinburgh, administers Friends of The Instructor.

3. Youth Camps: Camps Supervisor’s Report - a Year in the Life of Camps

In June 2010 Laura MacLeod moved from the BBC to start work as our new Camps Administrator, replacing Mhairi Mackintosh who had moved on after seven years in post. It was then a very busy time for camps with the summer programme about to begin; Laura had excellent assistance from Andrew Fraser who had taken on the task of temporary Administrator from the beginning of May. During July over 300 campers were bussed to 11 camps in various locations throughout the country. Laura and the Camps Supervisor visited some of these and found highly motivated leadership teams overseeing enthusiastic groups of young people in a whole variety of wonderful activities. During August and September reports were compiled and meetings held to discuss the way forward. It was encouraging to hear about the enthusiasm our young people have – not just for physical activities but also for discussing the Christian faith. For some – as so often before – it was at camp they came to faith for the first time and for this we are profoundly thankful to God.

Then in October it was the Big Free Rally – in 2010 held in Culduthel Christian Centre and in 2011 due to be held in the newly refurbished and extended Smithton Free Church building. November was the month for a Camps Anniversary Reunion – held in Inverness and enjoyed by the great many ‘older’ campers who came to tell their stories of long ago. During these months work was progressing on the Camps Brochure for 2011 and in December this was finalised and sent to the printers. January is always bookings month; this year was typically hectic with Laura handling over 350 bookings in a matter of a few days. That is of course a good sign as it meant most of the available spaces being taken up.
In February and March work was done on updating forms for leaders and cooks, looking ahead with Susan Maclean to the Big Free Rally of 2011 and rearranging facilities for the football camps. Attention has also been given to training needs for leaders and cooks. April marks the start of the camps programme with the first camp taking place in Scaladale, Harris – a Gaelic camp led by Rev. Ruairidh MacLean. It also is the month when Camps Administrator Laura enters an entirely new phase in her personal life as she marries fiancé Daniel MacAulay. The Board wishes them God’s blessing for their future together. By May the Camps Administrator, team leaders, Bookshop Manager and others will be busy finalising programmes, ordering resources and tying up transport arrangements and payments.

Throughout the year tea towels and DVDs have been sold in many congregations; also 150 ‘hoodies’ of varying sizes and colours are no doubt terrorising shopping centres the length and breadth of the country. What to do next? is the puzzle; answers please …! There are plans to hold training days for leaders and thoughts are being given to further fundraising to help with the development of the work. Much thankfulness should be expressed to those who make the work of camps possible: parents who encourage and fund their children’s attendance; churches that do the same and also support both with prayer and finance; leaders all of whom willingly give up time to ensure that camps are run – and run well; volunteers and support staff in many locations doing many different things; enthusiastic campers who come and without whom there would be no camp! Above all we give thanks to God for so graciously providing everything and for his goodness and faithfulness over many years. May we continue to be faithful with what we have been given and may God continue to bless the work of Free Church camps in the future.

Colin Morison, Camps Supervisor

4. Youth Workers

4.1 Conference for Youth Workers The Board is grateful for those who within the denomination are involved in youth leadership roles. The Board is planning a one-day conference in Inverness in the autumn for all youth workers operating within the Free Church, to provide an opportunity for mutual encouragement, training and the sharing of ideas and experiences.

4.2 Training for Youth Workers The Board has investigated the range of training courses accessible to Christian youth workers in Scotland and has concluded that a modified version of the Free Church College module devised by Professor Donald M. MacDonald offers the most appropriate possibilities for youth workers in Free Church congregations. This could be offered as a distance learning course using a combination of Moodle (open source version of WebCT), video-conferencing and several day conferences. In general the aim would be to provide appropriate training content that takes account of current needs, the scattered nature of the youth workers, and the benefits of developing a course that can be repeated using the model of personal, individual, directed study (rather than collegiate study), yet providing a forum in which trainee youth workers can benefit both from their instructors and their peers. It is hoped that firm proposals will be available before the end of the year.

5. Youth Conference This year’s Youth Conference was attended in March by 90 young people from all over Scotland! Rev. Kenny Macleod, Carloway Free Church, gave a four-part series on the life of Joseph. His message was challenging, and brought to life many similarities between Joseph and Christ. Various seminars were held outwith these talks, covering topics such as Guidance, Discipline, Relationships, God’s Promises and even a bit of John Calvin! These were well attended and stimulated interesting discussion. Derek and Catriona Lamont were houseparents and made a huge effort in getting alongside all the young people. Their contribution was vital, and their presence warmly received by all, Derek even stepping in to take a seminar on “Suffering”. The Conference served its purpose in teaching about Jesus Christ, and the unity and love between the young people from various parts of Scotland was evident for all to see. The Spirit dwelt there at Lendrick Muir all weekend, of this I am certain. Praise be to God for allowing such a blessed weekend at what many would call a difficult time!

Stephen Campbell, Youth Conference Committee Member

6. Education The Board is grateful to Dr Graham Keith for the watchful brief he keeps on developments in Scottish education. He regularly reports on conferences and seminars on Religious Education he attends and has helped the Board to submit observations on Religious Education and Religious Observance to the Scottish Government.

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

Development Officer’s Report

Contemporary Scotland provides the Church with a huge challenge. Only 8% of Scots attend church regularly. Most people seem indifferent or resistant to the gospel. In order to see the gospel make a growing impact on our nation we need to equip our congregations for mission. The role of the Mission Development Officer is to help congregations to grow and multiply for the glory of God.

The work of Mission Development is hugely enjoyable. I get to work with a wide range of ministers, elders and congregations in a variety of different contexts. I have been privileged to travel to a number of useful conferences and training events. I am able to benefit from contact with some very experienced church planters and leaders. I hope that this input will allow me to serve local congregations and the denomination more effectively.

My post continues for another year (until June 2012). It is my hope that by this time I will have established programmes that will allow the Church to go on equipping and supporting ministers and congregations in mission over the longer term.

1. **Redevelopment and Church Extension Charges**
   I try to maintain contact with all of these situations but have the greatest amount of contact where I have a coaching relationship with the minister. All of these charges face challenges as they work to establish a foundation for long term growth but most of them are making progress despite setbacks and frustrations. I received further training for coaching church planters in January 2011 and the Home Mission Board hopes to train a number of other ministers to coach. Coaching is proving to be a very useful tool.

2. **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.’ I am currently working with Buccleuch and Greyfriars in Edinburgh, and the Oban and Portree congregations. I intend to widen the process further by producing a ‘Hub’ handbook and training trainers to lead the process in other congregations.

3. **Church Planting**
   The Home Missions Board has a remit to develop new methods of church planting. I am working to develop a method that uses small groups as a basis for initiating new church plants from existing congregations.

   Progress on this is slow but St Columba’s Free Church in Edinburgh has begun to develop its small groups in this way and it is hoped other congregations will join later this year. The focus remains on city centre congregations in our larger cities. Training opportunities are being put together for this purpose.

4. **Training**

   4.1 **Free Church College**
   I continue to teach a six-week module on Evangelism and Mission for the Free Church College.

   4.2 **Porterbrook Distance Learning**
   This has been running since September 2010. We began with about 30 students from a number of congregations. The course is intended to equip Christians for mission. The course is proving to be both popular and very helpful and I hope to expand it to other locations. I am currently exploring opportunities to establish a training course for church planters and part-time theological study for those with an interest in mission and ministry. The Free Church College has been very helpful in this regard.

   NEIL MACMILLAN, Development Officer

APPENDIX TWO

Code of Conduct relating to Quinquennial Buildings Certificates

1. This Code of Conduct is a policy paper of the Home Missions Board setting out how the Board intends to meet its responsibility under Church legislation for Quinquennial Buildings Certificates.

2. The Board’s motivation is that all congregations should exercise a high standard of oversight of the fabric of their buildings.
3. Act XXXI, 1988 states that at each quinquennial visitation a Buildings Certificate has to be prepared by “a qualified person” and a Buildings Return by the Deacons’ Court. Subsequently presbytery “shall transmit a copy of the Buildings Return to the Clerk to the Buildings Committee, with their comments thereon.” The Home Missions Board has inherited the responsibilities of the Buildings Committee.

4. In order to fulfil its function the Board will ask presbyteries to report when a quinquennial visitation is held and to send the Buildings Certificate with the Return and comments.

5. The Board will maintain records including:
   a) date of all quinquennial visitations;
   b) confirmation of the receipt of Buildings Return, presbytery comments on the Return and Buildings Certificate;
   c) statement indicating that documents have been examined and found in order (see 7 below), or action taken to correct deficiencies, giving the name of the person who has checked documents and date.

6. Presbyteries and Deacons’ Courts will be reminded regularly about their responsibilities relative to buildings certificates.

7. The Board will:
   a) check that a Buildings Return and a Buildings Certificate are prepared at every quinquennial visitation, and that the Presbytery comments on the Return, and that all documents (including comments) are supplied to the Board;
   b) check that each certificate has sufficient content, including whether work is required and if so that it is listed to facilitate attention;
   c) examine all papers to ensure that the requirements of Act XXXI, 1988, have been considered appropriately;
   d) obtain if necessary from each Deacons’ Court confirmation that the Court has seen the Certificate and that urgent work required is subject to a plan;
   e) if appropriate ask the presbytery to give further consideration to relevant matters;
   f) monitor all reports to ensure that urgent work is attended to;
   g) identify situations where no action being taken, or able to be taken, obtain more information and work with the courts or finance committees to find a solution.

8. The Board will maintain a list of suitably qualified persons understood to be willing to prepare certificates to the standard required by the Church at restricted cost or on a voluntary basis. Presbyteries will be encouraged to access the list and also to provide information that may lead to the inclusion of additional names.

9. The qualification appropriate for the completion of a Buildings Certificate is not formally defined and is largely a matter of common sense. The ideal is a qualified surveyor or architect who is not directly involved in the congregation and so can carry out a competent survey with a high degree of independence. Not acceptable to the Board is an office-bearer of the congregation who has no building experience. The person has to have experience or qualification appropriate to the size and complexity of the buildings and be able to demonstrate independence, either by virtue of professional training or not being directly associated with the congregation.

10. The Buildings Certificate should cover the following areas:
   a) whether the building complies with disability access expectations;
   b) whether the building is in a good state of repair;
   c) what work is required to bring the building up to a good standard;
   d) if the needs are considerable, a programme of work sufficient to bring the building up to a good standard;

   It is not expected that a survey should involve gaining access to difficult to reach areas but comment on the limitations of a survey should be built in to its wording. If the surveyor considers that further investigation on a particular matter is desirable that should be stated. If professional indemnity is excluded from the work, perhaps because of a restricted fee, this should be stated. This Code should be made available to the surveyor before work commences. The nature of survey work proposed and the financial arrangements (amount of fee and the extent of any restriction, or no fee, and rates of expenses) should be clarified before a visit.

11. The Board’s intention is that the administration of this Code should be undertaken by a person other than the Board Clerk, on a five-year appointment or by the Church Offices. Some of the work is not routine (eg 7.7) and
would require the involvement of a senior person who had the confidence of those affected. A person appointed by the Board would work under the direction of the Board, with the Clerk to the Board filling the role of line manager. Offices involvement may require a separate paper setting out expectations, relationships, etc.

12. This Code is subject to review and change by the Board.

13. This Code was approved by the Board on 2nd March 2011.

APPENDIX THREE

Petition: Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: Assistantship for Glasgow: Dowanvale

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Free Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the congregation of Dowanvale has not been able to secure the services of an Assistant Minister within the timescale agreed;

2. Whereas the congregation has grown considerably since establishment in 2000;

3. Whereas the congregation has distributed the following sums to central funds over the last three years: £112,000; £130,000; £118,500 in 2008, 2009, 2010 respectively, which contributions are vastly in excess of the sum required to qualify for the services of an Assistant Minister as outlined in Act IX Class 2, 2007, Para 2;

4. Whereas the union with Paisley is now established;

5. Whereas there is suitable accommodation available for an Assistant Minister;

6. Whereas the congregation is becoming increasingly involved in a number of new initiatives in the community;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration and authorise the appointment of an Assistant Minister for Dowanvale Free Church in terms of Act IX 2007.

Or do as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX FOUR

Petition: Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: Assistantship for Inverness: Greyfriars-Stratherrick

Unto the Venerable General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross humbly sheweth that:

1. Whereas the congregation of Greyfriars-Stratherrick was consolidated in 2005;

2. Whereas the consolidated congregation covers the two preaching sites of Stratherrick-Greyfriars, Inverness;

3. Whereas there has been significant development in the Castle Heather area of Inverness in recent years;

4. Whereas the joint congregation is large and pastorally demanding;

5. Whereas the congregation of Greyfriars-Stratherrick has had an assistant minister in previous years;

6. Whereas the requirements of Act IX, 2007, have been met by the congregation;

Wherefore may it please your Venerable Court to approve the appointment of an assistant minister to the consolidated charge of Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church in terms of Act IX, 2007.
Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may see fit.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX FIVE

Petition: Presbytery of the Western Isles: Assistantship for Stornoway

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday the 23rd day of May 2011, the petition of the Presbytery of the Western Isles shows that;

1. Whereas the demands of the pastorate in Stornoway greatly exceed what can be undertaken by one minister;
2. Whereas the congregation was given permission by the General Assembly in 1989, 1991 and again in 1998, under the terms of Act V, 1986, to have an Assistant Minister appointed by the Presbytery;
3. Whereas the Rev. Kenneth I. Macleod was inducted as Assistant Minister to the congregation on 8th September 1999;
4. Whereas the Kirk Session and congregation, with the support of the Presbytery, wish to extend Rev. K. I. Macleod's appointment beyond the six years already served;
5. Whereas in accordance with Act IX, 2007, the permission of the General Assembly must be sought for the extension of an Assistant's appointment beyond six years’ service;
6. Whereas the conditions of Section 2, of the said Act are met by the congregation and,
7. Whereas the congregation is prepared to meet all expenses and provide accommodation, as stated in the Sustentation Schedule submitted to the Committee, in terms of Section 4 of the said Act;

Wherefore, it is humbly requested that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration and grant the congregation of Stornoway permission to extend the appointment of Rev. Kenneth I. Macleod as Assistant Minister at Stornoway for a further three years under Act IX, 2007, renewable in terms of Section 8 of the said Act;

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may deem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX SIX

Petition: Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross: Redevelopment Status: Gairloch and Kinlochewe

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; and granted an extension of that status at the Commission of Assembly in October 2009, in accordance with Act XXXIV, 1988;
2. Whereas the reasons supporting the petition of the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross to the General Assembly of 2007 and the Commission of Assembly of 2009 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 an extension to Redevelopment Status ends in May 2011, 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 are increased numbers of office bearers; (g) there is now a ‘package of support’ in place for a potential new ministry;
Wherefore it is humbly requested the General 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 deem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX SEVEN

Petition: Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: East Kilbride

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Free Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll humbly shows that:

1. Whereas a sub-committee from Presbytery met with the Kirk Session, Deacons’ Court and congregation on 14th September 2010;

2. Whereas a sub-committee from the Home Missions Board met with the Kirk Session and congregation on 13th October 2010;

3. Whereas East Kilbride with 90,000 residents is the largest urban town in Scotland and further expansion is ongoing;

4. Whereas the congregation is active in evangelism having run Christianity Explored Courses and use their building as a drop-in centre every Wednesday;

5. Whereas the congregation has exceeded its requested targets annually since last review;

6. Whereas the congregation and the Presbytery’s Strategy Committee have met with and initiated further discussions for a possible union with the Greenock congregation;

7. Whereas the Presbytery and the Home Missions Board noted the willingness of the congregation to consider Team Ministry in the future;

Wherefore the Petition of the Free Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll humbly requests, that in light of aforementioned premises, the General Assembly grant the congregation of East Kilbride continuance on Special Arrangements for a further five years in terms of Act XVIII, 1998, Section 5.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX EIGHT

Petition: Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet at Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll humbly shows that:

1. Whereas by Act XIII, 2009, the congregation of Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside was continued on the Equal Dividend Platform under Special Arrangements for a period of two years, to be reviewed by the General Assembly of May 2011;

2. Whereas the said Act also instructed the Home Missions Board in consultation with the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll to give further consideration to the most appropriate ministerial arrangements for Argyll and report to the General Assembly 2011;

3. Whereas the Presbytery is of the view that such ministerial arrangements would best be provided by team ministry and the Home Missions Board have indicated its agreement in principle;
4. Whereas legislation facilitating team ministries has not yet been passed by the General Assembly;

5. Whereas the area to be covered by the proposed team ministry is so widespread and is made up of a number of small congregations at a distance from one another so that the preparation of a team ministry plan is a complicated exercise and will take time to complete;

6. Whereas it is desirable that the Argyll area be served in the meantime by at least two ministers;

Wherefore may it please your Venerable Court to continue the congregation of Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside on the Equal Dividend under Special Arrangements on condition that they remit a sum equivalent to 85% of the stipend, under the ministry of Rev. Donald Morrison, for a period of three years to be reviewed by the General Assembly of 2014, or until the creation of team ministry arrangements incorporating the congregation of Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside, whichever is earlier.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX NINE

Petition: Northern Presbytery: Team Ministry

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011, the Petition of the Northern Presbytery shows that:

1. Whereas at present there are two ministers and a Resident Lay Preacher covering ministry in eight different locations in Caithness and part of Sutherland;

2. Whereas in the present situation many of these congregations are struggling spiritually, numerically and financially;

3. Whereas under the terms of Act I, 2009, Presbytery has carried out a Review and Audit of the congregation of Olrig, Watten and Bower, the finding of Presbytery being that the congregation by itself is not financially or numerically viable;

4. Whereas it is the vision and determination of the Northern Presbytery to develop ministry and not to remove it from places which are struggling spiritually, numerically and financially;

5. Whereas in harmony with the spirit of team ministry the congregations of Thurso and Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale propose to unite and become one congregation with the permission of the General Assembly;

6. Whereas the Home Missions Board supports the application from the Northern Presbytery for the implementation of a team ministry plan and is satisfied that all documentation has been completed in terms of relevant legislation;

Wherefore the Northern Presbytery humbly request that the General Assembly take these premises into consideration and ordain that:

a) a team ministry be created for the congregations of Helmsdale and Kinbrace, Lybster, Bruan, Latheron and Berriedale, Olrig, Watten and Bower, Thurso and Reay, Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale, and Wick and Keiss;

b) the team ministry shall comprise of three full-time ministers and one 80% post;

c) the ministerial arrangements for the congregation of Olrig, Watten and Bower, presently under review in terms of Act IX, 2010, shall be met by this arrangement;

d) the work carried out by each member of the team will follow the job descriptions in the Team Ministry Plan;

e) the Home Missions Board, is authorized to provide such finance as may be necessary to support the proposed team up to the level of one stipend;

f) a team ministry council be appointed with the responsibility of overseeing the plan;

g) the Convener of the Northern Presbytery Strategy Committee will be the Chairman of the Council;

h) this plan will take effect from a date to be jointly agreed by the Northern Presbytery and the Home Missions Board;
Or do otherwise in their wisdom as they deem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

APPENDIX TEN

Evangelism Support Working Party: Projects 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Numbers attending</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dornoch</td>
<td>29th March – 3rd April</td>
<td>Easter Holiday Club</td>
<td>£765</td>
<td>40 Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>20th – 27th June</td>
<td>Outreach at local Festival</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Not known</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shawbost</td>
<td>From 4th July ongoing</td>
<td>Evangelism and Outreach</td>
<td>£365</td>
<td>Not known</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brora</td>
<td>12th – 18th July</td>
<td>Beach Mission</td>
<td>£95</td>
<td>25 at Children’s event 80 at Gospel concert 50 at Family Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosskeen</td>
<td>26th – 30th July</td>
<td>Children’s Holiday Club</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>27 children 57 at BBQ and Family Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tongue Sunday School</td>
<td>9th – 11th August</td>
<td>SS Camp, South Uist</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>24 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arran</td>
<td>9th – 13th August</td>
<td>SU Holiday Club</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>23 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cumbernauld</td>
<td>December 2010</td>
<td>Christmas Outreach Project</td>
<td>£385</td>
<td>Not known</td>
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Total Expenditure on projects January to December 2010 = £3,210

APPENDIX ELEVEN

Grants and Loans: Church Extension

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<th>Loan</th>
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<th>Interest</th>
<th>HMB Grant</th>
<th>Repayments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Coatbridge</td>
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<td>Falkirk Church</td>
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<td>Falkirk Manse</td>
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<td>Dunblane</td>
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<td>Cobham</td>
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<td></td>
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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) CHAIRMAN

1. The General Assembly note that Rev. Alex J. MacDonald has intimated his resignation from the Chairmanship and membership of the Board and thank him for his faithful service during the first formative years of the Board’s existence.

(B) ASSEMBLY REMITS

1. 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:

1.1 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.

1.2 The Presbytery

1.2.1 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.

1.2.2 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 will be limited by the combined annual remittances of the congregations included in the Plan and the annual direct cost of ministry.

1.2.3 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.

1.2.4 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.

1.2.5 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.

1.2.6 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.

1.2.7 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.

1.2.8 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.

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

1.3 Home Missions Board

1.3.1 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.

1.3.2 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 fulfill the objectives of the Plan.

1.3.3 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.

1.3.4 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.

1.3.5 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.
1.3.6 The Board shall be fully satisfied with the financial and practical arrangements of the Team Ministry Plan before agreeing to support the Plan.

1.3.7 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.

1.4 Implementation of the Team Ministry Plan

1.4.1 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.

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

1.4.3 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.

1.4.4 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.

1.4.5 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.

1.4.6 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.

1.4.7 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.

1.4.8 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.

1.4.9 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.

1.5 Review

1.5.1 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.

1.5.2 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.
1.5.3 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.

1.5.4 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.

1.5.5 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.

1.5.6 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.

2. The General Assembly note that (1) the current level of support required to support ministries in the centrally-supported categories in 2010 was £259,284 with a budgeted figure of £232,849 for 2011; (2) the savings made through adjustments and progress in existing ministries was £107,997 in 2009 – 2010 with a budgeted figure of £26,435 for 2010-1; (3) the clearly identifiable income from fund-raising in 2010 was £49,244. The General Assembly instruct the Board to continue to monitor all ministries in this category during its annual budgetary review in accordance with Act XV, 2010.

3. The General Assembly note the progress that has been made towards the preparation of a Strategy Plan for the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll and thank the Presbytery for its efforts. They note that that the Board continues to liaise with the Presbytery through the Rev. Angus J. Howat. They instruct the Presbytery to continue to report their progress to the Board regularly.

4. The General Assembly note that the Board with members of the Strategy Committee of the Board of Trustees continue to consult 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 note the developments that have taken place during the last year. The General Assembly instruct the Presbytery to continue negotiations to bring about workable ministerial arrangements for East Sutherland and report their progress through the Board to next General Assembly.

5. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Northern Presbytery and, noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board, grant its crave to the extent that in the event of the General Assembly approving the creation of Team Ministries, they ordain that:

a) a team ministry be created for the congregations of Helmsdale and Kinbrace, Lybster, Bruan, Latheron and Berriedale, Olrig, Watten and Bower, Thurso and Reay, Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale, and Wick and Keiss;
b) the team ministry shall comprise of three full-time ministers and one 80% post;
c) the ministerial arrangements for the congregation of Olrig, Watten and Bower, presently under review in terms of Act IX, 2010, shall be met by this arrangement;
d) the work carried out by each member of the team will follow the job descriptions in the Team Ministry Plan;
e) the Home Missions Board, is authorised to provide such finance as may be necessary to support the proposed team up to the level of one stipend;
f) a team ministry council be appointed with the responsibility of overseeing the plan;
g) the Convener of the Northern Presbytery Strategy Committee will be the Chairman of the Council;
h) this plan will take effect from a date to be jointly agreed by the Northern Presbytery and the Home Missions Board.

6. The General Assembly note with approval the progress that has been made with the development of the pilot church plant from the congregation of St Columba’s, Edinburgh, and the proposal to extend this venture to other
centre city congregations in the near future. They instruct the Board to report on the progress of these plants with further proposals to next General Assembly.

7. The General Assembly approve the Code of Conduct relating to Quinquennial Buildings Certificates and instruct the Board to implement it as soon as possible. They thank Mr Iain Gill for his assistance in preparing the Code.

(C) CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

1. The General Assembly declare a stipend of £20,500 from 1st January 2011, 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 thank Rev. Neil MacMillan, Development Officer, for his Report and for his diligent and varied work on behalf of the Board. They note the continued development of Hub congregations strengthening local congregations in the work of mission and evangelism and commend this project to the prayers of the Church.

3. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: Dowanvale, and noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board, grant its crave. They renew permission for the congregation of Dowanvale to appoint an Assistant Minister in accordance with the terms of Act IX, 2007, such permission to lapse at the General Assembly of 2013.

4. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: Greyfriars-Stratherrick. Noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board, and waiving the requirement of Act IX, 2007, § 2, that such applications shall only be considered from congregations which contribute to central funds an amount not less than three times the Stipend, they grant its crave. They approve the appointment of an Assistant Minister to the charge of Inverness: Greyfriars-Stratherrick in accordance with the terms of the said Act, such permission to lapse at the General Assembly of 2011, on condition that the congregation contributes 300% of the stipend.

5. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of the Western Isles. Noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board, and waiving the irregularity in the procedure followed in that the congregational meeting at Stornoway which approved the Schedule and the Petition had not been called after notice on two previous Sabbaths, they grant its crave. They approve the renewal of the appointment of Rev. Kenneth I. Macleod as Assistant Minister of the Stornoway Free Church in terms of Act IX, 2007.

6. 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 call on the Church to continue in prayerful support of the work in these congregations.

7. The General Assembly note the continuing vacancy in the Church Extension charge of South Uist and Benbecula and commend the congregation to the prayers of the Church.

8. 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 (Glenuig and Fort Augustus) for their faithful labours and entrust them and their congregations to the prayers of the Church.


10. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: East Kilbride, and grant its crave to the extent that they continue the congregation of East Kilbride on the Equal Dividend Platform under Special Arrangements for one year on condition that the congregation remit a sum equivalent to 85% of the stipend. They further instruct the Board through its Executive, with Rev. Neil MacMillan, to meet with the Presbytery or its Strategy Committee in order to assist them formulate proposals for the future of the congregation for the General Assembly for 2012.
11. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll: Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside, and grant its crave to the extent that they continue the congregation of Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside on the Equal Dividend Platform under Special Arrangements for two years on condition that the congregation remit a sum equivalent to 85% of the stipend or until the creation of a team ministry incorporating this congregation, whichever is earlier. They further instruct the Board through its Executive, with Rev. Neil MacMillan, to meet with the Presbytery or its Strategy Committee in order to assist them formulate proposals for the future of the congregation for the General Assembly for 2012.

12. The General Assembly note the continuing vacancy in the charge of Dumfries and commend the congregation to the prayers of the Church.

13. The General Assembly give thanks for the dedicated ministry of Rev. Duncan Peters and Rev. Colin Macleod and all involved in Asian Outreach. They commend this work to the support and prayers of the Church.

14. The General Assembly note with approval the formation of a Joint Asian Ministry Sub-Committee.

15. The General Assembly note that a multi-cultural service has been held in Glasgow every Sunday since December 2011. They instruct the Board in consultation with the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll to bring proposals for the future of this work and any necessary amendments to the existing legislation to the General Assembly of 2012.

16. The General Assembly note with appreciation the work done by Rev. Finlay H. and Mrs Mackenzie and Mrs Fiona Mackay in the work among overseas students in its various aspects and commend their work to the prayers of the Church. They also commend the SOS website to the attention of all who are interested in this work of mission.

17. The General Assembly thank Mr James Morrison for his devoted labours in small congregation of Lybster and commend him to the prayers of the Church.

18. The General Assembly thank Mr Bryan Kee for his services to Dundee Free Church. They instruct the Kirk Session of Dundee to report on their future plans for the work in St Cyrus / Montrose through the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth to the Board.

19. 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. They instruct the Working Party to consider ways in which evangelistic projects might be stimulated.

20. The General Assembly note that the Presbytery of the Western Isles has agreed to the appointment of a Presbytery Evangelism Co-ordinator with financial assistance from the Board and the commend the person appointed to the prayers of the Church.

21. The General Assembly note that new Schedules for use at Quinquennial Visitations were introduced last summer and that since that time the Compliance Schedule has been updated and replaced to take into account the new legislation regarding the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme which came into force on 28th February 2011. The General Assembly remind Presbyteries of the requirement to complete this Schedule in terms of Act XVI, 2010.

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

(D) FINANCE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. The General Assembly thank the Home Missions Board along with the International Missions Board for undertaking a nationwide programme to raise awareness of the New Remittance Scheme, especially as it relates to fund-raising for the identified projects of the two Boards, and for the apparent success of these efforts. The General Assembly note the challenge which faces the two Boards in seeking to raise 40% of their respective budgets in 2011 and commend their efforts to the prayers and sacrificial giving of the Church.

2. The General Assembly note with gratitude the various caring and youth initiatives being undertaken within the denomination and commend them and their workers to the prayers of the Church.
1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Supplementary Report of the Home Missions Board.

2. The General Assembly note with gratitude the progress being made with the revision of the Sunday School syllabus and thank Mrs Anne Ferrier, Dr Allan Fraser, Mrs Irene Howat, Mrs Lilian MacDonald, and Miss Helen Sharp for their work. They commend the syllabus to Kirk Sessions and Sunday School staff.

3. The General Assembly congratulate all those who have gained awards and certificates and who have completed Explorations. They thank all the teachers and parents for their work in our Sunday Schools and Bible Classes and in our homes. They are gratified by the increase in the number of children who participated in the Awards scheme.

4. The General Assembly thank all those who prepared worksheets and marked and collated Explorations: Mrs Muriel Amey, Miss Sandra Bain, Mrs Janie Currie, Mrs Anne Ferrier, Miss Mary Gillies, Mrs Mary Macdonald, Mrs Alison MacPherson, Mrs Robina Miller, Mrs Elizabeth Murchie, Mr Innes MacLeod, Miss Kirsti Paterson and Mrs Murdina Skinner; and Mrs Irene Howat for co-ordinating the whole Awards system.

5. The General Assembly acknowledge with gratitude the work done as a marker by Mrs Muriel Amey and wish her well as she steps down after many years of willing service.

6. The General Assembly thank the Office staff, especially Mrs Sharon Fraser, who are responsible for the processing and distribution of materials relating to the syllabus.

7. The General Assembly acknowledge with much thankfulness the debt the church owes to Mrs Irene Howat for her work as Editor of The Instructor over the past 15 years. The General Assembly appoint Mrs Irene Howat as Editor of The Instructor for a further term of five years in accordance with the terms of Act XVIII, 1996.

8. The General Assembly thank the children, young people and parents for their generosity in contributing so generously to the work of the London City Mission as part of last year’s Youth Project.

9. The General Assembly thank the Camps Supervisor, Rev. Colin Morison, and all who serve on the Camps Working Group along with the Offices staff who help with the Camps administration. They especially thank Miss Laura MacLeod, for the way in which she has so efficiently and enthusiastically risen to the challenge of her appointment last June as Camps Administrator, following the resignation of Miss Mhairi Macintosh, and commend her to the prayers of the Church. They also thank Mr Andrew Fraser for his help as interim Administrator before Miss MacLeod took up her appointment. They also thank all leaders, cooks and others who have helped in any way to promote the work of camps. They urge Presbyteries and congregations to be active in promoting the work of the camps and commend the 2011 programme to the prayers of the Church. They thank Deacons’ Courts and individuals who have contributed to sponsorship for campers and leaders and encourage others to consider this form of help.

10. The General Assembly give thanks for all that our youth workers do in influencing our children and young people for good and commend them to the prayers of the Church. They commend the Board’s plans to hold a conference for youth workers and to arrange for the provision of a module on youth worker training.

11. The General Assembly thank the Youth Conference Committee, especially the Convener, Mr Craig Nicholson, for arranging this year’s Conference and commend the new Committee to the prayers of the Church.

12. The General Assembly thank Dr Graham Keith for representing the Church on the Scottish Joint Board for Religious and Moral Education and for keeping the Home Mission Board informed of developments in RME and other educational issues which are of interest and concern to the wider 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 third year of existence, met four times since the 2010 Assembly. 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 recommended to the Finance Sub-Committee in March 2010 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. At the Commission of Assembly on 6th October 2010 the Board of Trustees were supportive of the aspiration of the Personnel Committee to implement a programme of annual increases aimed at bringing the level of stipend up to a more acceptable level. However, in order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2011, the Board proposed that an increase of £1,000 be implemented from 1st January 2011 bringing the level of stipend to £20,500 and this was agreed.

The Committee remains of the view that, 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. It is proposed, therefore, that this should be achieved, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st January, 2012</td>
<td>£22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st January, 2013</td>
<td>£23,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further work is planned to Review underlying assumptions and calculations, particularly as the proposed measure for a long term target, namely the top of the scale for an unpromoted teacher in Scotland, is examined. It is realised that financial constraints are affecting many and that affordability remains a major issue. However, the Personnel Committee must recommend what is considered equitable, given that the stipend level is currently at a low base level.


The arrangements for the foregoing were revised at the 2010 General Assembly. It is proposed to review the working of these regulations in the coming year, and the Committee will welcome any comments.

Following the replacement by the government of the Sick Note with the Fit Note, an information document has been prepared for Presbyteries and their Pastoral Committees.
3. **Ministers’ Expenses** The Committee reviewed the existing legislation relating to Ministers’ Expenses (Act X V, 1983) and Ministers’ Car Expenses (Act XXIII, 2005 and Act X, 2008), in order to reflect the current practice.

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

4. **Regulations relating to Retirement and Resignation of Ministers and 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.” In the light of the fact that the existing legislation (Act XIX, 2004) refers back to a number of earlier Acts, it has been decided to review some six Acts extending over the last 30 years, making adjustments as appropriate, with the aim of encompassing the arrangements into one document. A first draft has been reviewed already, and the Committee wish to record their thanks for the advice of Rev. Angus Howat.

5. **Regulations relating to Probationers** In reviewing the legislation noted in paragraph 4, it was considered appropriate to review additionally the legislation relating to Probationers enacted prior to 1990. A draft will be forwarded for review to the Board of Ministry, to seek any comments in relation to the complementary legislation of Act XLVI, 2008 anent Probationary Placements.

6. **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. This document has been reviewed substantially, but its re-issue is being delayed until the work noted in the previous paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 is completed. It is planned to issue a revised document, following consultation with the Home Missions Board.

7. **Ministers’ Starter Pack** A Ministers’ Starter Pack is made available to new ministers. It is intended that in future, rather than circulating to ministers a lot of material, the information will be made available on the web site or, where more appropriate, a schedule of topics will indicate what is available on request.

8. **Manses and long term accommodation needs** At the 2010 Assembly, the Personnel Committee reported the results of an anonymous survey of ministers to assess the extent of personal concern over housing provision for their own retirement or for their family in the event of their death. There was an encouraging response rate of 82%. Amongst the conclusions drawn from the survey, the most significant was:

   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.

Currently, each minister has life assurance provision of three times’ stipend; it is the view of the Finance Subcommittee that any increase to this provision may have tax implications. The Personnel Committee is exploring whether it is possible to provide housing for ministers and/or their families in the event of unforeseen circumstances. A draft Policy Document has been prepared which contains practical options; following further revision the proposed Policy will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

**(B) WORKING CONDITIONS OF STAFF**

*Progress* The Committee has reviewed employment policies with the Chief Administrative Officer. The Committee has agreed to review employment procedures and policies annually, to ensure that they are kept up to date.

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

**(C) PENSION ARRANGEMENTS**

*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 previous years, namely:

It remains the view of the Committee that the current employer’s contribution of 10% is inadequate, on its own, 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 so that ministers have an increasing financial ability to make their own additional contributions to their Pension Scheme through “salary sacrifice”.

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

The Finance Sub-Committee accepted the Committee’s recommendation that, where “salary sacrifice” is exercised, the “employer’s” contribution saved will be added to the additional pension contribution.

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; it is considered that the issue of managing any presbytery staff may be a matter to address. No work has been undertaken to date.

(E) PASTORAL SUPPORT MECHANISM

A forum for development of meaningful pastoral support mechanisms It was reported at the 2010 Assembly that 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 will consider asking Presbyteries in the coming year whether any action has been taken.

(F) CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

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

   Deaths
   Rev. Angus Macleod  formerly of Point  18th March 2010

   Retirements
   Rev. Ian M. Allan  Bracadale  8th August 2010
   Rev. Andrew M. Fraser  Assynt and Eddrachillis  27th August 2010
   Rev. Ronald F. Morrison  Tain and Fearn  1st September 2010
   Rev. Douglas MacKeddie  Maryburgh and Killearnan  12th September 2010

   Resignations
   None

   Translations
   Rev. Calum I. Macleod  from Barvas to Back  10th August 2010

   Inductions
   Rev. Neil MacMillan  Development Officer, Home Missions Board  18th August 2010

2. Register of Ministers without charge available for call
   None

3. Register of Probationers
   Dr James Eglinton  37(1F2) Stewart Terrace, Edinburgh  
   Licensed by Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth 26th June 2007
   Mr William Paterson  Blue Waters, GowanBank Place, Hilton, Fearn  
   Licensed by Northern Presbytery 2nd July 2010
(G) CONSULTATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The International Missions Board provided to the Personnel Committee a draft Revision of their Regulations for Missionaries; this is being reviewed currently.

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

MURDO MURRAY, Convener
DUNCAN MACLEOD, Vice-Convener

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 £22,000 as from 1st January 2012, 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 note the planned review of the working of the regulations enacted in 2010 relating to the Management of Absence due to Illness and Annual Leave and Leave of Absence for reasons other than Illness, and that the Committee will welcome any comments.

4. The General Assembly re-enact the regulations relating to Ministers’ Expenses as follows:

4.1 The General Assembly ordain that legitimate expenses incurred by ministers or lay preachers in the course of their duties shall be reimbursed, or met directly where appropriate, by their congregations. Such expenses shall include council tax, relevant telephone expenses, communion expenses, hospitality, travel, a proportion of heat and light and removal expenses. Payment of such expenses shall not be regarded as a supplement.

4.2 The minimum rate at which ministers’ car expenses shall be met is 30p per mile for the first 10,000 miles in any tax year. Expenses for mileage in excess of 10,000 miles shall be met at the rate of 25p per mile. These rates shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Personnel Committee. A congregation may pay expenses at a higher rate if they so desire but any such higher rate should not exceed the approved rates set by HMRC. Expenses for travel on motor cycles or bicycles shall be met at the prevailing rates set by HMRC.

4.3 In all congregations the agreement regarding reimbursement of ministers’ expenses should be reviewed annually.

4.4 Claims for reimbursement of expenses should be made on a regular basis and must be submitted on the claim form approved for use by the Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees. All expenses claimed must relate to actual expenses incurred and must be backed by receipts. In the case of mileage expenses, claims must detail actual journeys undertaken.

4.5 In the case of a vacant Congregation, the Interim-Moderator shall have refunded to him by the Congregation, all travelling and other expenses incurred by him in discharging such duties on behalf of the Congregation as would normally fall to be undertaken by the minister if the charge were settled.

4.6 Expenses incurred in respect of travel to church courts or committees shall be met by the Presbytery or Committee concerned.

4.7 Cash supplements in addition to payment of expenses shall only be allowable by congregations meeting all required levies payable under the prevailing remittance system. In no case shall cash supplements exceed 50 per cent of the Equal Dividend.


5. The General Assembly note that the regulations relating to Retirement and Resignation of Ministers and Seats on Presbyteries are being reviewed.
6. The General Assembly note that the regulations relating to Probationers are being reviewed.

7. The General Assembly note that, following the anonymous survey of ministers to assess the extent of personal concern over housing provision for their own retirement or for their family in the event of their death, the Personnel Committee is exploring the potential to provide housing for ministers and/or their families in the event of unforeseen circumstances, with the aim of producing a Policy Document, for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

8. 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

For the last number of years this Committee has been endeavouring to be more active in fulfilling its remit to our ministers and their families. Hopefully progress has been made but the Panel still feels, surprisingly in the light of current tensions, it is still under-used. Nevertheless, this has been a challenging year for the whole Church and this Committee in particular.

The bulk of the Panel’s work is composed of informal conversations and visits. As the natures of these are both sensitive and confidential, they cannot be incorporated in a Report. Therefore this can give the impression that nothing is being accomplished.

One thing that has been clearly picked up from the above contacts is that many, if not all, of our ministers and families need pastoral support. It is clearer still that the majority are extremely reluctant to ask for help. (That is the way we are, for whatever reasons).

The Panel is aware that some of our brethren carry greater responsibilities than others, especially those in the larger congregations. These men need our constant support and prayers. Others are ministering in small, weak and ageing congregations perhaps facing increasing financial demands with the only prospect, humanly speaking being extinction. The truth is, of course, that we are all weak and vulnerable. By contacting one of the Panel, it gives us an opportunity to share problems, encouragements and air frustrations. Please don’t be suspicious. Sometimes when we phone, I think the person immediately thinks, “Do you know something I do not?” In this respect the on-going input of the Rev. W. and Mrs Graham is much appreciated among ministers and their wives.

One definite cause for thanksgiving is the role played by each Pastoral Committee in their presbytery. This is where the real work is done. It is easier to spot signs at the local level and early intervention can save enormous heartache later on.

As the personnel of the Panel do 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.

The Panel exists in order to help each of us to bear one another’s burdens, in compliance with the admonition of scripture. We are always available. We will keep in contact. Everything is in complete confidence. No doubt someone will be overlooked and they will rightly feel aggrieved. We personally apologise if that is the case and as always, any suggestions as to how this could 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 recognise the vital work undertaken by each Presbytery Pastoral Committee and encourage them, especially at this time to be extra vigilant.

4. The General Assembly thank the 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.
VII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee had its usual meetings this past year. Although such meetings occur regularly we are aware that we are dealing frequently with matters that occur in a fast-changing society, changes that are often difficult to understand and complicated to explain. One area of such change is that of technological development. We are familiar with technological advances in medicine, in electronics and in communications, with activities occurring today that only existed a few years ago in science fiction literature. Where could these advances take society? Read our report on Transhumanism, written by Rev. Roddie Rankin, in answer to this question.

We are also aware that we live in a society with large and, at times, disastrous problems. Many reports would have been written had we focused on all such problems, but for this year we decided to provide a report on one of the major traumatic features of contemporary society, that of suicide. The Committee is grateful to Rev. Robert Macleod, Chaplain in the Forth Valley NHS, for writing this paper.

The Committee is also aware that parents are naturally concerned about the education of children. Again, this is a wide area, but since we had been approached about the subject of sex education in Scottish schools, we have produced a paper outlining the current situation. We are thankful to former Director of Education in the Western Isles, Mr Murdo Macleod for preparing this paper.

Within the remit of the Committee, there are several means of conveying the biblical message on a wide range of topics. We have summarized below how the website, magazines and bookshop contribute to this. We would value the prayers of the Church for those means and hopefully what we have provided will enable our congregations to pray intelligently about such matters.

As we began the work of the past year, we did not anticipate that we would be losing the Editor of The Record, Rev. David Robertson, because of other commitments. The Committee is aware of the great amount of work put in by the Editor and wish to acknowledge its appreciation for what he has done in providing stimulating and helpful articles on a wide range of topics over the last few years.

(A) WEBSITE

1. Website The Free Church website continues to be accessed by a large number of interested parties as well as being our main source of internal news and information. It has recently undergone a slight facelift as well as some modifications which include the replacement of blogs with articles of general and specific interest. This adjustment should make for more interesting reading.

2. Assembly Reporting The site is at its busiest at Assembly times with a live up to the minute report being generated as the Assembly happens. This facility has been hugely popular and feedback has been positive. In like manner the debates at the Plenary Assembly were reported on the site and this information was accessed by interested parties all over the world. Again feedback was largely encouraging. The Media Officer was disappointed, however, at the suggestion that the reporting was somewhat biased towards the case for change. He wishes to assure the Assembly that he made every effort, irrespective of his own position, to give accurate and unbiased information as to what was being argued from both sides.

3. Future Development Despite its potential, the website has run on three cylinders since the departure of the Communications Officer. The Committee continues to consider how best to provide this function perhaps by other means.

(B) MEDIA

Media interest during the past year has centred largely on the Plenary Assembly, its decision and aftermath. On the whole, press coverage has been fair and if it has been negative, the blame lies with us for poor publicity rather than with the media. It is highly important in today’s world to think of how our decisions impact the perception which the world has of the Free Church. That perception is driven by and largely dictated by the media. A large proportion of the Media Officer’s work is to educate the media towards a more accurate portrayal of us. This is not made easy by
internal but public conflicts which give the appearance of a church disengaged from the real world. This in turn has a negative impact on our attempts to evangelise where the public have such a predetermined view of our church.

(C) THE RECORD

The Record is a team effort – involving a significant number of people. In addition to the Editor, David Robertson, the team includes Al McInnes (who does the design and layout), Malcolm Maclean (Book Review editor), Janet MacPhail (Gaelic), Charles and Daphne Douglas (From the Frontiers), Alison MacDonald (WFM Editor) and DaySpring MacLeod (Proof-reading and Prayer Diary).

1. Circulation The circulation at the end of the year (2010) was 2993 congregational subscriptions (in 2009, it was 3244), and 387 individual subscriptions (in 2009, it was 404), giving a total of 3380 (3648). This continued decline has been a little discouraging, although the Committee realises that this trend is happening with other religious magazines as well.

2. Website The website subscription service has not yet been set up. This should be a matter of urgency for the new Editor.

3. Content The content of the magazine continues with a mix of Bible teaching, cultural, historical, interview, church related, Gaelic, missions, apologetic, evangelistic and news articles. Thanks are extended to Barbara Cross, David Meredith and Iain D. Campbell who were regular contributors as well as to all others who contributed material in the past year, including those who sent letters and e-mails connected to articles in the magazine.

4. Future Plans Demands on the Editor’s time required him to resign as editor of The Record. Two factors in particular led to his decision. On the one hand, he spends a great deal of time fund-raising in connection with the redevelopment of the St Peters building; on the other hand, the opportunities to engage in evangelistic work throughout Scotland through Solas CPC are expanding. The Committee is encouraged by the development of Solas CPC and commends David Robertson’s work with Solas to the prayerful interest of the church.

Concerning The Record, Mr Robertson comments, ‘I would have liked to have developed The Record further and it was with a great deal of reluctance that I felt compelled to give up the editorship. I have greatly enjoyed the challenge and hope that it has proved of use to the Lord’s people. I pray that the new Editor will know the Lord’s blessing and guidance and I would like to assure him, and the Assembly, that I will do everything I can to assist him in the transition.’

5. Record Editor Rev. David Robertson indicated in late January that he intended to resign as Editor of The Record at the March Committee meeting. The Committee sought nominations from Presbyteries of suitable Free Church Ministers or Elders for the position of Editor in line with Act XXX., 2007. A Sub-Committee was formed at the March Committee to receive the nominations, contact candidates and arrange interviews. Presbyteries nominated as follows:

- **Edinburgh and Perth:** Rev. Dr David Ford, Rev. Dr John Ross, Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean, Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell, Rev. Alasdair I. Macleod, Rev. Iver Martin, Rev. Angus Macrae, Rev. Colin Morison, Rev. David Meredith.
- **Glasgow and Argyll:** Rev. Iver Martin, Rev. Alasdair I. Macleod, Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean
- **Inverness, Lochaber and Ross:** Rev. Dr David Ford, Rev. Dr John Ross, Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean
- **Northern:** Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean
- **Skye and Wester Ross:** Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell, Rev. Alasdair I. Macleod, Rev. Dr. Malcolm Maclean
- **Western Isles:** Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean
- **Great Lakes and Western Canada:** Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean
- **Prince Edward Island:** Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean, Rev. David Meredith, Rev. Neil MacMillan

The discrepancies in numbers nominated by different Presbyteries resulted from the tight timescale, and different methods Presbytery clerks used to obtain nominations. All but Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean, Rev. Dr John Ross and Rev. Dr David Ford withdrew their names when informed of their nominations. Rev. Dr John Ross later withdrew his name owing to his heavy workload this autumn at Dumisani, and the fact that he would not be able to give full attention to the responsibilities of Record editor until the end of the year. The Sub-Committee had considered whether it would be possible to have temporary editing arrangements in place were his name to be recommended to the Assembly, but such arrangements proved impractical to organise. After interviewing the other two candidates, the Sub-Committee decided to recommend Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean to the General Assembly as sole nominee for
the post of Editor of The Record. They wish to record their gratefulness to the men who were willing to allow their names to be considered, and who gave stimulating presentations to the Sub-Committee at their interviews.

(D) FREE

It is now almost five years since the present Editor of Free took up the post. The years have passed swiftly and Mrs Nicolson notes that it has been a pleasure and a privilege to be involved in this work. The contact with the Church’s young people has been especially enjoyable, and many of those who have contributed articles and assistance have become good friends. Working from home in Caithness, Mrs Nicolson reports that it has been wonderful to be involved in the work of the wider Church, when sometimes the distance can seem quite far. Nearing the end of her five-year appointment, the Committee wishes to reappoint Mrs Chris Nicolson as Free Editor for a further period of five years.

1. Production  The past year has seen a move from the regular printer, Woods of Perth. Hit by the recession, Woods suddenly went out of business at the start of last year, but our contact there, Grant Hamilton, moved to J. Thomson Colour Printers and Free went with him. The changeover was seamless. Catherine Pearson, the Church’s former Communications Officer, came back to work freelance on Free at the end of her maternity leave and designed two issues; however, she felt that this wasn’t for her and we returned to Dufi-Art, where new employee, Johnny Sherlock, took over responsibility for Free. Dufi-Art does a very professional job and the Editor has an excellent working relationship with the firm.

2. Content  Free has some excellent steady and supportive contributors. Mary Louise Stone and Colin Ross continue their columns, while David Kirk has produced some excellent articles on popular Christian music and has also put in place the format for a series on the Psalms, for which one off contributors will be sought from time to time. DaySpring MacLeod is about to start a series on prayer, and Free Church Camps continue to feature on a regular basis through the year. The Editor finds it useful to write a number of regular features herself, but would really welcome contributions from across the Church. Please consider contributing one-off articles on topics pertaining to young people. These would be very welcome.

3. Circulation and Readership  The print run has recently been reduced to 1150 copies per issue, to reflect the steady drop in circulation, to about 1050. It would be easy to feel despondent about this – and the Editor does at times – but having spoken to former colleagues who are still involved in publishing, we know that Free is not alone. The magazine industry as a whole is suffering a decline, possibly to do with the rise of the Internet and people getting information online and spending much more time occupied that way. The drop seems to come from congregations – the individual subscriptions have remained steady – and the Editor would encourage congregations to look beyond the young people in their church to the outside community and consider where they could distribute copies: after-school groups, youth clubs and so on. Speak to ministers from different denominations and ask them to consider taking it for their own youth work, and please encourage older readers to take the magazine, to keep in touch with the young people in the Church and their interests. We know from feedback that Free appeals across a much wider age range than it is intended for. There really doesn’t seem to be another magazine like Free available anywhere.

4. Promotion  Is there someone out there who would be willing to take Free on as a special project and promote it throughout the Church and beyond – someone with marketing ability? The Editor feels that she does not have the ability, the time, the contacts or the location, to effectively do this work, but is sure there is someone out there who would be perfect for the job and feels this could make a tremendous difference to circulation.

The Editor would like to say how much she enjoys working on Free – even after five years: ‘When I sat down to plan my very first issue, I suddenly thought, ‘So this is what that training all those years ago was for!’ I am very grateful for the support of everyone involved in the magazine. From those across the Church, young and older, who provide articles, to the office staff in Edinburgh and the Communications Committee members, to those who send encouraging emails of support or come over to say ‘hello’ at various times – and to Fiona MacArthur, the wonderful proof reader and friend who adds valuable insight and advice, I have to say a massive thank you. I have a very real sense of God being in control and believe that what goes in each issue has been provided by Him. There have been times when He has provided right at the last minute – and the fit has been perfect. It’s a great relief as Editor knowing that Free is in His hands, not mine.’

(E) BOOKSHOP

1. Sales  The shop did fairly well in 2010, although once the final adjustments are made there will be a small loss. Sales of books at the Island and Spring conferences and camps were encouraging. Sales of psalm stock are good and the shop continues to provide books for students of our own college and of New College. The new sign on the wall in front of the bookshop has brought in new customers.
One of the main highlights in 2010 was the bookstall at the Edinburgh conference which celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 1910 mission conference. Sales were good and there was positive feedback.

2. **Future**

The development of 16 North Bank Street is an exciting prospect for the future. The plan for Saturday opening of the café will make it easier (from a security point of view) to open the bookshop as well. It will also provide new opportunities to display stock. The Committee recently discussed proposals for an online bookshop. It is hoped to progress this once a secure online payments system is in place.

(F) **END OF LIFE ISSUES**

The 2010 Assembly considered the Free Church's response to the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill which was going through the Scottish Parliament at that time. In September 2010, Rev. Professor Donald MacDonald, who authored the Free Church response, was asked to give oral evidence to the End of Life Bill Committee at the Parliament. This was a great opportunity to articulate our objection to the Bill from a Christian standpoint and to point out its many weaknesses. The Bill was debated in parliament on 1 December at the end of its first stage; MSPs voted against the general principles of the Bill resulting in it proceeding no further. We are thankful to God for this answer to prayer but are mindful that this issue has not gone away and other attempts are likely to be made to legislate to permit some form of assisted suicide and euthanasia. We therefore intend to continue to monitor the situation through our membership of Care Not Killing, which was so effective in opposing this Bill.

(G) **KJV ANNIVERSARY**

The 2010 Assembly instructed the Committee to look at how the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible should be celebrated. Recognising that other organisations such as The King James Bible Trust and the Trinitarian Bible Society are planning a series of events, the Committee agreed that it should not duplicate these efforts. The Committee decided to arrange two conferences on the Bible for later in the year. One will be held in Greyfriars Free Church, Inverness, on Saturday, 3rd September; the speakers will be Nigel Anderson, David Meredith, and Fergus Macdonald; the conference will be held in the afternoon, so enabling speakers and audience, should they wish, to travel there and back home on that day. Further details about the Inverness Conference will appear in The Record. It is hoped that a similar conference will be arranged for the Western Isles; details of it are not available at going to print, but will be made public once they are confirmed.

(H) **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Over the past year the Committee has responded to various matters of concern. As noted above, among them was the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill. We are grateful to those who helped in all our responses, including those who provided the three following papers on (1) Suicide, (2) Transhumanism, and (3) Sex Education in Scottish Schools.

1. **SUICIDE**

1. **Introduction and context**

Malcolm Chisholm, minister for Health and Community Care at the launch of the Scottish Executive's Choose Life campaign in 2002 said: “Suicide touches the lives of many people and is a devastating event. Many of us will know of someone who has attempted or completed suicide. Preventing suicide and reducing the rate of suicide in Scotland is therefore an urgent public health issue.”

The authors of Living Works’ Suicide Intervention Handbook and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training [ASIST] maintain that suicide is one of the most underestimated community health problems in the world. It is believed more people die from suicide than in all of the armed conflicts around the world and about the same or more than those dying from road traffic accidents. For every person who dies from suicide there are as many as 100 times more people who injure themselves from non-fatal suicidal behaviours.

When considering suicide data, it is conventional to combine deaths classified as intentional self-harm with those of undetermined intent, as the majority of the latter are probable suicides. Doing so protects against under-recording and provides a more accurate figure and usually three year rolling averages at a national level, five years at NHS board and local authority level, smooth out annual fluctuations.

2. **World Demographics**

Every year almost one million people die from suicide, a world mortality rate of 16 per 100,000, or one death every 40 seconds. In the last 45 years worldwide suicide rates have increased by 60%. Suicide is among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15-44 in some countries, and the second leading

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Choose Life Initiative, [www.chooselife.net](http://www.chooselife.net)
cause of death in the 10-24 age group; these figures do not include suicide attempts which are up to 20 times more frequent than completed suicide.\(^2\) Within USA [2002] suicide accounted for 31.655 deaths (11.0 per 100 000 per year) representing a human tragedy and estimated $11.8 billion in lost income.\(^3\)

Suicide rates vary widely ranging from less than 1 in 100 000 persons per year in Syria, Egypt and Lebanon to more than 40 in 100 000 in some Eastern European countries. The reason is not known but in the late 80’s Hungary held the highest reported rate in the last century.\(^4\) In the industrialised world a number of nations across Asia are at risk of increasing rates of suicide due to the economic conditions and worldwide recession. In 1997, with currency devaluation, suicide rates rose 40% among men and 20% among women in Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. In 2009, the number of suicides in Japan exceeded 30,000 for the twelfth straight year.\(^5\)

2.1 **UK Demographics** There are large differences in suicide rates between countries and regions of the UK according to analysis published in Health Statistics Quarterly by the Office for National Statistics. The UK rate for men peaked in 1998 but has since fallen, whilst the suicide rate for women remained stable in the period 1991–2007 although increasing to 5.4 per 100,000 in 2008. In 2007 there were 5,377 reported suicides in adults aged 15 and over, 177 less than in 2006 (5,554) and 940 less than in 1991 (6,317). Three-quarters of the suicides in 2007 were men, and this proportion has remained fairly constant throughout the same period.

2.2 **Scotland** In Scotland, suicide is seen a leading cause of mortality among young people and continues to have the highest rate of the constituent countries of the UK. In the period 1991 – 2004 that rate for men was 50% higher than the rate for the UK as a whole. For women the rate was almost double that for the UK - 15.9 compared to 8.2 for England and Wales and 8.5 for Northern Ireland. An international comparison reveals the suicide rate for males is higher in Scotland than for most other European countries, except Finland and Poland. The rate for females is also high in Scotland compared to the rest of Europe – and of the countries included in the comparison only Finland had a higher suicide rate for females.

3. **National Strategy** Choose Life, a ten year national strategy and action plan to prevent suicide in Scotland set a target to reduce suicide by 20% by 2013. An evaluation of phase 2 [2006-08] of the Choose Life strategy, commissioned by the Scottish Government noted that the main achievements were seen in relation to:

- Awareness-raising both amongst professionals and the wider community
- Wide uptake and availability of suicide prevention training
- Improving knowledge and evidence base on suicide risk and prevention
- Improved reporting of suicide in the media\(^6\)

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\(^2\) World Health Organization – Suicide prevention Programme (SUPRE)
\(^3\) Goldsmith S K; Pellmar T C; Kleinman A M; Bunney W E [2002] Reducing Suicide: A National Imperative.
\(^4\) Mann, J. J [2002] A Current Perspective of Suicide and Attempted Suicide
\(^7\) Suicide rates by sex and age-group, UK – 1991-2008 National Statistics Online, [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)
Some question the robustness and appropriateness of the 20% reduction target and suggest a lower or non-quantitative target is preferable. Others would argue that having an “aspirational” target has led to a concentration of resources on suicide prevention.

Considering the evaluation report it is worth noting the key points released by the Information Services Division [ISD Scotland] in August 2009 which were:

- 843 deaths by suicide in Scotland in 2008 equated to an age-standardised rate of 16.1 per 100,000 of population. 630 were males and 213 females.
- Based on the three-year rolling averages there was a 10% fall between 2000-02 and 2006-08. These rates have shown little change since 2003-05 although rates amongst men increased marginally in the latest three year period.
- In 2008 the suicide rate for males continued to be around three times that for females.
- Suicide rates increased with increasing deprivation, with rates in the most deprived areas of Scotland significantly higher than the rate for Scotland generally.
- Between 1999-03 and 2004-08, the suicide rate decreased in 13 of the 14 NHS boards and in 26 of the 32 local authorities.
- 2004-2008 rates amongst men were significantly higher in Greater Glasgow, Clyde and Highland NHS Boards and significantly lower in Lothian and Forth Valley NHS Boards. For the same period rates in women were higher in Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Boards and significantly lower in Forth Valley and Grampian NHS Boards. Within local authorities rates were higher in Dundee City, Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire and significantly lower in Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Perth and Kinross.

Looking at the UK national figures which in 2008 Revealed a 6% rise over the downward trend of previous years, Stephen Platt, Samaritans’ Trustee and Professor of Health Policy Research at the University of Edinburgh, stated that it could turn out to be a normal fluctuation but nevertheless on strong evidence, he saw a link between economic recession and suicide. He said: “it is also possible this is the start of an upward trend which could continue until there is an improvement in economic conditions.”

4. **Suicidal intent-risk factors**

Risk varies from person to person. What can be said from research is that it involves trying to block out unbearable pain and hurt. Many times the attempt is a cry for help. Reaching the point of contemplating suicide finds a person so distressed they are unable to rationalise alternative options or see a way out. “Suicide is not chosen; it happens when pain exceeds resources for coping with pain.”

Every person confronts stressful situations and traumatic events and generally, ways are found both to cope and resolve them. However, sometimes, stresses build up over a period of time that has individual coping strategies pushed up to the limits. These limits vary from person to person: Rape and abuse survivors are vulnerable as they deal with all kinds of memories, flashbacks, depression, relational and trust issues on top of everyday situations. There is evidence that people living in the idyll of rural communities can be at risk because there are fewer resources, isolation and, sometimes, economic pressures.

Research from Oxford University [1991-1993] found the key explanatory variables in 84 suicides to be the presence of mental illness, low rates of treatment, lack of a close confiding relationship, work, financial problems and the availability of firearms. Grappling with questions around sexuality as a young person can propel them into the risk category – the why questions, sense of isolation and fear of discrimination. Prison inmates, particularly following sentencing, may be vulnerable as they confront shame, fear and drug misuse. Mental health disorders increase the likelihood of self-harm or suicide through sadness, apathy, self-blaming, hopelessness and loss of interest in everyday activities. Lifestyle: drug and alcohol misuse are also regarded as significant risk factors. Other factors include age and gender, marital status and those within minority groups - particularly due to the stress of acculturation and of isolation. Interestingly, religiosity would appear to have a protective effect against suicide. Research suggests higher percentages of individuals without religious affiliation have correspondingly higher suicide rates. The suggestion is that religion may well provide social support systems, the ability to cope with stressors, purpose and/or the conviction.

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10 [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1246863/Suicide-rate-rises-time-decade-recession-blame.html#ixzz0sGCsACfD](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1246863/Suicide-rate-rises-time-decade-recession-blame.html#ixzz0sGCsACfD)
12 Centre For Suicide Research, Oxford University: [http://cebmh.warne.ox.ac.uk/cs/resfarmers.html](http://cebmh.warne.ox.ac.uk/cs/resfarmers.html)
that suicide is not the solution. In addition, there is lower misuse of drugs/alcohol and divorce rates which are significant risk factors.\(^{13}\)

5. Warning Signs

This is not an easy question to answer and again varies from person to person. Usually by the time a person gets to the stage of thinking about suicide as an option they are not able to evaluate objectively. If they weren't in such great distress many would choose a different option. A lot of suicidal people give out warning signs in the hope that they will be rescued. Most just want an end to the never ending emotional pain and hurt - not to die. Research suggests there will be more than one particular sign - often several clues will be apparent. Further, just because one or more of these clues may be noticeable, it does not necessarily mean that someone is definitely contemplating suicide. Some warning signs or signals a suicidal person may give are:

- Depression but not necessarily suffering clinical depression
- Recurring suicidal thoughts dreams or fantasies
- Showing signs of sadness and hopelessness
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Loss of energy
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Changes in behaviour
- Change in sleep patterns
- Negative self-image: comments about being hopeless, helpless, worthless
- They may have made previous suicide attempts.
- They may talk, write or hint about suicide.
- Purposefully putting personal affairs in order
- Clearing the air from past personal incidents
- Giving away personal possessions
- Checking and putting in order wills or insurance policies
- Having a ‘death wish’: putting themselves at risk
- Self-destructive behaviour: alcohol and drug misuse or self-harming
- Saying things like “it would be better if I wasn't here” or “I want out”
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye

These signs are not exhaustive. Some people may not show any outward signs, even though they are feeling suicidal. Some may show many of the signs but are coping. The only real way of knowing for sure is to ask.\(^{14}\)

6. Myths around suicide

There are many myths around suicide – some examples:

**MYTH:** You have to be mentally ill even to think about suicide.

**FACT:** Most people have thought of suicide from time to time and not all people who die by suicide have mental health problems. However, the majority of people who kill themselves do have such problems, typically to a serious degree. Sometimes this has been recognised before the person’s death and sometimes not.

**MYTH:** People who talk about suicide aren’t really serious and not likely actually to kill themselves.

**FACT:** People who kill themselves have often told someone that they do not feel life is worth living or that they have no future. Some may have actually said they want to die. Whilst it may be the case that some people talk about suicide as a way of getting the attention they need, it is very important that everyone who says they feel suicidal be treated seriously.

**MYTH:** Once a person has made a serious suicide attempt, that person is unlikely to make another.

**FACT:** People who have attempted to kill themselves are significantly more likely eventually to die by suicide than the rest of the population.

**MYTH:** If a person is serious about killing themselves then there is nothing you can do.

**FACT:** Feeling suicidal is often a temporary state of mind. Whilst someone may feel low or distressed for a sustained period the actual suicidal crisis can be relatively short term. This is what makes timely emotional support so important.

\(^{13}\) [http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view.php?te=doc@id=13737](http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view.php?te=doc@id=13737)

\(^{14}\) [www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk)
MYTH: Talking about suicide is a bad idea as it may give someone the idea to try it.
FACT: When someone feels suicidal they often do not want to worry or frighten others and so do not talk about the way they feel. By asking directly about suicide you give them permission to tell you how they feel. People who have been through such a crisis will often say that it was a huge relief to be able to talk about their suicidal thoughts. Once someone starts talking they have a greater chance of discovering other options to suicide.

MYTH: Most suicides happen in the winter months.
FACT: Suicide is more common in the spring and summer months.

MYTH: People who threaten suicide are just attention seeking and shouldn’t be taken seriously.
FACT: People may well talk about their feelings because they want support in dealing with them. In this sense it may be that they do indeed want attention in which case giving that attention may save their life.

MYTH: People who are suicidal want to die.
FACT: The majority of people who feel suicidal do not actually want to die; they do not want to live the life they have. The distinction may seem small but is in fact very important and is why talking through other options at the right time is so vital.15

7. Impact of suicide

Suicide, along with the many other deaths where the cause is ‘undetermined’, [some considered ‘hidden suicides’] and suicide attempts are a major cause of death and morbidity worldwide.16 The impact is significant. For every person who ends their own life there are family, partners, friends, colleagues, neighbours, support workers and others who are affected.17 Anecdotal evidence affirms that nothing can prepare people for the news that a loved one has taken their own life. A poem by a father says it all:

... “we feel bad that, on that day, you didn’t tell us, what you had to say, you decided just, to end it all... our days have changed from, full to aimless the song is wrong: Suicide’s not painless.”18

The impact initially is shock and disbelief followed by questions from others and from those immediately affected: why did they do it, should it not have been predicted or prevented? Even if a note is left, because of the distress in the person, it may not properly express the problem or cause. Sometimes part of the impact is that the reason may never be known. Although society has moved from condemnation of suicide to an emphasis upon trying to understand it; there remains a stigma. It is a hidden or taboo subject with many. Denial, secrecy and avoidance remain common.

Theologian and writer Frederick Buechner relates that it was in adulthood he faced his grief and guilt surrounding the suicide of his alcoholic father when he was ten years old. He and his brother were surrounded by an imposed conspiracy of silence. It had a profound effect on their development and their relationships with other family members. He would say: “We are as sick as our secrets... finally, I suspect that it is by entering that deep place inside us where our secrets are kept that we come perhaps closer than we do anywhere else to the One who, whether we realize it or not, is of all our secrets the most telling and the most precious we have to tell.”19

8. Role of the Church

The lives of individuals who contemplate or commit suicide are complex and their emotional pain substantial. A Christian perspective on this issue must begin by affirming that such does not separate us from the love of God. The words of the apostle Paul speak of the power of divine love to transcend and overcome the discordant realities of our human existence, including suicide: “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor death, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [Romans 8:38-39]

8.1 Unfortunately, history evidences that the church has taught the opposite and that some still view suicide as an unforgiveable sin. Consequently, sometimes, out of good motive to prevent suicide, the church has been condemnatory, even punitive of victims and families through stigmatization and social penalties. Churches have denied funerals, memorial services to bereaved families and victims’ remains have been banned from cemeteries.

15 www.samaritans.org
18 Campbell, G. [2007] Suicide is Painful
Does that explain why the churches’ response has been judged as dismal by some and not seen as a place of refuge; nor pro-active in its social responsibility?

8.2 The Roman Catholic Church views suicide as a grave sin but there are clear indications that it is moving towards a greater understanding of the issue, recognising that mentally ill people who kill themselves are not fully aware of the consequences and that God does not condemn them. Bishop Bernard Longley [2009]: “when a person commits suicide, they are generally so clouded by confusion and despair as to be no longer in full control of their mental faculties. God does not condemn anyone not fully aware of what they are doing - His mercy is without end.”

8.3 In 2009 Rev. Ian Galloway, Convener of the Church of Scotland’s Church and Society Council, urged the Church to listen as well as talk when it comes to supporting those considering suicide. His call came in support of the Scottish Government’s Choose Life programme. “It is commendable that help is being provided to train ordinary people to spot suicidal tendencies… While such a complex issue as suicide can most effectively be tackled by professionals in many cases just having someone to talk to can help, at least initially. In times of economic crisis with high levels of unemployment and a gradual disintegration of family values and community life…anything that can be done to help in tackling the social and economic causes that make life difficult for young people is to be welcomed and perhaps we in the church need to learn to listen a bit more as well as talking.”

8.4 Professor Sheila Hollins [2009] is quoted as saying: “often in Church settings people think that praying is going to be enough; that people don’t need to seek professional help. Community leaders including clergy are very important gatekeepers to accessing the appropriate professional help through daring to ask if somebody is experiencing suicidal thoughts. A trusted parish priest is just the sort of person who might be able to persuade someone that is seeking professional help that it is not a sign of weakness, but of strength.”

8.5 A 2005 study which explored the role of the Church as a voluntary organisation in deaths by suicide in Highland, had ministers from different denominations interviewed about their own experiences of death by suicide and what they understood to be the key aspects that might contribute towards the Church offering protection and solace. That study was conducted upon clear ideas that are evidenced within literature:

- Mainstream religious groups are likely to provide some protection against suicide. Most prevalent when congregations have the greatest interaction with one another and can respond in a crisis and counsel against suicide.
- Internal religious beliefs as well as public expression of religion are important in their own right
- Mental illness is one of the mechanisms for over-riding these protective factors in people with religious affiliations.
- Overall levels of religious belief in a community appear to provide some protection against suicide in men in Western countries, perhaps both by regulation in relation to advice against suicide and by integration with routes by which support can be accessed.
- Faith communities can provide a counter-cultural view of the world and an alternative set of values and criteria for being human and living humanly. As such they are in a position to reframe the expectations and value systems of adherents.

8.5.1 The Highlands study highlighted the issue of ‘disconnection’. Prof. Norman Sartorious [2003] has said “suicide is a fundamental breakdown of trust between individual and social environment.” Mowat et al [2006] introduced their findings concurring: “suicide is a challenge to normative values. It lays bare social deprivation, poverty, mental illness and attitudes to mental illness. Suicide and deliberate self-harm affects individuals, families, communities and society. This most tragic of deaths confronts us all with questions of meaning, hope and social cohesion and challenges us to acknowledge the possibility of suicide for each of us in particular circumstances.”

8.5.2 Suicide was seen to have a relationship to the spiritual and religious and that where a lack of understanding, listening, friendship and sense of belonging existed, so the likelihood of suicidal behaviour increased. ‘Disconnection’ was expressed in terms of isolation, not fitting in with the main social groupings and being dislocated from what would be described as the ‘normal’ range of social life available in the area. ‘Disconnection’ triggers could be marital breakdown, lack of affection, difficulty with relationships, which in some cases might run across generations. Alcohol and drug misuse exacerbated the problem. Other factors unique to Highland were the ‘tourist

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20 www.archive.catholicherald.co.uk/articles/a0000590.shtml
21 www.christiantoday.com/article/church.urged.to.listen.to.people.contemplating.suicide/25675.htm
economy’ and ‘retirement culture’ that gave rise to the presence of a disproportionate number of transient or ‘uncommitted’ populations that in turn contributed towards superficial and transient relationships. Additional factors were pockets of deprivation and the issues of transport and employment.

8.5.3 The Highland experience is sociologically and spiritually fascinating. The study rightly asks whether the Highlands were any different to other places in the country. That said, factors that mitigate in suicidal tendency are prevalent within the geographic area where the Free Church of Scotland is historically strong. Subsequently, the denomination’s experience [and that of other denominations] should not only be about meeting the spiritual needs but also this significant area of social need.

8.6 Martin Luther once wrote: “the church is the inn and the infirmary for those who are sick and in need of being made well.” That metaphor remains valid as we are called to be a community of grace and healing – mutually bearing each other’s burdens. Every suicide statistic represents a wasted life and a death that leaves behind inestimable hurting, sometimes traumatised people. Enter the website of any survivors of suicide support group and tearfully you read the reality and feel the pain as expressed in words like: “I am broken in pieces, brittle sharp and small. Shattered into fragments – don’t feel like me at all. We were going on holiday, I bought a brand new dress, and then you went and left me, my life is now a mess...the dress that I bought for our holiday, I wore to your funeral instead.” [or] “there are days when I hear a tune, visit a place, go to a function or just have a thought; and the pain returns.”

8.7 There is no shame in having suicidal thoughts or asking for help. When life’s difficulties and disappointments threaten to overwhelm people’s desire to live, the church must recognise that it is strategically placed to make a significant difference and be our brother’s and sister’s keeper. The demands will be significant, perhaps frightening and some might wish to minimise the matter. The inclination might be to shy away because there is a sense of inadequacy or that matters might be made worse but regardless there remains a challenge to learn, listen and encourage people away from suicidal inclination towards appropriate help. We live in a broken and hurting world and often, the wounded still reach out to the church for help.

8.8 What is evidenced in other countries has parallels in Scottish society. Ministers and religious leaders can play a significant role in the provision of education about suicide and mental health, can foster hope, purpose and meaning which are protective factors against suicide, initiate and build infrastructure and forums that support prevention efforts, support survivors after suicide and are often pastorally placed to be in a position to refer to professional help. Ministers and leaders of all faith groups have credibility and influence and sometimes their words are the first public words following a suicide within a community which in turn can carry influence with respect to comfort, support and education.

8.9 A [2005] clergy workgroup on suicide prevention highlighted some of the challenges and barriers church leaders face in preventing and responding to suicide:

- Lack of knowledge, particularly regarding identification of suicidal risk and in assisting suicidal individuals
- Lack of knowledge regarding prescription medicines for depression and related metal/emotional concerns which can sometimes lead to suicide
- Stigma around suicide and the fear that talking about it will lead to suicidal behaviour
- Lack of access to members that might require support
- Time-competing concerns and often “reactive versus proactive” approach to suicide
- Issues about the church’s perspective on suicide
- Lack of knowledge about how to respond to survivors, unclear expectations from church members after suicide and uncertainty around when to intervene with survivors.

That same report identified some of the priorities essential for training in suicide prevention and the care of survivors:

- Relationship between suicide and mental health
- Warning signs
- Handling suicide-related emergencies e.g. directing people to appropriate treatment
- How to approach the issue and related mental illnesses as more than just a ‘spiritual problem’
- Process/protocols of mental health services and referrals
- Relationship between suicide and other high-risk behaviours [e.g. domestic violence, substance misuse]

25 http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk/poetry_and_prose.htm
Suicide prevention resources to share with members of congregations
Survivors grief experience and stigma
Exploration of one’s own attitude to suicide
Cultural differences and how to address these

8.10 A report like this raises questions of the wider Church and religious leaders: do we provide sufficient education in training of ministers, youth leaders and even Sunday school teachers? Is enough consideration given to this issue within ‘In Service’ training programmes? Do Presbyteries ever discuss ways this issue could be addressed within their boundaries? Has The Record ever carried an article or series on the subject? Interestingly, the 2011 ‘In Service’ training programme of the Free Church of Scotland delivered papers on: Pastoring People with Mental Health Issues; Pastoring and the spectre of Euthanasia – each of which impinges on the issue.

Churches and faith communities have outreach programs, educational forums [seminars, bible studies, other ministries, networks of support] that are invaluable in assisting education about health issues.

8.11 In the Free Church of Scotland there are Road to Recovery Groups in various localities that are working directly with people at potential risk. Is the denomination doing enough to encourage and promote such work or providing facilities for others groups such as Alcoholics, Narcotics or Gamblers Anonymous? Are there any local ‘Survivors of Suicide’ groups that could be supported or established? Are we engaging in dialogue with groups who have implemented outreach training in this area so as to learn? Have we considered building a network of ‘advisors’ who could be consulted in the event of a completed suicide in terms of appropriate church response?

8.12 Further, Church leaders across the denominations surely have a duty to make known and promote the work of the Scottish Government in its public suicide prevention policy ‘Choose Life’. This is a significant piece of social policy that merits promotion. How many know of its existence? Are there literature and promotional materials distributed and on display? Does the Church adequately familiarise itself with national and local resources that could enhance pastoral care?

8.13 Responsibility and good leadership call for the Church not to ignore and refuse to address this significant social problem. It is not good enough to embrace the common sentiment sometimes felt by survivors of completed suicide: “just get over it and move on!” If only the problem was so simple! For people in risk a call and compassion must reach them which will challenge behaviour. Solomon said: “do not be a fool: why die before your time?” [Ecclesiastes 7:17b] The reality of life is that at times it does hurt and for some it can become unbearable and precipitate suicidal inclination. However, let the Church remind society that life is a most precious gift and having the chance to be alive and play a part in the grand scheme of God’s eternal plan is a privilege.

8.14 For survivors of suicide it is not that they are obsessed with their grief or cannot move on. It is that too many have experience of the church failing them. For many, their concern, is no different from that of those who have a loved one with Alzheimer’s or had a child killed by a drunk driver – they wish to experience the same comfort with which God has comforted us. It can also be argued, that simultaneously they seek to educate those not touched by such a unique loss, that there should be cognizance of the need/reality and an appropriate Christian response.

Senator and Mrs Smith, Oregon, lost their son to suicide aged 21 [2003]. In a book ‘Remembering Garrett’ he writes: “Lastly, there is one more thing that, if I could, I would give to all. It has sustained me throughout my wandering in mortality’s mist. It is the glue that held me together in grieving for Garrett. It does the same for others. That one thing is, simply, faith.” Clearly, the Church can speak to that reality! In addition, there is veracity in the comment: “the Church is called to proclaim the gospel of grace and, in its own life, to embody that gospel. It embodies that gospel when it is particularly solicitous of those within its number who are most troubled, and when it reaches beyond its own membership to such people who stand alone.”

Important Contacts and Links

NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24
Childline: 0800 11 11
Crossline Scotland: 0845 6580045
Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90 [24 Hours]

26 Marshall, D S [2006] Clergy Workgroup on Suicide prevention and Aftercare Suicide prevention Resource Centre [SPRC] USA
28 Smith, G [2006] Remembering Garrett: One Family's Battle with a Child's Depression
29 http://www.umc-gbcs.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=frlJK2PKLqFandbt=6331673andct=4206833
Choose Life National Implementation Support Team
www.chooselife.net

The Scottish Association for Mental Health
http://www.samh.org.uk

Breathing Space
http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

The Samaritans
http://www.samaritans.org.uk/

Papyrus
http://www.papyrus.org.uk

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide [SOBS]
http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland
http://www.crusescotland.org.uk

Quiet Waters Counselling
http://www.quiet-waters.org

2. TRANSHUMANISM – SALVATION BY TECHNOLOGY?

1. Eve  Eve is a nine-year-old living in Inverness. 'She' will live forever. Her father owns a Model T Ford, which he lovingly maintains long past its original life expectancy. When Eve is fifteen she will wonder why she can't live forever, like the Ford. This seed thought will mature during her studies in Life Extension Technologies at the Google Multiversity and will lead her into research. She will pioneer, by auto-experiment, the implantation of computer chips which monitor vital signs and organ function. This data will enable tailored real-time drug therapy which will optimise her health and cognition.

In 2040 she will receive gene replacement therapy which will entirely remove any genetic predisposition to illness or ageing. In 2067 she will develop cancer. While it is treated, she will receive by transplant a vastly superior set of synthetic major organs. To eliminate further disease, repair-nanobots will also be injected into her bloodstream. A life threatening injury in 2090 will necessitate the transplanting of her brain into a machine body, with capabilities hugely superior to her former biological body. In her new, exhilarating cyborg existence she will now interface with multiple sensory and super-consciousness devices, and participate in the over-class, served by unmodified humans.

In 2147 her brain wiring will be uploaded to a newly developed deep-space craft. She - that is her cloned intellect and self-awareness - will become the craft. Her computer brain will vastly augment her intelligence. The cyborg will be 'taken out of service'. The craft will depart from earth on a millennia long trajectory to populate another part of the galaxy, manufacturing life forms using her on board molecular assembler. She will narrowly miss the wholesale destruction of earth by a malevolent artificial super-intelligence. Eve will survive to create life in her own image.

2. What is transhumanism?  Transhumanism refers to the enhancement and augmentation of our present human condition by the application of technology. It is often denoted by $H^+$ while Human 2.0 denotes its interim objective. Transhumanists routinely imagine life trajectories like Eve's, leading to an immortal, cyborg future which they characterise as 'posthuman'.

A cadre of present and future technologies is enlisted to fulfil the objectives of the transhumanists:

- Cryonics. Low temperature preservation of the body intact after death, in the hope that it may be revivified, and the person awakened, at a future date when technological advances allow.
- Virtual reality. Coupling vivid computer generated environments with sensory 'suits' worn by the participant, out of the body capacities and experiences may be realised. This transhuman route does not alter the subject bodily.
• Genetic modification. Transhuman goals which may be realised through this approach include the elimination of congenital diseases and defects, the enhancement of the capacities of the human body and the elimination of gender.

• Neuropharmaceuticals. Transhumanists seek to improve mental function or even create alternative consciousness through designer drugs.

• Nanotechnology. Small scale devices may, for example, be carried around the blood stream repairing organic damage or may operate in the environment to maintain ecological balance.

• Robotics and bionics. Machines under the motor control of human minds may enhance or even displace the human body.

• Information technology. Artificial intelligence may greatly enrich human opportunity. Additionally, the human mind may be scanned and recreated within a computer. The machine would think as the mind, and may therefore be self-conscious. This is another route to cloning the human person, or enabling ubiquity, in transhuman science.

These technologies are sometimes gathered together under the rubric NBIC - nano, bio, info, cogno.

2.1 The future scenarios anticipated by transhumanists are far from inevitable. They require the consent of society, the avoidance of technological apocryphal and, critically, the successful development of the requisite technologies. Most of these technologies only exist in seed form at present; some belong entirely to the realm of science fiction. That is not to say they can be discounted. Did Graham Bell's or even Logie Baird's wildest visions hear rumour of the iPhone?

The pace of technological development is presently relentless. Measured by criteria like Moore's Law (the rate of progress is such that the number of transistors possible on a silicon chip doubles every two years), it projects a future of unimaginable complexity and potential. Current human intelligence is the most obvious limitation to progress. The transhuman vision therefore drives research into enhancing cognitive capacity and developing artificial intelligence. Should this be fruitful the spectre of a technological 'singularity' looms, where increasingly smart people or machines design even smarter models in an exponential progress leading to godlike beings that had better be benevolent towards humanity! It is this exponential scenario which allows the rapid transformation of Eve in the conjecture above. Alternatively, the express train of progress may hit the buffers of unforeseen absolute limits in the very fabric of nature, which would frustrate this vision.

3. The influence of transhumanist thinking

Given how speculative the transhuman forecasts of the future are, we might expect the devotees of transhumanism to be fringe members of the scientific community with little influence. This is not necessarily the case. Transhumanism has a distinguished history with roots in the writings of such figures as J.B.S. Haldane and Julian and Aldous Huxley. Its ideas have entered popular consciousness through authors of the pedigree of Isaac Asimov, Margaret Atwood, Arthur C. Clarke and Iain M. Banks. Today its proponents are often simply known as futurists and their predictions frequently elevated to oracular status. The most prominent from a British perspective include the following:

• Ray Kurzweil. Kurzweil is an American inventor and entrepreneur who has written extensively on transhuman topics. He is probably the most influential figure in the field and originated the idea of the singularity.

• Nick Bostrom. A Swedish academic teaching at Oxford, Bostrom's interest is in the philosophy and ethics of futurist technologies and in the risks they pose to humanity.

• Kevin Warwick. Professor of Cybernetics at the University of Reading, Warwick is best known for pioneering chip implants to interface between the human nervous system and machines, and has been dubbed the first cyborg!

• Aubrey de Grey. A Cambridge researcher in the field of gerontology, de Grey pursues what he calls 'strategies for engineered negligible senescence' (SENS). His goal is the capability to repair age-related bodily decline.

While these thinkers may not be household names, the ideas they generate are so striking and suggestive that they have arced into the popular imagination through films, documentaries, television interviews and magazine articles, thereby raising an expectation of how the future will look.

4. Transhumanism and government policy

At the level of national governments transhuman technologies have received considerable endorsement. There may be various reasons for this:
• Politicians are as susceptible as the rest of us to populist visions of the future, which may in turn inform research funding policy.

• The demonstration of superior technological capability may give one country a psychological edge over another, as in 'space race' type scenarios.

• History shows how wars are won by the forces with the more advanced weaponry. So, for example, America invests heavily in drug therapies to increase the concentration and endurance of soldiers, exoskeletal aids to bolster strength, and military hardware that can think for itself.

4.1 The default assumption in government policy across the developed nations is therefore that technologies, including those we might label 'transhumanist', are ethical and desirable.

This positivity towards technology is not universal. Critiques of the transhumanist vision have been more forthcoming at the academic level. Professor Nigel Cameron, director of the Chicago based Center on Nanotechnology and Society, writing from the British and American perspective warns, "from where I sit, I see nothing so significant as the rapid development of these technologies, and nothing so troubling as the near absence of healthy public engagement with their social and ethical implications". Again he observes, "particularly in the United States, but also in other jurisdictions the transhumanists have made considerable progress in instantiated some of their fundamental assumptions about the purpose of technology and the nature of human existence in policy and civil service contexts which will be hard to dislodge, partly because of the lack of public debate and democratic accountability for the discussions of technology policy over which they have begun to exercise considerable influence".

4.2 Other writers’ caution is based on the law of unforeseen consequences. Thomas Glessner, a member of the bar association for the U.S. Supreme Court has written about this in the biotech context. He shows how the 1973 Wade vs. Roe Supreme Court decision legitimated a far wider range of technological outcomes than envisaged at the time. The Wade vs. Roe ruling was that abortion was a fundamental constitutional right. Glessner argues that this aegis allowed foetal tissue research, selective killing in multiple foetus pregnancies, sex-selection abortion, the RU-486 abortion pill, human cloning, partial birth abortions, and what Glessner terms ‘transhumanism and the redefining of humanity’. In his view a permissive and uncritical attitude to technology can open a Pandora’s Box.

In all of this we should think not only of Western nations. Japan, for example, has a highly developed research programme in machine augmentation, while many expect China to become the global centre of gravity for emerging technologies in the near future.

5. Academic critiques of transhumanism Thinking beyond government policy, academic reservations towards transhumanism are pitched at several levels. It is viewed as...

• Escapism. It diverts energy and creativity from finding solutions to the host of problems presently blighting humanity.

• Unrealistic. The technical know-how to accomplish the vision will simply not materialise. Human 2.0 is hype.

• Dehumanising. Human dignity is brushed aside in pursuit of goals which are eugenic in nature and in which mere humans will be an underclass. Already technology is mastering us, not we it.

• Dystopian. In the Brave New World of the future the power conferred through extreme technological superiority will deliver dreams to a few through the nightmares of many.

• Dangerous. The annihilation of humanity is a real possibility: self-replicating nanoscale devices may devour flesh, or genetic tinkering may unleash fatal pathogens, or intelligent robots may usurp human mastery.

Francis Fukuyama, Professor of International Political economy at John Hopkins University, is a prominent opponent of transhumanism, perceiving it as a devastating threat to political order. He has called it “the world's most dangerous idea” and is on record saying “transhumanists are just about the last group I’d like to see living forever”!

6. The transhumanist ethos With such trenchant denunciation, and a vision that is far from being fulfilled, what is it that drives the transhumanists? What qualities and ethos characterise them? To be sure they are creatures of their time. They have drunk deeply from the philosophical wells of consumerism, materialism, individualism and evolutionism. The human phenomenon is entirely explicable in material terms. There is no soul, as Christians have traditionally understood that term. Evolution has brought us to an unprecedented stage, where we can now participate in our own development; choose what we want to become. The body is a commodity we may
trade in for a better model. Indeed, it is our right to indulge in misanthropy towards our soon to be obsolete body as we eye the next must-have: Human 2.0.

Unsurprisingly, most transhumanists are agnostic, if not atheist. Their ideology certainly dovetails with the New Atheism. The future is humankind's to conquer. A naive optimism concerning man's moral nature, coupled with an ethical imperative to pursue perfection, gives transhumanism a pragmatic, compelling feel. What man wants, man shall have. Technology will yield satiety.

A Christian Response

7. Transhumanist religion? Trawling through the websites and blogs devoted to the subject often feels like an encounter with a novel, scientific religion for modern humans. Faith, hope and love are in plentiful evidence. Religious concerns are addressed. Technology will be our salvation from the body of death. The good works of science will secure immortality, and resurrection if necessary. The damaged environment will be restored, and space colonised. There will be a new heavens and a new earth. Righteousness will dwell there, as all genetic predispositions to criminality and addiction will have been engineered away. There will be no more suffering, tears or death. Our love for what we've become will be boundless; like Narcissus we will delight in our own image. For an wants, man shall have. Technology will yield satiety.

A Christian view of humanity

In attempting to evaluate transhumanism from a Christian perspective we must first recognise that the human body, Human 1.0, is worthy of our honour and delight. As genetically determined in the womb by God we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14, Jer. 1:5). Christ himself took a human body and thus affirmed human life from conception to grave. Our bodies enable our creativity and industry, exploration and experimentation, sport and artistic expression, individuality and intimacy. It is in our bodies that we swim with dolphins, play the violin, enjoy fine wines, savour our first kiss. With our bodies we serve God. Nevertheless it is not the perfect body of God's original plan, but is sinful and under God's judicial strictures. As Paul's term flesh (which is functionally equivalent to body in many passages) indicates, it has desires which oppose God's will (Rom. 7:18, Gal. 5:17) and enslave us self-destructively. Thus it is possible that theological justification for transhumanism may have been given by the Catholic priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who was a colleague of the scientist Julian Huxley. De Chardin taught that man is evolving from individual to global consciousness and beyond to the Omega Point. The Church censured his views.

8. What then is the humanity that God intended? Is it the "very good" body of the pristine creation, or the earthly body of the sinless Christ? To find what true humanity is in its perfect expression we must raise our eyes to God's throne, to his Son seated at his right hand; to the glorified man, Christ Jesus. There is our true omega point. The goal of God's redemptive program is that we should be with Christ where he is, and see him as he is, and be like him (John 14:3, 17:24; 1 Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2). Our resurrection bodies will be imperishable, glorious, powerful and spiritual (1 Cor. 15:42-44). This is a truly inspiring hope, and one which has been given substance and certainty by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.
The Christian gospel includes God's offer to glorify humanity in the image of the exalted Christ. This is not the image transhumanists have in mind.

9. **God given limitations** Meantime we know life-in-the-body to be an existence of limitedness, much to the frustration of the transhumanists (and the rest of us!). The very parameters which transhumanists would seek to overcome are often those which Christians teach have been set by God:

- Mortality. Death is certain. While variable life spans are evident in biblical history there seem to be upper limits. Psalm 90:10 speaks of 70 or 80 years, although it was composed by Moses who lived 120 years!
- Sanctity of human life. No-one should destroy that which is human from fertilised ovum through to adult, even in the cause of 'life improving' research.
- Gender differences. Those physiological, emotional and role differences which distinguish male and female.
- Family roles. Husband and wife, parents and children each have their own distinct status and responsibility.
- Equality. Notwithstanding role differences and headship - submission relationships, each person has equal dignity and value.
- Work. Our environment will only sustain our lives through the 'sweat of our brow'.
- Intelligence. Even Solomon does not know the mind of God. The physical parameters of our brains constrain our memory and cognitive powers.
- Rest. Our bodies have limited stamina, and require daily sleep and a weekly day of rest to perform optimally.
- Genetic integrity. Man is not an animal and is forbidden to have intercourse with the animals (Lev 18: 23, 19: 19). He must preserve his uniqueness "according to his kind".

9.1 There can be no doubt that transhumanism is about removing limitations. One challenge for Christian reflection about transhumanism is to determine which limits we are divinely permitted to cross, and which can only be crossed by partaking of 'forbidden fruit'. If we consider the 'Eve scenario' with which we began, we find that the technologies she utilises in her journey to the stars frequently blur or remove the lines of what Christians consider to be God-determined humanity. Immediately we see her efforts to escape mortality. The untold story is of how many sacred embryonic or foetal human lives are manipulated *in vitro* and discarded in the process of researching life extending technologies. Again, elements of her new genome may be animal or entirely novel creations. In the course of her transformation Eve becomes effectively asexual and renders familial roles obsolete. At the same time she consents to a society whose inequalities vastly exceed those of slavery in its worst expressions, and her powers completely redefine what we know as work or rest, intellectual capacity or consciousness. Many divinely ordained boundaries have been set aside. She is ultimately post-human in every sense.

10. **The Church's position in practice** Does the 21st Century Christian Church have a thoroughly worked out position on where the lines and limits are? Is the Church awake to the high ethical stakes raised by emerging technologies? Is it ready to meet the challenges ahead? Given that our lives are dominated by technologies which have gained prominence within our lifetimes, are our preachers regularly relating the Bible to this new challenge? It may not be unfair to represent the present situation as one of:

- Assimilation. Christians are as likely as other consumers to be 'early adopters' of new technology. The addictiveness and kudos of possessing the latest gadgets may cause questions about how the technology is changing us and altering our values to be suppressed.
- Confusion. Navigating the evolving technoscape demands deep thought. Even biblically literate Christians often find scripture difficult to apply. There is no Levitical case law or apostolic command to fit many situations; or at least how to apply these is not obvious. There is no black and white, only many shades of grey. There are few books or sermons on technology themes, so that we cannot really speak of the church having a 'Christian mindset' or consensus in its approach to technology.
- Fixation. Such current debate as there is tends to stall on bioethics issues which have been around for decades. While abortion, assisted dying and the like require a robust Christian response, they could turn out to be but the first snowflakes of winter.
- Myopia. For most Christians the present is challenging enough. We are reactive, not proactive; followers, not leaders; insufficiently prescient when analysing trends and permissive legislation.
Nigel Cameron and Joni Eareckson Tada highlight these points through the example of reproductive technology. They caution, "because the evangelical church has uncritically absorbed in vitro techniques, millions of Christians have learned the wrong lesson at the outset of the biotech century. For in vitro contains the seeds of what is coming next:

- a willingness to hazard early human life
- experimental use of embryos
- 'quality control' before implantation so that only desirable human beings reach the womb
- sale and purchase of superior gametes that have eugenic appeal, and
- babies conceived so their tissue can be used in later life for transplants."

They continue, "already, Christian parents have deep-frozen thousands of their embryos. These and worse practices amount to what ethicists call an 'instrumentalisation' of the human person - that is, treating people as things to be used for our purposes." If this example is typical it is not encouraging.

In fact, we are often content with the rest of our society to cast off God-given limitations without pausing to ask why divine wisdom first placed them there. Long since we accepted that the afflictions God imposed in Genesis 3 could be circumvented by technology: mechanisation replaces the 'sweat of our brow', anaesthetic alleviates the pain of childbirth, and medical advances boost life expectancy. We have also embraced a technology enhanced Sabbath. Maintaining our electricity, telecommunications, industry, transport and leisure infrastructure has become a 'work of necessity' which we expect countless employees to maintain for us on the Lord's Day as on any other. Even if we are not asserting that we have gone too far, it is clear that we have crossed many lines which make subsequent protest more difficult.

There are many other examples of how challenging it is for Christians to decide if a technology legitimately strengthens or culpably distorts their humanity. Here are some:

- **Genetic modification.** Ever since we began using cosmetics we have been happy to modify our bodies. There have been dissenting voices along the way. When Edward Jenner developed the smallpox vaccine (derived from material taken from a cow suffering cowpox) many Christians objected. They were troubled by the spectre of chimeras and scripture prohibitions against liaisons with animals. Today no Christian would object to diseases being eliminated by immunisation, except on the basis of animal welfare where animal experimentation is involved. We have come to accept thereby the modification and enhancement of our humanity.

  Will the same process of gradual acceptance be followed with regard to genetic disease? If we could eliminate Huntington's disease, cystic fibrosis or polycystic kidney disease through postnatal therapy, would it not be acceptable to achieve the same outcome through modification of the human genome prior to foetal development? If this could be accomplished without the need for experimental 'Frankenstein' embryos along the way, perhaps by investigating the effects of altering DNA sequences using computer simulation, should we embrace it?

  Then, if the computer simulation can also show how GM can enhance our humanity with greater or novel powers, would we be transgressing if we welcomed those? Many scientists see GM as the most rapidly advancing of the potentially transhuman technologies. We are progressing along a continuum whose trajectory is mind bending, having accepted the crossing of many boundaries already.

- **Machine augmentation.** Again we are on a continuum. This one began with the first tools and may lead to the cyborg. D. Gareth Jones in *Designers of the Future* highlights this when he says "cyborgs are generally viewed as fitting far more into the world of science fiction than do clones, and so people are not as fearful of what they might mean for us. To me, this is a short-sighted response, since it shows we are unaware of how much the artificial already intrudes into our lives". We accept prosthetics with ever more sophisticated brain interfaces. We are grateful for pacemakers, cochlear implants and several other internal electromechanical devices. These are therapeutic. Will we continue to adopt coming technologies as readily? Will the chip-implants which Kevin Warwick has experimented with become ubiquitous, or the bloodstream nanobots we have been promised by futurists soon be coursing through our veins? And in times to come will we be glad to incorporate into our bodies inventions which not only restore or sustain health but give us new capacities? Could machines ultimately supplant our bodies?
• **Cognitive enhancement.** Society has already accepted that caffeine can improve concentration and stamina, and a generation of students is growing up widely accepting the routine use of more powerful drugs like Ritalin to give them a competitive edge in examinations. There are of course dangers (even with caffeine!) from side-effects and from what happens when we boost one function at the expense of others, but further research may eliminate these. Might mind enhancing designer drugs of the future become acceptable to Christians if they do not carry a behaviour degrading payload?

We are also familiar with an ever growing mental arsenal of apps and other IT which enable us to appear knowledgeable and accomplish multiple tasks often in collaboration with a virtual community. **How powerful might these tools become?** We already interface with the brain using skullcaps - might we also reach into the brain and connect directly? **What heights might machines and brain plasticity enable our consciousness to attain?** Transhumanists even speak of 'uploading' our minds into a different substrate in the future. Will future Christians countenance what to us may seem grotesque assaults upon the integrity of the human race, if change comes in small increments?

• **Life extension.** In the developed world, life expectancy has doubled since pre-industrial times. It has been estimated that the upper limit on lifespan achievable through modern medicine, supplements and anti-ageing drugs like Resveratrol is around 120 years. To move beyond that the mechanics of ageing will have to be modified. We have already alluded to this as a transhumanist goal. Christians have so far not objected to the principle of life extension. Would that remain the case if people continued to be hale and hearty at 150 or even indefinitely? Have biblical principles which should have been observed at an earlier point in the debate been laid aside on the assumption that life extension *per se* is a good thing? Puritan objections to the smallpox vaccine included the argument that use of the vaccine was 'fighting with the Most High' because the disease was believed to be a punishment for sin. In seeking to postpone physical death (which we believe to be one aspect of God's judgement on sin), is there a point at which we find ourselves opposing God's will? Professor D. Gareth Jones in a 2007 address in Edinburgh to the annual conference of the American Scientific Affiliation cites one source which spoke of "the impiety of seeking to wrest out of the Deity's hands such rights as the bestowal of smallpox" and went on to ask "how much worse would everything be if such matters were put into the sinful hands of men?" While we may not agree with the argument, the latter question surely needs asking when man attains a level of sovereignty in imposing his will on the parameters of his humanity.

11. **A Christian response to transhumanism in a secular world**

It was philosopher Martin Heidegger in his 1954 essay *The Question Concerning Technology* who warned of the dangers of seeing technology as something passive which humans simply use to achieve ends: "we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it as something neutral". Perhaps this is a pitfall which society has fallen into, becoming enamoured of and enslaved to technology by degrees, redefining our humanity.

As a subset of the technological society, rather than an alternative society, the odds are stacked against the church shaping the technology debate or bringing redemptive help to the slaves. For the church, as for others, liberation is as likely to come from broken dreams or costly mistakes as from applying biblical thinking. That is not to say that we should abandon involvement in the marketplace of ideas. History demonstrates too often how societies decline when Christians retreat from salt and light engagement and privatise their faith.

11.1 We must begin with theological education. Christian leaders must be trained to reflect upon the challenges of technology and transhumanism, so they can teach the whole body of Christ, and be involved in national policy debates. In the process the church must surely declare the following convictions:

- The wonder and glory of all of God's creation including *homo sapiens*. It is an unspeakable privilege to live, move and have our being in the presence and plan of God.

- Human nature will frequently handle technology inappropriately. We must bear what Stephen Monsma of Calvin College calls a "prophetic witness to a technicistic society". This includes a "condemnation of technicism", which is an idolatrous overconfidence in technology as society's benefactor. Technology in the hands of men will not serve man's highest good in the way that men in the hands of God will.

Again, C.S. Lewis, in *The Abolition of Man*, shows how those who use technology to wield control in society (the 'Conditioners'), are themselves conditioned by their human impulses. Thus technology enables corrupt human nature to enslave humanity. He says, "at the moment, then, of Man's victory over Nature, we find the whole human race subjected to some individual men, and those individuals subjected to that in themselves which is purely 'natural' - to their irrational impulses. Nature, untramelled by values, rules the
Conditioners and, through them, all humanity. Man's conquest of Nature turns out, in the moment of its consummation, to be Nature's conquest of Man."

- Legislative control of technological development is essential. This derives from the previous point. There must be legal sanctions against research into dehumanising technologies to constrain the unscrupulous. If we think of the example of human cloning, we see both the difficulty of the issues and the strength of opposition to an outright ban under many legislatures. The result is a confused situation with very few countries banning all forms of cloning; some, like the UK, allowing therapeutic cloning, while many also allowing reproductive cloning. It remains to be seen what the consequences of unregulated experimentation in this area may be, but if results so far in animal cloning are anything to go by the path ahead may be strewn with tragic and harmful blunders.

- The motive for seeking a technology should be examined. Although, as we have shown, the ethics surrounding technology can seem labyrinthine, a clear view of whether a technology is desirable can often be gained through asking why its proponents want it. Will it benefit the whole of society, or is it for the benefit of an elite few while the rest suffer? In the biotech sphere profit is often the true motivator, with the large players in the industry even seeking to patent the human genome and every life form created through synthetic biology.

In addition academic reputations and ploys to attract research funding are in play. The Baconian notion of disinterested scientists pursuing knowledge for the sheer pleasure of discovery is remote from the reality of much modern research.

- Christians can bring realism to society's view of technology. The church, with its sober view of human nature and its future grounded in Christ, can expose the limitations of technology to fulfil human needs, and debunk the more fanciful visions of technological utopia. Nicholas Wolterstorff in his classic Lament for a Son brings this realism when he writes: "When we have overcome absence with phone calls, winglessness with airplanes, summer heat with air-conditioning - when we have overcome all these and much more besides, then there will abide two things with which we must cope: the evil in our hearts and death. There are those who vainly think that some technology will even enable us to overcome the former. Everyone knows that there is no technology for overcoming death. Death is left for God's overcoming."

11.2 In addition to these convictions the influence of the church would be greatest if agreement could be reached regarding a Christian view of technology.

12. A Christian approach to technology It may be questioned whether a consensus on the Bible's teaching in relation to technology may be reached, or even if it is necessary. However, "the earth is the Lord's and everything in it" (Ps. 24:1); nothing lies outwith His sovereign rule. Even if the details of individuals' approach to technology must be left to the command to love God with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves, yet there are some principles we believe can be discerned. These are listed below:

- We must define our use of technology like the rest of our activity as something we do under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Thus Stephen Monsma defines technology "as a distinct human cultural activity in which human beings exercise freedom and responsibility in response to God by forming and transforming the natural creation, with the aid of tools and procedures, for practical ends and purposes."

- The Christian is not anti-technology. It is possible to find very negative and pessimistic views of technology within the church. But we are not to be Luddites; we do not yield to populist knee-jerk type reactions to certain technologies, such as those seen in response to the sowing of genetically modified crops. Also, while we may admire the simplicity of the Amish lifestyle, we do not hold it up as especially virtuous. Godly attitudes to technology are possible without the need to exclude all developments past a certain date, or to allow only some classes of innovation.

- The Christian is not blindly optimistic about technology. We have already demonstrated that above. We seek a middle ground between the extremes.
• We affirm science, engineering and the development of technologies as God given endeavours. We understand the commands to rule and subdue the earth (Gen. 1:26, 28), while implying environmentally sensitive dominion, require the application of progressive mechanical, industrial and electronic know-how for their fulfilment. We recognise technological progress throughout the timeline of the Bible story, and witness its use, most importantly, at the bench of the Carpenter (tekton) in Nazareth.

• We reject the idea that technology should develop in an unbridled, unregulated manner, like a garden left to itself. That is to Revisit Babel, where technology usurps the place of God and the destiny of man: "nothing they plan shall be impossible", nothing unthinkable.

When technology seeds where it pleases it imports its own virtues. Instead of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control (Gal. 5:22f), comes convenience, accessibility, efficiency and satisfaction.

C.S. Lewis calls for a rethink akin to re-landscaping the garden: "It might be going too far to say that the modern scientific movement was tainted from its birth: but I think it would be true to say that it was born in an unhealthy neighbourhood and at an inauspicious hour. Its triumphs may have been too rapid and purchased at too high a price: reconsideration, and something like repentance may be required".

Pastor Vermon Pierre of Roosevelt Community Church, Phoenix, in a 2009 sermon, "The 21st Century Christian and Technology" calls for Christians, in recognition of the subtle dangers of technology, to major on the importance of:

- being physically present (e.g. in fellowship), when technology tends to us being only virtually present;
- self-forgetfulness, when technology fosters self-centredness;
- sustained, undivided attention to God and people. He encourages us to employ "techno-fasts";
- words, especially God's words. Technology gears us to the medium of images;
- gaining wisdom and understanding. Technology has exponentially grown our access to information in every category. Possessing this information is not the same as achieving good character.

• The priority for applied technology is to tackle the causes of human suffering, not satisfy scientific curiosity. While searching for the Higgs boson or establishing a research base on Mars are laudable pursuits, there are far more pressing objectives for the tens of billions of dollars involved to be spent on. Technological solutions are required for the multiple problems associated with human disease, water supply, over-population, environmental degradation and resource depletion.

• Again, the priority for applied technology is to increase equality, not to raise up a technological elite. Therapy precedes augmentation; repair has primacy over enhancement. The whole population should participate in the boons and benefits of progress.

• The image of God in man must retain its integrity. Hybridisation involving the human species, or tampering with man's bipartite sexuality are examples of where technology could introduce chaos.

• Destructive experimentation on human life should be avoided, and ways to achieve research goals which do not require this should be found. The present stem cell debate encapsulates this principle: is it necessary to destroy human embryos in order to harvest stem cells for research into cures? Does the putative end justify any means? With the increasing power of computer modelling the need for physical experimentation will decrease and hopefully obviate the pressure which drives research on embryos.

Of course there have been monstrous regimes which have sanctioned experimentation with sentient human subjects. Our regard for all human life should never bring us even remotely within the proximity of such horror.

• We recognise that what may be unthinkable to present Christian sensibilities may nevertheless become accepted by the church if the journey there involves many small steps and ethical compromises. We may think for example of a cyborg future in this way. While we are still relatively clear-sighted we need to ask where our trajectory will take us and decide now whether we want to begin the steps which will take us there.
12.1 Are we then to relate to developing technology with enthusiasm or caution? Undoubtedly both. In the hands of sinful people technology is always going to be a two-edged sword. Humanity may benefit or suffer. Nicholas Carr in his milestone 2008 essay in The Atlantic, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" considers the example of Gutenberg’s printing press. He says that its invention "set off another round of teeth gnashing". He continues, "The Italian humanist Hieronimo Squarciafico worried that the easy availability of books would lead to intellectual laziness, making men "less studious" and weakening their minds. Others argued that cheaply printed books and broadsheets would undermine religious authority, demean the work of scholars and scribes, and spread sedition and debauchery.

As New York University professor Clay Shirky notes, "Most of the arguments made against the printing press were correct, even prescient. But, again, the doomsayers were unable to imagine the myriad blessings that the printed word would deliver."

12.2 The potential for "myriad blessings" is unimaginable, as technology enables humanity to flourish at new levels. As those levels become ever higher, the cost of mistakes becomes greater. At the time of writing, the news reels are full of pictures of Japanese helicopters dumping water on the unstable reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear facility. Questions are being asked about the quality of safety planning, and the lack of foresight in locating the plant on low-lying ground beside the sea in a tsunami-prone region. Such hindsight wisdom can be applied to the transhumanist project. Should we follow a path to where the consequences to humanity of mismanagement or technological meltdown may be very grave indeed?

13. Conclusion We have attempted to describe the nature of transhumanism and to offer a critique of its worldview. This has led us to consider what true humanity is, and to find ways that the church can relate to technology which harmonise humanity with the rest of Creation and with God. It is the tendency of transhumanism to corrupt our relationship with God, ourselves and the Creation which presents its greatest challenge. Perhaps we can apply to ourselves the moral of Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner:

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast,
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

May God help us to love His creation and our humanity as He does and to serve Him with a view to the glorious consummation of that humanity. Then, when God's purpose is complete, His people shall be:

"before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.
Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst.
The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.
For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd;
he will lead them to springs of living water.
And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 7:15-17

Short Bibliography

Transhumanist websites:
H+ magazine, www.hplusmagazine.com
Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, www.ieet.org
SENS Foundation, www.sens.org
Ray Kurzweil, www.kurzweilai.net
Nick Bostrom, www.nickbostrom.com
Kevin Warwick, www.kevinwarwick.com

Christian responses to Transhumanism on the web:
Society, Religion and Technology Project of the Church of Scotland, www.srtp.org.uk/srtpage3.shtml
The Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity, http://cbhd.org
Institute on Biotechnology and the Human Future, www.thehumanfuture.org
Christian reflections on Transhumanism and technology in print:

How to be a Christian in a Brave New World, Joni Eareckson Tada and Nigel M. de S. Cameron, Zondervan
The Emerging Brave New World, Thomas A. Glessner, Highway
Matters of Life and Death, John Wyatt, IVP
Designers of the Future, D. Gareth Jones, Monarch
Responsible Technology, Stephen V. Monsma, William B. Eerdmans (available on Google books)
The Abolition of Man, C.S. Lewis, Zondervan

The definitive symposium with both Christian and other contributors:


3. SEX EDUCATION IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS: THE CHURCH’S RESPONSE

1. Introduction This report outlines the key issues with regard to Sex Education in schools and includes guidance on what the Free Church’s corporate response, and individual members’ responses, should be where there are concerns about what children are being taught.

2. Legislative Background Current legislation concerning this matter arises from Section 56 of the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act, 2000. At that time Scottish Executive Ministers had appointed a Working Group to review the range of curricular advice and support available to teachers on Sex Education, specifically in the light of the controversial repeal of section 2A of the Local Government Act 1986 which prevented the promotion of homosexuality in Scotland’s schools.

At that time it was concluded that the package of safeguards already in place was adequate and robust as were existing curriculum guidelines. However, it was also concluded that it would be helpful to complement the guidelines through the development of additional material to support teachers in formulating their programmes and consulting with parents. All of this resulted in the issue of Circular 2/2001 by the then Scottish Executive which sets out guidelines on the conduct of Sex Education in Scottish Schools.

3. Observations As can be seen from the factors detailed above the Scottish Executive’s approach to this matter was underpinned by two main elements:

a) The provision of Guidelines for Education Authorities. These guidelines provide the setting and basic curricular outlines, advice and basic information.

b) The development of Support Materials for teachers. This was to take the form of textbooks and other materials as is the case with all subjects when filling out the necessary programmes of study.

3.1 Subsequent experience has shown that it is the second of those elements which has proved, in some instances, to be problematic. Materials deemed to be of dubious content have been included in the list of resources for use in class and, unfortunately, there have been many instances when the lists of materials for use for Sex Education and the actual Guidelines on Sex Education have been confused as being the same thing.

3.2 The reality, however, is that the Guidelines on the Conduct of Sex Education in Schools are robust and do give substantial degrees of control to Local Authorities, who are obliged to seek the input of Parent Organisations and indeed Faith Communities concerning the materials which are to be used in schools. However, for this to be effective, all parties must be aware of the potential influence afforded to them by the Guidelines and be prepared to exercise this influence vigorously as there is currently no guarantee that meaningful and extensive consultation takes place. Parents can take up the matter with schools, school councils and elected representatives. Churches can contact Directors of Education and also use their own representatives on Education Committees. It is extremely important that such channels be used as new materials tend to emerge from time to time. The need for vigilance by all concerned parties cannot therefore be overemphasised.

4. Free Church of Scotland’s Current Position Statement The Free Church’s official Position Statement on this matter dates from 2001 and is set out in the ‘Summary of National Advice’ which was produced by Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) for the Scottish Executive. It is stated as follows:

- The Free Church is clear that Sex Education should not take place in a clinical manner in which moral and social issues are sidelined. We would oppose any treatment of this significant subject that deals with sex in
terms of human physiology without significant reference being made to the moral, spiritual, emotional and social context in which all human relationships take place.

- In our approach to sex and human reproduction the Free Church recognises the authority and the continuing relevance of the Bible. We affirm the moral framework of the Judaeo-Christian tradition with the Ten Commandments at its core as the historical basis of our social values. We look to the detailed teaching of the Bible to discover principles for sex and relationships.

- These principles begin with a positive and affirming attitude to sexual desire. The Church has best reflected this Biblical teaching when it has affirmed sex as a gift from God that is of great value when used correctly but capable of causing great sorrow when used in defiance of the will of God. We recognise that the proper context for the expression of sexual desire is within the security and intimacy of a committed and faithful lifelong partnership.

- As Christians we do not accept that our sexual urges are too powerful to be controlled. To concede this would be to demean humans to the level of instinct-driven animals; it is human to struggle with temptation. However, we offer the hope that God will provide the ability to gain self-control to all those who seek his help. The Christian ethic demands that we honour God with our body.

- We would expect marriage to be referred to in the curriculum not merely as an option but as the natural setting for the expression of human sexuality and as the most fitting basis for the cohesion of stable family and a healthy society.

- Since sex is integral to the creation of the family unit and forms part of its core values no attempt should be made by schools or education authorities to instruct our children in sexual matters without first consulting the wishes of parents.

5. **Position Statement still valid** The above statement was, and indeed remains, an appropriate response to the national consultation exercise which took place when the guidelines were being drawn up. It is also important to note that some of the concerns expressed by this denomination, and several other faith communities, were subsequently accommodated and, therefore, the potential for influence which the guidelines provide should be used. Consequently, the advice which the Church issues must highlight this point. The following key factors in particular must be noted:

- Sex Education is not always a discrete subject in the curriculum. It is but one element of Health Education, set within the even wider context of Health Promotion and Personal and Social Education (PSE).

- Parents have a right to be consulted about the content of Sex Education Programmes and the materials to be used, and they should exercise this right. They can bring the matter up with the Parent Council. They can approach the Head teacher. They can ask for sight of the materials to be used.

- Local Authorities are required to have arrangements in place to respond promptly and fully to any concerns which parents and carers may have about the content or conduct of sex education programmes. If parents are not satisfied with the response they get from schools they can take the matter up with the Education Authorities who have procedures in place for dealing with such concerns.

- The guidelines explicitly state that the education provided must reflect the cultural, ethic and religious influences within the home, the school, and the community. Parents and Churches can influence this through direct approach to Schools, School Councils and Education Authorities.

- There is no statutory requirement for participation in such programmes. Parents and carers have a right to withdraw children. However, providing that the programmes of tuition are sound, cases of withdrawal will be rare.

6. **Conclusions**

- The guidelines on Sex Education issued by the Scottish Executive in 2001 remain robust and give parents, and Faith Communities, substantial influence over what is taught.

- Parents and Faith Communities should use this influence, both through Parent Councils and direct contact with schools to ensure that unacceptable materials are not used.
• Religious interests have a statutory entitlement to representation on Local Authority Education Committees and Christian parents should use this facility to ensure that the materials used in the Sex Education element of Health Education are acceptable.

• Despite the liberal approach promoted by many agencies in the present day, it is likely that the demand for robust standards by Faith Communities will find favour with most parents in Scotland.

**Relevant Background Papers**

• Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000: Section 56
• Scottish Executive Education Department Circular 2/2001: `Standards in Scotland `s Schools etc ACT 2000: Conduct of Sex Education in Scottish Schools
• Sex Education in Scottish Schools: Summary of National Advice
• Sex Education in Scottish Schools: A guide for Parents and Carers
• Sex Education in Scottish Schools: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities on Effective Consultation with Parents and Carers

*(N.B. The last three documents were published by Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) on behalf of the Scottish Executive [www.LTScotland.com](http://www.LTScotland.com) or email:enquires@LTScotland.com.)*

MALCOLM MACLEAN, *Convener*

RODDIE RANKIN, *Vice-Convener*

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Communications Committee and thank the Committee for its work, especially the Convener, Vice-Convener and Clerk (Mrs Heather Akroyd). The General Assembly thank the Vice-Convener for his contribution to the work of the Committee during the last four years.

2. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Robertson for all his work as Editor of *The Record* and commend his ongoing work for Solas CPC to the prayerful interest of the Church. The General Assembly also encourage the congregations of the Church to pray for his successor as Editor.

3. The General Assembly thank the Committee for its work in searching for a new Editor of *The Record* and note that the Committee recommends Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean as suitably qualified and sole nominee for the impending vacancy as Editor of *The Record*, in line with Act XXX, 2007.

4. The General Assembly thank the Editor, Mrs Chris Nicolson, and those who help her, for their contribution to the production of *Free* and reappoint Mrs Nicolson as Editor for a further period of five years in accordance with the terms of Act XIX, 1996.

5. The General Assembly encourage people of all ages in congregations to read *Free*, to keep in touch with the young people of the Church and to promote *Free* to groups and individuals within and outside the Free Church. The General Assembly also thank the various persons who contributed to *The Record* and commend both magazines to the prayers of the Church.

6. The General Assembly thank Rev. Iver Martin for his work in connection with the Free Church website and also as Media Officer. The General Assembly encourage congregations to use the website to promote local information and events.

7. The General Assembly thank Mr Charles Douglas for his running of the Bookshop and note potential new opportunities for the bookshop in connection with the redevelopment of 16 North Bank Street.

8. The General Assembly note that the General of Assembly of 2010 instructed the Committee to look at ways to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible. The General Assembly note that the Committee plans to organise two conferences on the Bible later in 2011 in Inverness and the Isle of Lewis.
9. The General Assembly thank Rev. Professor Donald MacDonald for his valuable and timely contribution to issues connected to Public Questions.

10. The General Assembly note, with gratitude to God, that the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill was soundly defeated at the end of its first stage in the Scottish Parliament on 1st December 2010. They instruct the Committee to remain vigilant concerning further attempts to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia and to continue its support for Care Not Killing. The General Assembly reiterate its support for the extension of Palliative Care services and enjoin our people to pray for all who are involved in this important work.

11. The General Assembly commend the United Kingdom and Scottish governments to the prayers of the Church and encourage our people to make their voice heard on issues of biblical morality.

12. The General Assembly encourage the congregations of the Free Church to pray regularly for the work of the Communications Committee.
VIII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

1. Introduction The work of the Psalmody Committee continued throughout the year as normal. It is the Committee’s prayer that the products and the special events organised by the Committee will help the Church to enjoy and appreciate the Psalms more and more, and thus to offer intelligent, tuneful and joyful praise to God in all her acts of worship.

2. Sale of Psalmody Resources During 2010, and into the present year, psalmody stock has been sold steadily through the Free Church Bookshop. The preferred item has been the Sing Psalms/Scottish Psalter combined edition, of which over 850 copies have been sold. Just over 200 copies remain, and the Committee is now considering a measured reprint to keep this item in stock. Also sold have been 168 copies of Sing Psalms (words-only), 108 copies of Sing Psalms in Staff, 92 copies of the Scottish Psalter in Staff, while the Sol-fa editions of these last two have been very modest by comparison: 33 copies of each. The Manual for Precentors (including CD), a truly excellent resource, has not sold as well as hoped for during this past year, and the Committee will be making a special effort to commend this manual to the praise-leaders of the Church. In CDs, Psalms for All Seasons has sold 69 copies, All Peoples, Sing! has sold 20, and the Festival of Psalms has sold 10. In DVDs, Sing a New Song has sold 18 copies. Eight copies have been sold of the Gaelic Precenting booklet.

3. Book Agency in the USA In April 2010, the Banner of Truth's consignment to the USA included 280 copies of Sing Psalms (words-only), 296 copies of Sing Psalms (Staff) and 24 copies of The Scottish Psalter (Sol-fa). Since then, the Trust has housed the Church's psalmody products free of charge in their Carlisle, Pennsylvania, warehouse, and although it does not act as a sales agent for the Free Church, it is able to put the Committee in touch with bookstores which may show an interest. One bookstore in Wilmington, North Carolina, recently bought several copies of Sing Psalms (words-only) and Sing Psalms (Staff). The Committee is now actively seeking to foster relations and promote sales with other US bookstores. Mr John Rawlinson, General Manager of the Banner of Truth Trust, has been especially helpful to the Committee: he has advertised the Church's psalmody products on the Banner website, promoted them through Facebook and Twitter, and featured them as part of an email 'blast' that goes out to over 10,000 people. This web publicity was repeated around Easter-time. The agreement with the Banner of Truth Trust is for two years initially, ending in April 2012, when a review will be conducted to see how things have worked out. The Trust provides the Church with a statement of sales every six months, with payment. The Committee is very much indebted to Mr Rawlinson and the rest of his team for their partnership in this enterprise.

4. PCA Assembly For a number of years now, the Free Church of Scotland has had a booth at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, through which the Sing Psalms material, plus CDs and additional praise aids have been promoted. This year’s Assembly is to be held at Norfolk, Virginia, between 7th – 10th June 2011, and after a year’s absence, the Free Church will again be represented by Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean. In the light of our newly delivered stocks of Sing Psalms to the Banner of Truth warehouse in Pennsylvania, this could be a prime moment for the promotion of our psalmody resources in the USA.

5. Compilation of Psalms for Special Occasions The Committee has been working to produce a selection, in handy booklet-form, of 50-60 Psalm portions for use in student and youth work, and on occasions such as evangelistic services, joint services with other denominations, etc. The selection is taken from the contents of Sing Psalms (Staff edition). There will be a tune printed with each psalm, and an index of themes. The Committee expects the product to be available by the end of the year.

6. Central Belt Praise Workshop A Praise workshop, attended by 31 people from the Central Belt, was held at Free St Columba’s, Edinburgh, on Saturday, 9th October. Morning activities included sessions on general singing warm-up, practical exercises in breathing, confidence-building and range-extension; also pitch-setting, pace-setting and the introduction of new tunes. The afternoon included an introduction to precenting, pitch-setting practice and sectional practices in part-singing, followed by a plenary singing session led by different precentors. Much good practice was shared, and from the evaluations received afterwards, the Committee gained several insights on how to make such workshops even more practical, and so improve its provision for the precentors and people in the advancement of the Lord’s praise.
7. **Northern Presbytery Praise Workshop**  
A day workshop is planned for Saturday 28th May 2011, in Brora Free Church. This event is designed for all who enjoy singing the praise of God in church, for precentors, budding precentors and ministers. There will be practical sessions on achieving and maintaining correct pitch and pace, how to learn and introduce new tunes, singing in harmony, and other areas of good practice, delivered by experienced singers and musicians.

8. **Tutor CD**  
A valuable resource which has now been completed is the two-volume Tutor CD set, containing a large number of the less well-known tunes in Sing Psalms, sung to a simple accompaniment for better familiarisation. This now provides precentors, and others who wish to increase the repertoire of tunes in their congregation, with an excellent resource. Credit for the success of this enterprise is largely due to Colin Mackay, Dundee. The Tutor CDs will soon be available from the Free Church Bookshop.

9. **Children and the Psalms**  
The Committee has compiled a booklet containing a selection of “bite-size” excerpts from the metrical Psalms, mostly from Sing Psalms, which are suitable for children to learn and sing. The Committee hopes the booklet will be useful for Sunday School classes, so that children will be encouraged to sing these verses, and grow up with an appreciation of the Psalms and their place in the worship of the Church. Suggested tunes accompany the words. It is anticipated that the booklet will be available for the commencement of the new school session later this year. The Committee will be pleased to liaise with Sunday Schools on any matters relating to the promotion of Psalm-singing among children, including introducing children to precenting.

10. **Praise Pages on the Free Church Website**  
The Committee is immensely grateful to Mr John MacPhail for his ongoing help in building the Praise section on the Church’s website. Several excellent renderings of unaccompanied psalm-singing can be enjoyed, an attractive downloadable and locally usable article on Free Church worship is available, plus helpful printouts of talks given at the very successful Psalmody Conference held at Smithton in May 2009. Recently added were 11 video files of psalmody recitals, which include marvellous views of the Highlands and Islands, as well as ‘soundbites’ from able speakers. Visit the Praise pages by clicking on the middle icon at the bottom of the homepage!

11. **Copyright Permissions**  
Sing Psalms has proved to be popular in churches in other parts of the UK, and also abroad, and during the year, permission was granted for the use of the words of certain psalms and tunes in worship to churches in Sheffield, Tasmania and North Carolina. A request was also granted for the inclusion of the Sing Psalms version of Psalm 147 in an Occasional Paper by Rev. Dr Graham Deans, published by The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 2011. Hymns Ancient and Modern were granted permission by Rev. Professor Donald MacDonald and Mrs Isobel Gordon for the inclusion of the tune Bunillidh in their new hymnal Sing Praise, in which the tune was set to a paraphrase of Psalm 27.

12. **Plenary Assembly’s Decision on Praise**  
Many will be aware of the decision taken by the Plenary Assembly to allow congregations the liberty to extend their repertoire of praise to include biblically sound hymns and paraphrases, and also to use instrumental accompaniment. A legitimate question would be to ask, “How has this decision affected the work of the Psalmody Committee?” In answering this question, we bear in mind that:

a) The Free Church’s commitment to Scriptural authority has not changed;
b) Our commitment to Scriptural worship has not changed: our worship must be God-centred, Scriptural and Spirit-enabled;
c) The Psalms will continue to be a prominent medium of praise in the Free Church, since the Assembly’s finding prescribes that “Psalms” be sung in “every service of congregational worship”.

The Committee is happy to continue its work in promoting the singing of the Psalms to God's glory.

13. **Congregational Psalmody Practices and Family Worship**  
The Committee continues heartily to recommend to the people of all congregations in every presbytery the importance of maintaining regular psalmody practice-sessions, for the purposes of teaching and learning new tunes and harmonies, practice for precentors, and congregational fellowship. They also recommend the singing of the Psalms in family worship, in the hope that the young may grow up with the Psalms upon their lips, and the Saviour in their heart.

FINLAY H. MACKENZIE, Convener
PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Committee on Psalmody and thank the Committee for their work.

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

3. The General Assembly acknowledge with grateful thanks the thoughtfulness and generosity of the Banner of Truth Trust in the transportation of the Church's psalmody products to the USA, and storage in their warehouse there; also, for their considerable help in advertising these products on their website, and promotion through social networking sites and email systems. The Assembly directs the Committee to bring a report on the progress of this initiative to the 2012 General Assembly.

4. The General Assembly thank Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean as he prepares to attend the 2011 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, for his work in commending to the delegates there the value of singing psalms, and of promoting to them the publications and products of the Psalmody Committee.

5. The General Assembly encourage the Committee in the production of Psalm selections for special occasions, including student work and evangelistic services, and also a booklet containing selections of psalms for the very young.

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

7. The General Assembly thank Mr Colin Mackay for all his hard work in finalising and producing Sing Psalms Tutor CD Vol. 2, and commend this product to the wider Church for greater familiarisation and use of the less well known tunes in Sing Psalms, and for the singing of some well known tunes more accurately.

8. The General Assembly thank Mr John MacPhail for his invaluable assistance in the construction of the Praise section of the Church's website, and recommend the Praise pages, including excellent audio and video resources, to the Church.

9. The General Assembly note with interest the favour with which Sing Psalms is being received by other churches, in the United Kingdom and abroad.

10. The General Assembly continue to encourage congregations everywhere to set up a regular session for psalmody practice, for the purposes of teaching and learning new tunes and harmonies, practice for precentors, and congregational fellowship. The Assembly also recommend the singing of the Psalms in family worship, so that, as they grow, the young will come to know and love the Psalms and the God who gave them.

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

**REPORT**

**OF THE**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PRAISE**

1. This Committee was set up by the Plenary Assembly in November 2010 with the following remit:

*The General Assembly appoint a Special Committee (using consultants as required) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of producing a recommended list of paraphrases of Scripture and hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the Word of God and the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, and whether the Free Church ought to produce a praise resource supplementary to the Psalter, and to report to the 2011 General Assembly.*

*The General Assembly instruct this Committee to investigate, collect and, if necessary prepare from within the resources of the Church appropriate portions of Scripture, other than the 150 Psalms, in a form which accurately renders the thought of the original and is suitable for singing in public worship. The Committee is empowered to seek the cooperation of others with the requisite linguistic, theological, literary and musical skills and is required to report progress to the 2011 General Assembly.*

2. The Committee has met twice and has begun to fulfil the remit. With regard to the first part of the remit the Committee decided that it is not necessary at the moment to produce a new praise resource in book form. The Committee is investigating the wealth of resources that are currently available and have begun the process of drawing up a list of praise items which conform to the requirements of the Assembly Act and the sources from which they may be easily accessed electronically. These will be made available to Kirk Sessions who have decided to use such materials of praise.

3. The Committee believes that most congregations who wish to introduce materials of praise other than the Psalms will use overhead projection by PowerPoint. The Committee has prepared a guide to such procedures as are necessary because of copyright law and this will be circulated to congregations.

4. With regard to the second part of the remit, the Committee has begun the process of investigating currently available Scripture songs and Paraphrases of Scripture. The Committee has also collected about a dozen new metrical versions of Scripture prepared within the Free Church. The Committee intends to make these available to congregations who wish to use them on a trial basis and will revise them as necessary on the basis of feedback received, in a process analogous to that used in the production of Sing Psalms.

5. Rev. Finlay MacKenzie and Rev. John MacPherson have intimated that they wish to resign from the Committee due to pressure of work. The Committee wishes to thank them for their contribution to the work of the Special Committee. The General Assembly thank Mr MacKenzie and Mr MacPherson for their contribution and asks the General Assembly to appoint replacements.

DONALD M. MACDONALD, Convener

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Special Committee on Praise and thank the Committee, especially the Convener.

2. The General Assembly note and approve of the production of guidelines about the requirements of copyright law and enjoin Kirk Sessions to implement its regulations as necessary.

3. The General Assembly note that Rev. Finlay MacKenzie and Rev. John MacPherson have intimated that they wish to resign from the Committee due to pressure of work. The General Assembly thank Mr MacKenzie and Mr MacPherson for their contribution to the work of the Special Committee. The General Assembly resolve to appoint replacements.

4. The General Assembly continue the remit of the Special Committee and instruct the Committee to report progress to the 2012 Assembly.

5. The General Assembly commend the work of the Committee to the prayers of the Church.
X.
REPORT
OF THE
STUDY PANEL

The Study Panel met twice during the year and the members kept in touch by email. The following two sections of the report represent what is hoped will be the penultimate stage in fulfilling the remit of the Panel. The first section covers the Panel’s findings with regard to Biblical teaching on divorce and remarriage in light of recent Biblical research and the second section consists of recommendations with regard to material for preparation for marriage.

The Panel is asking that these be sent to Presbyteries for their comments and suggestions which should be forwarded to the Panel by 31st January 2012. The Panel intends to produce a definitive report for next year’s Assembly. It is intended that this will include practical advice to ministers on dealing with various situations they may encounter in their pastoral ministry.

(A) DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

1.1 Introduction The Study Panel was appointed by the 2008 General Assembly with the remit “…to examine, in the first instance, the implications of the Public Questions Committee’s report on Marriage and Divorce, to formulate guidelines for ministers in view of Biblical teaching and the present legal situation and to report to a future Assembly…”

1.2 It is hoped to fulfil the second part of the remit in the very near future. This Report is concerned with the remit “to examine, in the first instance, the implications of the Public Questions Committee’s report on Marriage and Divorce”. This is referring to the Report to the 2008 Assembly which raised questions about some areas of the traditional understanding about marriage and divorce in light of recent Biblical research.

1.3 The 2008 Report outlined the traditional view (as understood from the Westminster Confession of Faith) thus: “…according to the traditional Scottish Presbyterian view, divorce is allowed, but only on two grounds – adultery and wilful desertion – and the divorced party is allowed to remarry.”

1.4 The Report then went on to summarise the new research which has emerged in recent years, as follows:

1.4.1 However, a different perspective has emerged in recent years. One of the leading exponents of this view is David Instone-Brewer. He has written two books, one more academic (Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible) and one more popular (Divorce and Remarriage in the Church). Methodologically, his approach differs from the traditional ones, in that he looks at the relevant Biblical texts against the contemporary historical background. Much more has been discovered in recent years about Judaism, the teaching of the Rabbis and Pharisaism than was known in even the first half of the twentieth century. Such new discoveries, and the new emphases that emerge from them, have to be treated with some caution, as is shown by “the new perspective on Paul”, for instance.

1.4.2 However, it would be utterly wrong for a Bible-believing church such as our own to ignore anything that can throw light on the meaning of the Biblical text. We lay great emphasis on our ministers being able to understand Greek and Hebrew, the languages in which the Bible was originally written. But we also need to appreciate that those languages were used in a particular historical and cultural milieu. For instance, until Greek papyri were discovered in Egypt, classical scholars thought that the New Testament was written in very bad Greek. In fact it is written in the Koine (common) Greek of the first century.

1.4.3 Instone-Brewer argues that the Old Testament, as understood by the Jewish Rabbis and Jesus’ contemporaries, teaches that there were a limited number of grounds for divorce:

- Adultery (in Deuteronomy 24:1, affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19)
- Emotional and physical neglect (in Exodus 21:10-11, affirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7)
- Abandonment and abuse (included in neglect, as affirmed in 1 Corinthians 7)

Those who divorced on these grounds were entitled to remarry. He argues that the expressions “free” or “not bound” were clearly understood in this way.

1.4.4 Interestingly, he also argues that these grounds were based on marriage vows which made a commitment to clothe, feed and love (found in marriage certificates discovered near the Dead Sea). These have formed the basis of
marriage vows ever since, even to the present day – reflected in such phrases as “love, honour and cherish” or “love, comfort, honour and keep”. The same idea occurs in Ephesians 5:28, where Paul is dealing with marriage and he says that husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies (v.28). He continues: “After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the Church”. There is the same emphasis: love, feed and care for.

1.4.5 The implication is that where these commitments are broken, divorce is permitted. Notice, Instone-Brewer says “permitted”, not mandatory. This is important, as in first century Roman society, divorce was considered mandatory...

1.4.6 If Instone-Brewer is correct, we need to rethink our position on divorce and remarriage. However, even if he is right, this does not mean that we can simply accept the present civil legal position as being correct. While Instone-Brewer maintains the idea of fault or guilt in grounds for divorce, the present legal position does not. It is obvious that this area requires more study, and it would appear that the time is ripe for the General Assembly to set up a special committee, along the lines of the previous Study Panel to look at the subject in the light of these recent studies.

1.5 Subsequent to that Report, the Study Panel’s attention was brought to Calvin’s concept of accommodation and its relation to the question of divorce. Accommodation is dealt with first in this Report.

2. Accommodation While the concept of accommodation is chiefly associated with John Calvin in his writings in his Institutes and in his Commentaries on Genesis and the Gospels, nevertheless accommodation was not original to Calvin. We can trace the origins of the concept to the writings of some of the Early Church Fathers. We shall, briefly consider four examples of the application of accommodation in early Christian writings.

2.1 Accommodation in the Early Church Fathers

2.1.1 Justin Martyr (c.100 –165) used the concept of accommodation to explain that God through Moses had given to the Jews laws on circumcision, Sabbaths, sacrifices, and many other laws because of the hardness of their hearts. However, his use of accommodation sought to bring in a hermeneutic that had no support in Scripture itself. We can see this in his interpretation of the reasons for the sacrificial system. He wrote that God, “accommodating Himself to that nation, enjoined them also to offer sacrifices, as if to His name, in order that you might not serve idols.” According to Justin Martyr God did not want the Jews to offer sacrifices, but because of their tendency to idolatry, He accommodated Himself to them by commanding them to bring sacrifices, but only to Him and not to the idol gods.

2.1.2 Origen (c.185-c.254) finds divine accommodation in Scripture and in the incarnation of Christ. Because of human weakness, Scripture comes to us in a “poor and humble style.” Several times throughout his writings Origen describes divine accommodation by picturing God as speaking “baby-talk” to us like a father to his little child or like a schoolmaster uses “little language” to his pupils (Calvin, himself, would suggest much the same in the Institutes). For example, in his comments on Jeremiah 18:6-10, where it seems that God changes his mind and “repents” of a certain contemplated action, Origen assures us that “when divine providence is involved in human affairs, God assumes human intelligence, manners and language.” Furthermore, in regard to the Incarnation, Origen applies accommodation. For Origen, “The incarnate Lord, like the written revelation in inspired scripture, is a veil that must be penetrated. It is an accommodation to our present capacities in this life.”

2.1.3 Chrysostom (c.347-407) It seems that of all the church fathers Chrysostom used accommodation extensively in his interpretation of Scripture. For example, in his work, ‘On the Incomprehensible Nature of God’ Chrysostom uses accommodation to explain the passage in Ezekiel 1 where both Ezekiel and the cherubim “approached the divine essence in itself and in its pure state.” Chrysostom argues that such language as used of the cherubim “hiding their faces with four wings” and of the appearance of heaven presented by Ezekiel in which “the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God” was revealed speaks of God’s “accommodation of condescension.”

2.1.4 Moreover, as with Origen, he stressed the fact that God in the plan of redemption accommodated Himself to human weakness. “That he who is God was willing to become man, that he mightily suffered to accommodate himself is too great to comprehend.” However, sometimes his application of the concept of accommodation seemed to go beyond the clear meaning of Scripture. Chrysostom argues, for instance, that God had intended for Adam and Eve a state of virginity, and that marriage is a divine concession or accommodation to their changed condition after they had sinned.
Augustine (354–430) taught that the language of scripture was accommodated to the understanding of ordinary readers because it was not intended to teach the theories of natural science. According to Augustine, the original writers of scripture accommodated their physical statements to the capacities of ordinary people by describing ‘sensible’ phenomena as they would appear to any observer. Therefore, according to Augustine, physical references should be interpreted in terms of those things that are immediately obvious to the senses.

For example, Genesis 1:16 refers to the creation of the “two great lights – the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.” Augustine asks, “Does this teach that the Moon is larger than the stars, since the stars are not among the “great lights”?” Augustine suspected that the stars were small enough to be set in daily rotation by the rays of the Sun, but nevertheless he insisted that this verse teaches nothing about the Moon’s actual size. Rather, adopting accommodation Augustine affirmed that it only referred to the relative appearance of the Moon and stars to the eye.

As we can see, even from this brief summary of accommodation found in the writing of the Early Church Fathers, the concept of accommodation was used as a tool to interpret Scripture where divine writ appeared to be compromised and where accommodation helped the reader understand the purposes of God behind such apparent compromise. Thus, for the writers above, readily understood language by the common man is used in the Bible as a means of making sense of the incomprehensible; thus such language becomes the key to the understanding of Scripture, particularly in such areas as creation, the incarnation and the description of God.

We now turn to the possible relevance of the doctrine of accommodation in Calvin to the ethical, social and legislative aspects of marriage and divorce.

The doctrine of Divine Accommodation, outlined by church fathers such as Augustine, Origen and Iranaeus and emphasised more famously by John Calvin, expresses the position that in all God’s dealings with his people, God adapts himself to our feeble capacities. This doctrine is considered in relation to God’s accommodating himself to finite human capacities through divine self-revelation and in God’s accommodation to the sinfulness of his own people.

In two separate but connected comments on the Mosaic permission of divorce – Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and Matthew 19:3-9 – Calvin reflects on the accommodation of God in permitting divorce. He lays out the divine parameters that indicate the development from divine prohibition to divine permission. As Calvin declares in his comments on Deuteronomy 24, the divine prohibition on divorce was “a perpetual and inviolable rule” and “God has declared, once for all, that the bond of union between husband and wife is closer than that of parent and child; wherefore, if a son cannot shake off the paternal yoke, no cause can permit the dissolution of the connection which a man has with his wife.” But as Calvin states, the Israelites’ “perverseness” was such that they “could not be restrained from dissolving a most sacred and inviolable tie.”

Thus Calvin indicates what might be considered pragmatic grounds behind the divine permission for divorce: there is the consideration for the well-being of the woman wronged by the divorcing husband. Calvin continues: “God chose to make a provision for women who were cruelly oppressed, and for whom it was better that they should at once be set free, than that they should groan beneath a cruel tyranny during their whole lives.”

Complementary to his discussion of Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Calvin, in his comments on Matthew 19:3-9, likewise attributes the accommodation of God in the matter of divorce to the “obstinacy” of the people. Calvin discusses Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ question (Matthew 19:3) “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” Calvin points out the distinction between God’s lawful enactments and Moses’ permissive legislation. As Calvin states regarding Jesus’ reply regarding Moses’ granting the certificate of divorce, “Moses permitted it on account of their obstinacy, and not because he approved of it as lawful.” This is highlighted in Jesus’ words to the Pharisees that “it was not this way from the beginning.” Thus the inviolability of the creation ordinance of marriage is established; and as Calvin continues, “it follows that whatever swerves from it does not arise from its pure nature, but from the depravity of men.” But the question remains: why did Moses enact something that in itself was “bad and sinful”? – to which Calvin replies “in an unusual sense of the word, he is said to have permitted what he did not severely forbid; for he did not lay down a law about divorces, so as to give them the seal of his approbation, but as the wickedness of men could not be restrained in any other way, he applied what was the most admissible remedy, that the husband should, at least, attest the chastity of his wife.”

Thus, extrapolating from Calvin’s comments on God’s accommodation with respect to divorce, it can be seen that God’s permitting of divorce does not equate with God’s approval of divorce. Marriage, as a creation ordinance is the divine ideal and the God-given structure for family life. Any deviation from that ideal is contrary to God’s intention for marriage as a life-long commitment between a man and a woman. Moses’ permitting of divorce
was just that: a sufferance, an allowance because of the “hardness of heart” of sinful man. Permission does not imply approval; but permission is granted as that pragmatic response to the callous nature of the human heart.

2.2.6 Now, in terms of relating the possible relevance of the doctrine of accommodation to the ethical, social and legislative aspects of marriage and divorce we must abide by the principle set forth in that doctrine in relation to divorce, viz. God accommodating to human sinfulness. Thus, for example, the church cannot impose a legislative imperative on marriage that denies divorce. If God accommodates to the sinfulness of the human heart, then the church, likewise, must seek to exercise a pragmatic, realistic allowance for divorce to occur that enables release from an unbearable marriage. Lord Hailsham’s Memoirs emphasises this position:

“I continue to think of marriage as…. a life-long obligation of mutual fidelity. But the fact is that marriages do break down, sometimes from the fault of one only of the parties, sometimes of both, occasionally as the result of circumstances outwith the control of either. In such cases, I believe that to impose an obligation of life-long celibacy on either or both of the parties terminable only on what has become an irrelevant duration of the other’s life is in the interest neither of public nor private morality, nor indeed of religious observance.”

2.2.7 This position is echoed by David Instone-Brewer who comments that “too many generations of husbands and wives have been forced to remain with their abusing or neglectful partners and have not been allowed to divorce even after suffering repeated unfaithfulness.” Both Instone-Brewer and Lord Hailsham would appear to reflect the consequences of divine accommodation in the practical outworking of an irrevocable breakdown in marriage, seeking to address the matter of how to make the unavoidable consequences of a broken marriage more tolerable to parties and children and at the same time protect public interest in maintaining the permanence of the marriage bond.

2.2.8 And it is that latter aspect that must be emphasised within the parameters of accommodation. The permitting of divorce in fact must be seen within the greater good of maintaining the primacy of the marriage union. Divorce will be permitted under the aegis of accommodating to the sinfulness of the human heart but divorce, at the same time, should be avoided whenever possible. The highest ideal is the creation ordinance of marriage; permissive legislation allowing divorce must never be confused with accepting divorce as of equal validity to marriage.

2.2.9 Adultery and Divorce in Calvin’s Geneva, 1541-1564

The extent to which Calvin adopted accommodation in the work of the Consistory of Geneva when dealing with matters of divorce can be gauged by examining contemporary records extant for the period 1541-1564 when Calvin was based in Geneva. While there is no direct evidence of any overt mention of accommodation per se in Calvin’s involvement in the various cases he was concerned with, nevertheless there is sufficient evidence that he did practice the principles behind accommodation, namely the accommodating to human sinfulness that permitted divorce whilst not approving of it.

2.2.10 The Consistory was an organisation of elders and pastors whose purpose was to control the behaviour of the citizens of Geneva. Its chairman was Calvin himself unless he was bringing a case to the Consistory, as we shall see below. While the Consistory had no executive power it acted as an investigating body, examining cases brought to it and preparing a final report for the secular government’s ‘Small Council’ to pass judgement on.

2.2.11 In Calvin’s time in Geneva only 26 divorces were granted for adultery. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence contained in the (often illegible) minutes of the Consistory records to gauge Calvin’s position regarding adultery and divorce. One such case involved his brother Antoine. Antoine was married to Anne Le Fert. Twice, in fact, Antoine filed for divorce on the grounds of his wife’s alleged adultery, first in 1548 and then in 1557. The 1548 case was dismissed, there being insufficient grounds for concluding adultery, but Antoine and Anne were ordered to go through a reconciliation ceremony. The second case did end in divorce. What is interesting is that John Calvin was involved in both cases as a joint pursuer of divorce for Antoine. Without going into the details of the allegations, it is clear that Calvin was fully supportive of his brother receiving a divorce because of his wife’s alleged (and in the second case, proven) adultery. Furthermore, on the basis of his divorce, Antoine was permitted to remarry.

2.2.12 Calvin’s support of his brother Antoine and his subsequent granting of divorce on other occasions appears to have stemmed from a pragmatic response to the moral calamity of adultery: permitting divorce without in any way questioning the inviolability of marriage. As Roger Kingdon notes of Calvin and the members of the Consistory, “they felt that marriage was a holy state in which almost all people should live. They felt that this holy state was destroyed by the sexual betrayal involved in adultery or the wilful disruption of marital life caused by desertion. They

1 Lord Hailsham, ‘A Sparrow’s Flight’, p. 206
2 David Instone-Brewer, Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible (DRB), p.314
were accordingly prepared to recommend that a marriage compromised by either be dissolved.”

This observation, coupled with Calvin’s own actions in and towards the Consistory, seems to concur with Calvin’s written attestation of God accommodating himself to the sinfulness of the human heart in permitting though not approving of divorce as a pragmatic response to the callousness of the human heart.

2.2.13 Certainly the general observation regarding the Protestant Reformers can be applied to Calvin in particular, namely that it was only with the Protestant Reformation in Europe that divorce became legally possible. This is the more pertinent in that it was the Consistory in Geneva that was at the forefront in pressing for the secular authorities (which were often more reluctant to grant divorces than the clergy) to enact legislation permitting divorce. That Calvin was the leading figure in the Geneva Consistory in its early years would suggest that Calvin did practise the principles outlined in his ‘doctrine’ of accommodation.

2.3.1 To what extent did ‘accommodation’ influence later Reformed thinking? When we examine later Reformed thinking on accommodation we can detect a drift away from what we might call the orthodoxy of Calvin to the liberal theology of the Enlightenment. This can be observed during key periods of teaching at the Academy at Geneva (founded by Calvin in 1559) chiefly in the works of father and son professors of theology - Francis Turretin (1623 -1687) and, more particularly, Jean Alphonse Turretin (1671-1737).

2.3.2 While in the work of Francis Turretin, there was no substantive change from that of Calvin in terms of his understanding of accommodation, when we analyse the position of his son Jean Alphonse Turretin on accommodation and Scripture we discover a significant development towards enlightened rationalism with Scripture placed below reason in determining truth.

2.3.3 Jean Alphonse accepted, with Calvin, the view that God accommodated his revelation to the mental capacity of mankind. However, Jean Alphonse argued that such revelation could only be accepted as historic truth if it accorded with what any reasonable individual could accept. Thus historic accuracy was only considered if verified by eyewitness accounts and fulfilled prophecy. For example the accounts of creation, the Tower of Babel and the Flood narrative were considered a form of revelation inferior the rest of the Old Testament because they could not be verified by eyewitness accounts. Reason rather than the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was considered the determining factor in interpreting early Genesis. According to Jean Alphonse, God accommodated to the limited state of the Hebrew people in transmitting these accounts in order to teach moral lessons rather than historic truth.

2.3.4 Moreover, Jean Alphonse argued that God holds individuals responsible for knowledge of the truth only in accordance with the mental capacity of the individual. If God accords less light to a people then fewer essentials are necessary for salvation. Notwithstanding, Jean Alphonse did attempt to protect the fundamental beliefs concerning salvation through Jesus Christ alone but adopted a rationalistic defence of the Christian faith against the proponents of deism and atheism. Scripture was still deemed valid for the spiritual good of mankind but where rational critique superseded historic veracity by reason alone, Jean Alphonse would argue that such revelation was accommodated to the limited level of the people and only provided a moral dimension.

2.4.1 Critique To what extent can we extend accommodation to human laws and customs which blatantly contradict Scripture? From the above, admittedly brief, historical survey above we might suggest that the use of accommodation to human laws and customs that blatantly contradict Scripture is fraught with difficulty. The propensity to use accommodation as a lever to explain away aspects of biblical truth which reason alone does not verify, would suggest that accommodation could likewise be used to justify laws which Scripture does not sanction. For example, accommodation might be used to justify euthanasia on the basis that it is reasonable to end a life from a subjective perspective based on rational criteria devoid of any Scriptural teaching on the sanctity of life.

2.4.2 Indeed, the use of accommodation as a tool to lessen the absolute nature of truth for a pragmatic, utilitarian approach to Scripture could be used to adopt a pragmatic, utilitarian approach to justifying much that is in fact contrary to biblical truth. The whole moral law could likewise be categorised as a relic of a primitive, pre-scientific society with the developments of socio-economic and cultural advancement re-shaping a moral code according to the spirit of the age. To extend accommodation, then, to human laws and customs which blatantly contradict God’s moral law runs the risk of relativising truth and making subjective reasoning of more value that Scriptural truth.

2.4.3 In spite of this, we do believe that the concept of accommodation is a helpful one when applied to divorce in two regards. First, it illustrates the struggles which theologians have had with what Instone-Brewer believes is the

Church’s misunderstanding of Scripture on this issue from the earliest times. Second, it shows that the concession of divorce is Biblical.

3. **David Instone-Brewer** Instone-Brewer’s approach to the subject is very much that of understanding the whole matter in its historical context, asking how the original hearers/readers would have understood what was said. He draws on his study of Rabbinic literature for this. He writes:

3.1 “Suddenly realising how a 1st century Jew would have understood these texts wasn’t due to a blinding flash of inspiration, but was the result of three years of hard work for my PhD which suddenly came together: three years of reading huge sections of Rabbinic literature, digging into the Mishnah, Tosephta Talmud, Philo and the Dead Sea scrolls; analysing the texts – especially to see how they interpreted the Old Testament – and comparing my findings with medieval and modern scholars. At the end of all this I could think and interpret like the ancient Rabbis themselves and I was able to unpack the highly abbreviated accounts of their debates.

3.2 When I read the words of Jesus and Paul, I found details which would have been recognised by a contemporary Rabbi, but which are meaningless to most modern readers. Both Jesus and Paul used the language and terminology used by the Rabbis – especially when speaking about divorce, which was a hot topic of debate at the time. I suppose it’s not surprising that they did so because Jesus was, after all, answering questions which were being posed by Pharisaic Rabbis, and Paul said that he had been trained under Gamaliel, who was a foremost Rabbi of the time.”

3.3 **Difficulty** His main argument is that the Christian Church, in all its branches, has been guilty of seriously misunderstanding the core New Testament texts dealing with marriage and divorce. The reason for this misunderstanding lies in an inadequate knowledge of the social and religious milieu in which these texts were first uttered and then recorded. Indeed, there is still a wealth of untranslated material which may shed further light on these issues. In any case, on the basis of the wealth of material already unearthed and translated towards the end of last century, he is calling for a major review of the church’s teaching and practice in the area of divorce and remarriage.

3.3.1 This kind of argument seems on the face of it implausible for at least two reasons: Firstly, the notion that the whole Christian communion has been in error on some points – and that for the first two thousand years of her existence – is hard to take. The possibility that all of the church has been mistaken on these points all of the time, to the misery of countless people, raises very difficult questions. However, it should be said that, as Reformed Christians, we believe that the bulk of the Church was wrong on the question of justification for the best part of a thousand years.

3.3.2 Secondly, the notion that a significant Bible teaching is likely to be misinterpreted without external evidence sits uncomfortably alongside the perspicuity of scripture. Of course, it is one thing to obtain additional light by way of corroboration or confirmation from external sources. But it is quite another to say that, with the Bible in your hands, you are likely to err in the absence of such sources – which is what Instone-Brewer appears to be saying and which would, naturally, explain why the whole church has got it so badly wrong.

3.3.3 However, the issue is not that simple and that, again, for two reasons: Firstly, there is a long-standing impression abroad in the church, probably throughout all its branches, that there is something elusive about the marriage/divorce doctrine as it appears on the face of the New Testament – a sense of something being missing somewhere. The reason for this lies in the sheer difficulty experienced in reconciling certain passages of Scripture. Undoubtedly, most Old Testament passages are plain and, apart from the phenomenon of polygamy, they conform to our classic understanding of marriage – particularly in respect of the permanence of the marriage union and the abhorrence of divorce – but there are two passages which provide a difficulty.

3.3.4 In Deuteronomy 24:1ff, which deals with the famous ‘bill of divorcement’, one of the areas of difficulty has to do with the meaning of ‘uncleanness’. It seems strange to argue, as many traditionally have done, that this ‘uncleanness’ – which provides a valid ground for divorce – is a reference to adultery, when it is well known that the punishment for adultery was not divorce but death. Therefore, on the face of it, there seems to be a possibility here that something short of adultery is given as a valid ground of divorce.

3.3.5 In Exodus 20:10f, permission is given to a woman to leave a marriage on the ground that food, clothing and conjugal rights are being denied to her. Although the wife spoken of here appears to be a slave, she is still a married

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4 David Instone-Brewer, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Church* (DRC), Intro IX
5 DRC p.4 para. 3
slave – or, ‘concubine’ – and it remains the case, therefore, that in this situation also, something short of adultery is given as a valid ground of divorce.

3.3.6 These two passages, both of great importance for Instone-Brewer, indicate that the issue is not as straightforward as it seems in terms of the interpretation of the Biblical data itself.

3.3.7 Secondly, and in relation to all that, it would go a long way to mitigating the difficulty in accepting the new position, if the missing interpretive key were to be found within the pages of scripture itself, as opposed to within extra-biblical sources. Instone-Brewer’s claim is that extra-biblical source material forces us to look at the evidence in a new light and re-interpret it accordingly. What is much more interesting is whether extra-biblical material provides an impetus towards a rethink of the evidence in the old light of the scripture itself, and whether a simple re-examination of the Biblical material yields unexpected results. In this connection, it is important to remember that the scripture is to be taken as a whole and systematised. In attaining to a clear view of doctrine, it is never enough to look at the explicitness of, say, Mark, without noting the subtle qualification of Luke.

3.4.1 The argument Instone-Brewer’s contention is that the question Jesus was asked about divorce in Matthew 19:3 was not “Is it right for a man to divorce his wife?” but “Is it right for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?” In this, the Pharisees were “testing him.” The Jews knew that Moses commanded divorce according to Deuteronomy 24:1 (Matthew 19:7). Jesus, in His reply in Matthew 19:8, corrected them by saying that Moses permitted divorce because of the hardness of men’s hearts. However, that had not been God’s intention from the beginning. Since that was the situation, it would have been nonsensical to ask Jesus if a man could divorce his wife full stop. That wasn’t in contention. It was the grounds on which he could do it.

3.4.2 The ground in Deuteronomy 24 is “some indecency”. This Instone-Brewer says could be translated “a thing of nakedness” or “a cause of sexual immorality.” It was the ground on which a man could divorce his wife, according to Deuteronomy 24, that was in contention. One rabbinical school followed Shammay, who held that “a cause of sexual immorality” meant “sexual immorality” and nothing else. The other school followed Hillel who asked the question: Why did Moses use the phrase “cause of sexual immorality” when he could simply have said “sexual immorality”? Hillel reasoned that the seemingly superfluous word “cause” must refer to another, different, ground for divorce and since this other ground is simply called a “cause”, he concluded that it meant “Any Cause”.

3.4.3 Instone-Brewer also says that there were three other grounds for divorce about which there was no dispute. These are found in Exodus 21:7-11. They are the provision of food, clothing and conjugal rights. The latter would include love and tenderness and not simply sex. He says, “…adultery is not the only sin that can end a marriage. Many marriages are ended by neglect or abuse… why is adultery a more valid reason for divorce than cruelty? Why wouldn’t God allow divorce in these situations (cruelty, abuse, neglect)? And why wouldn’t the victim be allowed, at the very least, the choice of being able to leave such a marriage? In fact the Bible does have a law which addresses this situation. Exodus 21:10-11 is a text which is usually forgotten, but it provides precisely what is needed because it allows the victim of abuse or neglect to be freed from the marriage”.

3.4.5 The slave wife was entitled, if her husband took another wife and withheld from her food, clothing and conjugal rights, to leave the marriage with no penalty. The Rabbis derived a principle from this which they said applied to all marriages. “They reasoned that if a slave wife had the right to divorce a husband who neglected to supply food, clothing and conjugal love, then a free wife would certainly also have this right. And they argued that if one of two wives had this right, then so did an only wife. Furthermore, if a wife had these rights, then a husband was also entitled to the same right to divorce a wife who neglected him. The Biblical principle which is established, therefore, is the right of someone to divorce their partner if they neglect their vow to give you food, clothing or conjugal love.” (This would be an example of deducing matters from Scripture by good and necessary consequence.)

3.4.6 Instone-Brewer goes on to say that the four grounds for divorce corresponded to the vows couples took in marrying. “They promised to feed, clothe, exchange conjugal love and be faithful to each other. The man agreed to provide food and cloth, and the woman agreed to cook and sew, and they both agreed to share conjugal love and be faithful.”

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8 DRC p.20 para. 2
9 DRC p.20 paras. 3,4
10 DRC p.21 paras. 3,4
11 DRC p.22 para. 3
He adds, “Abusive situations were covered by these laws because physical and emotional abuse are extreme forms of neglecting material support or physical affection”.

The discussion about “any cause” as opposed to “for sexual immorality only” dated from farther back, but was still live in Jesus’ day even although most divorces were on the grounds of “any cause”, which is why His opponents asked the question. They were trying to show him in a bad light as too narrow. However, as time passed, the Shammaite view faded and, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the dispersal of the Jews, only the Hillelite view survived. It was this Judaism that the early church knew.

Jesus was never asked, so far as we know, about the other three grounds of divorce. The reason would be that these were never in contention. Given by God through Moses, they continued. It was the “any cause” divorce around which debate centred. Thus, there were these four grounds for divorce accepted by all Jews as Scriptural.

There is a difference between gospel writers as to the question Jesus was asked. Mark (10:1-12) gives the impression that the question was about divorce, full stop – the Pharisees “began to question him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife”. (The wording of Deuteronomy 24 makes the husband the one who divorces, whereas a wife could do so on the other three grounds). Jesus’ response to his disciples about this was that any man who divorced his wife and married another woman was committing adultery against his wife, and the same went for a wife. Therefore, it looked as if when people did divorce, they could not remarry.

Mark wrote his gospel earlier than the others. At that time people would still be familiar with the debate over “for any cause” and they would automatically add “for any cause” to the question, “Can a man divorce his wife?”

However, when Matthew wrote, the “any cause” divorce was the order of the day so he had to add “for any cause” to show what exactly Jesus was being asked. Jesus’ reply was that, in the context of the dispute, sexual immorality/adultery was the only lawful ground.

In answering his questioners, Jesus made it very clear that the focus of all should be on maintaining the marriage bond. When two become one in marriage this is following God’s plan for the human race and no one should separate what he has joined. However, it is not impossible to separate what God has joined. Whichever party to the marriage breaks the marriage vows is guilty of separating/breaking up the marriage. Divorce by the “innocent” party is simply legally recognizing what has already been done.

By speaking of the hardness of men’s hearts as the reason for God permitting divorce, Jesus was meaning persistent, unrepentant breaking of the marriage vows. The example in this was God. When unfaithful Israel prostituted herself with the gods of the nations and wouldn’t listen to the entreaties of Yahweh her Husband, he wrote a bill of divorce and put her away (Jeremiah 3 especially v.8). Following God’s pattern, forgiving and seeking to save the marriage would be the way until persistent breaking of the marriage vows made this impossible.

To come back to the overall picture, if this was the way the Jews of Jesus’ day looked at the matter, why has the Christian church lost sight of the Exodus 21 element? Instone-Brewer says that the destruction of Jerusalem changed the whole world of Judaism and cut off Christianity from its Jewish roots. Only Hillelite rabbis survived and “any cause” divorce was simply called divorce. As above, it was this Judaism which the early church knew. This explains why the 2nd century Christian church had a partly different view on divorce and remarriage to that of Jesus, the apostles and the early church.

Instone-Brewer’s explanation is that language changes and former usages become forgotten or misunderstood. He gives various examples, including how in youth slang “wicked” has changed from meaning something evil, to something good. Anyone who wasn’t aware of the meaning “wicked” had in the past would understand it only in today’s terms. In the same way, Matthew’s “is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” was (mis)understood as “is divorce ever lawful?” not as a question about who was right, Hillel or Shammai.

This is why, in seeking to understand Scripture, we need to know how it would be understood by people of the time and, for that, we need to understand their culture and circumstances, and this is what the Church fathers of

11 DRC p.22 para. 4
12 See whole section DRB pp.184-7
13 DRC ch.12
14 DRC p.111
the second century did not understand. We have so much more information and background evidence today and so can better understand the situation.

3.4.18 Instone-Brewer also says that “...the 2nd century Roman world was dominated by corrupt and degenerate sexual practice... sexual immorality was all-pervasive ... the sexual act was despised and feared by the church as a source of corruption and spiritual disease and the church ended up being suspicious of conjugal relations within marriage” As for remarriage after the death of a spouse, “...if a widow or widower remarried it was regarded as evidence of lasciviousness because they had done their sexual duty by being married before... the church gradually elevated celibacy higher and higher until, by 9th century, the Roman church had decided that priests must be unmarried, that celibacy within marriage was a pious attitude, and that sexual relations without the goal of having children were sinful. This trend, which started in the 2nd century, was largely based on the misunderstanding that both Jesus and Paul taught that virginity was superior to the married state and that remarriage was always impious and often sinful.”

3.4.19 Instone-Brewer also says that it is right to apply the principles behind God’s command in Old Testament to NT situations. This would mean that divorce is lawful for Christians where there is physical or mental cruelty, the failure to love and cherish (including normal sexual relations) and the failure to provide sufficiently.

3.4.20 With regard to marriage after divorce, Instone-Brewer says that the certificate of divorce among the Jews always declared that the divorced person was free to marry. In NT times, remarriage after divorce was the norm in Roman society across the empire. This was without ceremony. A person either left the home or was ejected from it. They were now divorced and free to remarry. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15, gives us the example of the unbelieving partner to a marriage leaving. That was divorce Roman style. The Christian partner was now free to remarry but “only in the Lord.”

3.5.1 Instone-Brewer’s position Instone-Brewer argues that the marriage contract (a term which he prefers to use rather than covenant) of the Old Testament shares the same characteristics as marriage contracts in the surrounding Ancient Near Eastern cultures. In these contracts, there are clearly defined rewards for entering into marriage and clearly defined penalties for failing to keep its obligations. Instone-Brewer argues that the Old Testament information on marriage is rather scanty, simply because the general situation regarding marriage was well understood—indeed, he argues, the only time specific reference is made to marriage is when legislation is being enacted which is different in some respect to that prevailing in the surrounding culture. Invariably, this legislation grants greater rights to the woman within marriage and, inevitably, greater rights to her on its dissolution.

3.5.2 For example, according to Instone-Brewer, the right of a woman to a divorce – and to a subsequent remarriage — is a right granted by Mosaic law but denied in the surrounding cultures. This right is plainly stated in the controverted passage in Deuteronomy 24. The main purpose of this passage has been understood to lie in forbidding remarriage to a former spouse – usually for dowry reasons – but Instone-Brewer argues that the right of divorce and remarriage is, itself, enshrined in the passage and ought not to be overlooked. Furthermore, the right to remarry is fundamental to the issuing of the certificate: the certificate is a declaration of the woman’s right to marry whoever she wishes. If a husband was not willing to issue the certificate, and if the woman’s ground was valid, he could be compelled by the authorities to do so.

3.5.3 In keeping with other cultures, however, Instone-Brewer argues that both parties, within an Israelite marriage, had legitimate ground for divorce in the case of emotional or physical neglect. The key passage here is the one already referred to, found in Exodus 21:7-11 – particularly verse 11 – which appears to teach that a wife is free to leave her husband if he fails to provide ‘food, clothing and marriage rights’.

3.5.4 The significance of these passages – particularly the latter – is that they were both recognised as constituting valid grounds for divorce by the Rabbinic School of Shammai, who were – unlike the opposing school of Hillel – opposed to a “for any cause” divorce. The school of Hillel, which became by far the majority Rabbinic school by the time of Christ, had come to interpret Deuteronomy 24:1f in a particularly lax way: for them, it was allowable to divorce for ‘any cause’ or ‘any matter’. For the school of Shammai, the divorce was only allowable in the case of a ‘matter of indecency’ (lit. nakedness of a matter/thing) being found in the wife. This was understood by them much as it has been traditionally by the Christian church – if not a reference to adultery, then at least something approximating to it. In this way, it was held by the school of Shammai that, in the context of Deuteronomy 24, divorce was lawful on the basis of ‘indecency’ – but this was not considered to be in any way inconsistent with there being other lawful grounds for divorce.

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15 DRC p.121 second half
16 DRC p.82
3.5.5 From this, Instone-Brewer argues that the best way to understand Christ’s pronouncements regarding divorce is to see them as a ruling on a contemporary debate between the two Rabbinic schools. In this debate, between those who approved of divorce for ‘any cause’ and those who approved of it for ‘indecency of matter’, Christ upheld the latter and pronounced accordingly. Therefore, to act on the basis of ‘any cause’ divorce would be spiritually invalid (even if not illegal) and, in the event of the subsequent remarriage of either party, would involve adultery for all involved – presumably on the ground that the original marriage was somehow still in force. According to Instone-Brewer, Christ went further than the School of Shammai here, in that they tended to accept the rulings of Hillel-dominated courts even if they did not agree with them. Instone-Brewer argues, however, that we should not assume that Christ disapproved of the other Old Testament grounds for divorce. Rather, like the Rabbinic school with which he sided, he gave a ruling on the verse in dispute without commenting on other related issues. In this way, and especially by a comparison with Paul’s treatment of sexual and emotional neglect and desertion (which is really a form of neglect) in 1 Corinthians 7, Instone-Brewer concludes that the legitimate grounds for divorce are wider than they have traditionally been held to be and include physical and emotional neglect as well as adultery and desertion.

3.5.6 Divorce on the grounds of Exodus 21 was not a matter in dispute, but was accepted by all Jews without exception, whereas other matters were not accepted by all. Therefore, the issue doesn’t come into the gospels.

3.5.7 Paul accepted this as still valid: “Paul referred to the Jewish law when he taught Christian sexual morals to the Corinthians. Perhaps he did this because many of the Christians in Corinth came from a Jewish background, but it is more probable that he did it because he based all his moral teachings in the Old Testament. Although many commentators have missed the reference to Exodus 21:10-11 in this passage, others have noticed it... [T]he rabbis found three grounds for divorce in this passage, based on the three obligations of providing love, food and clothing. They divided these into two groups: emotional obligations and material obligations. He has dealt with the emotional obligations in these verses (1 Corinthians 7:1-7.) In verses 32-35, Paul deals with the material obligations.”

3.5.8 “Paul described the material obligations, like the emotional obligations, in terms of exact equality of men and women. This equality is emphasized almost to the point of repetitiveness. The rabbis also taught that the obligation of material provision applied to both men and women, even although it only applied to the man in the original legislation of Exodus 21:10-11. Presumably they felt that if a slave wife had a right to food and clothes, then so did the free wife, and so did a man. As seen in chapter five, the rabbis carefully defined both the amount of food and clothing the husband had to provide, and the tasks that the wife had to perform in preparing the meals and clothes. Paul did not speak in such legalistic terms. He referred to the husband and wife who wished to ‘please’ each other. He said nothing negative about these material concerns, even though they are ‘of the world’. This is an obligation within marriage that he recognized in the Law.”

3.5.9 The only other ground for divorce was adultery (sexual sin) as Jesus made clear to those who asked Him, “Is it lawful for as man to divorce his wife ‘for any cause’?”

3.5.10 Instone-Brewer makes it clear that Jesus and Paul taught that divorce was not obligatory. Forgiveness and reconciliation were to be tried first. However, in the face of persistent breach of the marriage contract due to hardness of heart, the wronged spouse could divorce and remarry.

3.5.11 In the context of divorce on the grounds of adultery, Jesus taught that remarriage was lawful. Paul, speaking on the basis of Exodus 21:10-11, in v.15 of 1 Corinthians 7, “quotes from a standard Jewish divorce certificate ... You are free to marry any Jewish man you wish” adapting it to the Christian context – “she is free to be married to whom she wishes; only in the Lord.”

3.6.1 Assessment How far should we accept Instone-Brewer’s argument and how would this relate to the Westminster Confession of Faith’s teaching on divorce? If his argument is Biblical, which it appears to be, we should accept it. To make it clear to others is perhaps more difficult. For instance, it is notoriously difficult to make the seemingly abrupt, unambiguous pronouncements of Christ on this matter mean anything other than adultery alone being the only lawful ground of divorce. And, on the basis of these words alone, the possibility of there being other grounds is often dismissed out of hand. However, it is strangely overlooked in such reasoning that, in subscribing to the Confession of Faith, we already accept another ground for divorce—desertion. The consequences of this are really quite far-reaching. Unless we suppose additional apostolic revelation on this issue which effectively overrides the word of Christ – which is problematic – we must acknowledge that adultery is, in fact, not the only ground on which

17 DRB p.194, last para.
18 DRB p. 196, first para.
19 DRC p.84, para.4
divorce can be granted. In other words, we already acknowledge, essentially, the position which Instone-Brewer is advancing—that Christ’s words are somehow limited in application by the context in which he spoke them.

3.6.2 The Westminster Confession of Faith gives adultery and desertion as the only two Biblical grounds for divorce (24.6). But neglect and abuse – not looking after a spouse’s material and emotional needs properly – is an abandonment of the promises involved in marriage, a rejection of the other. In essence it is desertion. This could fit within the terms of the Confession.

3.6.3 It was, of course, possible that good men of the past could miss the significance of the Biblical passages. Even the commentator Matthew Henry, in commenting on Exodus 21 said, “The laws recorded in this chapter relate to the fifth and sixth commandments; and though they are not accommodated to our constitution, especially in point of servitude, nor are the penalties annexed binding on us, yet they are of great use for the explanation of the moral law, and the rules of natural justice.” The only lesson he draws from verses 7-11 is the general point: “Thus did God provide for the comfort and reputation of the daughters of Israel, and has taught husbands to give honour to their wives (be their extraction ever so mean) as to the weaker vessels, (1 Peter 3:7).” 20

3.6.4 He seems to be saying, “This is what the Bible says and is part of the moral law of God, the practice is just and according to natural law, but we have different ideas and customs, so we ignore the specifics of Exodus 21”.

3.6.5 This is not a valid position for those who take the Bible seriously. Instone-Brewer’s position does much more justice to passages like this which the Church has found difficult, and the Panel recommends his position to the careful consideration of the Church.

3.7.1 Conclusion It is quite clear from Scripture that marriage is regarded as sacred and is intended to be lifelong. The key passage appears first in Genesis 2, with regard to the first married couple: “A man shall leave his father and mother, be united to his wife and they will become one flesh” (v.24). It is quoted by Jesus in Matthew 19, where he adds, “Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate” (v.6). It is quoted again by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:31, where he is using the marriage bond of love as an illustration of the relationship between Christ and his Church. If husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church, that love is to be permanent.

3.7.2 However, we have to face the reality (and the Bible faces the reality) that married love between sinful human beings is sometimes not permanent. Because of the hardness of human hearts, the marriage bond is destroyed by adultery, desertion, neglect or abuse.

3.7.3 In such cases the Bible allows for divorce. However, it must be recognised that although it may be a remedy for an intolerable situation, it is not a cure. Once the marriage bond is broken, nothing can put everything back together again. This is particularly true where there are children involved. God’s design is that children are brought up in the stable, loving and safe environment of their parents’ marriage. While it is true that through death children may be brought up by a single parent or parent and step-parent, that situation is different, because their other parent is not still around. Inevitably, in divorce children are caught up in the tensions, the arguments and the divisions, not only of their parents, but of the wider community of family and friends. It is not impossible that, by the grace of God, children may not only survive such a situation, but develop normally, but the odds are stacked against them.

3.7.4 But this is not only true with regard to the children. Separation and divorce tear at the very heart of husband and wife. They are hurt at the most vulnerable place of all — the place of love and compassion and tenderness. God has declared that they are one. They cannot simply be separated back into the same two individuals they were before.

3.7.5 Nevertheless, it must be recognised that the Bible does allow for the remedy of divorce and remarriage, and it appears from Instone-Brewer’s study in particular that the Bible allows for divorce not only in the cases of adultery and desertion, but also in the cases of neglect and abuse. But it must be stressed that divorce is not mandatory, even in the case of adultery. Hosea was commanded to redeem his adulterous wife as an illustration of the forgiving grace of God for a spiritually adulterous Israel.

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3.7.6 It should also be stressed that there is no indication in Scripture that there is any instance where divorce is permitted, but not remarriage. Both Old Testament and New make it clear that where divorce is permitted, remarriage is also permitted (Exodus 21:11, 1 Corinthians 7:15). “Free” and “not bound” mean “free to marry”.

3.7.7 What about the “guilty party” in a divorce? The whole concept of “guilty party” is no longer recognised in civil law, as the only ground for divorce now is “the irretrievable breakdown of marriage”. However, in the eyes of God, the person who commits adultery or deserts or neglects or abuses their spouse is guilty.

3.7.8 But is the guilty party free to remarry? It is difficult to see why not. If a true Biblical divorce is granted, then the marriage is ended and both partners are free to remarry. However, if a Christian marriage is being sought by the person responsible for breaking the original marriage, there should be genuine evidence of repentance.

3.8 Where do we go from here? The Study Panel is proposing that this report be remitted to Presbyteries for their careful consideration and responses in good time for the Study Panel to report to the 2012 General Assembly, which Report will also relate the Panel’s findings to the legal situation today and will include practical guidelines for ministers.

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(B) MARRIAGE PREPARATION

1.1 Introduction Prevention is better than cure. We lament the number of broken marriages in society, yet a small survey of ministers in the Free Church revealed that on average about two hours were spent discussing marriage with couples planning to get married. As ministers of the Gospel we can spend ten hours or more preparing one thirty minute sermon for a Sunday. It begs the question whether two hours with a couple is sufficient to prepare them for a lifetime of marriage.

1.2 The need for marriage preparation is striking. In Scotland during the year 2010 there were over twenty eight thousand marriages, but there were also ten thousand divorces (figures from National Statistics). It is reckoned that two out of every three marriages will end in divorce. It is undoubtedly the case that many enter into marriage with the possibility of divorce in mind if things do not work out as they had hoped. Such high divorce rates demonstrate that there is a great need for people to be better prepared for the demands of married life.

1.3 Because of the high rate of divorce there is a generation of children being brought up in broken homes. Previous generations, even if there were no marriage preparation courses, did have a model of marriage (good or bad) presented to them in the home. With an increasing number of children being deprived of that, we are left with a society that is uneducated as to what marriage is meant to look like. A child’s painful experience of parents separating can lead them to conclude that marriage is more trouble than it is worth. Some young adults have a very warped view of marriage because of what they have witnessed and experienced in their own homes.

1.4 There is also an increasing tendency by parents to leave all moral teaching to the education system. Sex education is taught in a supposedly amoral context. Sexual experimentation is encouraged and homosexual and bisexual behaviour is taught as legitimate alternatives to heterosexual. A variety of sexual experiences and partners is considered normal. Marriage is presented as an option, but not necessarily a preferred option. At the same time children are seeing high profile celebrity weddings and the appeal of the hype and glamour of these events is making marriage trendy again for some. When couples come asking to be married, the motivation behind it may well be that Will and Kate got married, rather than because that is what God requires. There is a need for biblical re-education.

1.5 Marriage preparation for those who wish a Christian marriage ceremony has to be the responsibility of the Church. When we agree to perform a wedding service we are encouraging and facilitating the couple to enter into the
marriage covenant. In agreeing to perform a marriage service we are enabling a man and woman to enter into a relationship sanctioned by God. We are encouraging them into a relationship designed for the raising of children and the wellbeing of society. We are legitimising a relationship of amazing intimacy. We are creating a covenant between two people and God which carries with it life-long commitment and huge responsibilities for which they must give an account. We are leading them into a relationship that is intended to reflect the relationship between Christ and his church. If we do not do all that we can to prepare people for something so important, perhaps we become party to the guilt of marriage breakdown. It could be argued that by merely glancing at the issues with the couple intending to marry we are actually communicating to them that marriage doesn’t really matter that much. By apologetically skimming over what the Bible says about marriage the sub-text may well be that the Bible and what it says about marriage can be ignored. In his Premarital Counselling Handbook, H. Norman Wright claims that, “For too many years it has been too easy to get married. Unfortunately in many cases the church has contributed to the divorce problem of our nation by promoting easy weddings. People have spent more time preparing to obtain their driver’s license than in preparing for their marriage” (Wright, 21).

1.6 The importance of marriage preparation is also seen in the teaching of Scripture. To be ready and prepared is a scriptural command. For example in the story of the ten virgins the foolish were unprepared for the bridegroom coming, the five wise were prepared. Although the story is not about marriage as such, it does provide the principle that those who are wise prepare for future events and that seeking to prepare for an event after it has taken place is pointless. Preparation for marriage needs to be done before the event not after the marriage takes place.

1.7 Also when we look at the picture of Christ and the church, which all marriages are meant to mirror, we see preparation. Jesus speaks of going to prepare a home for his Church (John 14:2-3). The work of redemption is viewed as Christ taking his church as his wife-to-be, and “cleansing her by the washing of water through the word to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Ephesians 5:26-27). At the end the church comes “out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Revelation 20:2). Jesus prepares his church before there is the marriage feast. It would seem strange that Christ would take so much care and attention to ensure that all is prepared for that final and greatest of all weddings in heaven while we treat with a measure of indifference the need for preparations for weddings here on earth. The example of Christ would suggest that marriage preparation is essential.

2. Marriage Preparation Course The Study Panel has examined a number of published marriage preparation courses but it was felt that they were either Biblically weak, culturally inappropriate, over-intrusive, or excessively demanding. It was agreed to attempt to prepare something that could be easily used in various situations. The aim in general terms was to produce something that could be adapted:

- To suit different age groups
- To suit different church backgrounds
- To suit different relationship histories
- To suit different levels of Christian commitment

It was felt that the course needed to be

- Biblical
- Simple
- Not too long
- Not over-intrusive

It was agreed that a marriage preparation course should involve no more than three sessions. However it may be beneficial to invite the couple for a meal before the first session just to get to know them a little better. The three sessions would look at:

1. Marriage and God

Essentially the aim of the first session seeks to cover (or uncover) the couples belief in God and view of Christ. It introduces them to the Bible as God’s book to guide in all things. It emphasises commitment and accountability. Finally it gives a taste of what marriage preparation will involve.

2. Marriage in the Bible

The aim of session two is to make the couple focus on the Bible’s teaching on marriage and to get them to think seriously about the practical implications of what the Bible teaches.
3. **Marriage service**

The third session will focus on the order of service and the wedding day, but the main focus will be on the vows and the content (readings and praise) of the wedding service.

**SESSION ONE - Marriage and God**

The aim of the session is to help the couples realise that we are not just providing some kind of professional service that enables them to fulfil a romantic dream or a nice tradition. It is designed to make them see that God is real and that they should take him seriously, and that we take what we do seriously.

1. **Church Wedding** – The fact that a couple have asked for a church wedding suggests at the very least a belief in God. This allows opportunity to discuss:

   - Their own church history
   - Church attendance
   - Taking God seriously
   - Recognising the fact that God does not appear for a wedding service and then disappear.

2. **Christian Service** – The couple are asking not just to get married but to have a Christian marriage, conducted by a Christian minister. Discuss:

   - Why not civil ceremony?
   - Why is it important to have Christ’s blessing on their wedding day?
   - What it means to them have Christ’s blessing in their married lives not just their wedding day.

3. **Marriage Vows** – The couple will make vows to each other at their wedding service but also take them before God.

   - The celebrant’s sense of responsibility and accountability.
   - The couple’s sense of responsibility and accountability.

4. **Marriage Guidance** – God does not leave us without marriage guidance. He has given us his Word. Look at:

   - Their understanding of the Bible
   - Introduction to some Bible passages about marriage
   - The place the Bible already has in their lives.

5. **Marriage Preparation** – No one would go out driving on the road without getting lessons and passing a test. It would be considered dangerous to just let someone get behind a wheel without preparing them for all that they will encounter on the road. Yet somehow we think that we can go into something much more serious, like marriage, without any preparation or instruction.

   - What influences their understanding of marriage
   - What examples they have seen (good or bad)
   - The purpose and aim of marriage preparation

**SESSION TWO – Marriage and the Bible**

Rather than use several passages of scripture this session focuses mainly on Genesis 2:18-25

1. **Marriage designed and gifted by God.**

   - Marriage is God’s idea. He designed it for a purpose. Must refer to God to understand marriage. Reflects his nature.
   - Look at the story of creation. It is good, it is good, it is good…. It is not good for man to be alone. Marriage intended for companionship/helpmeet.
• Adam and Eve brought together by God. No accident. Adam is God’s gift to Eve, Eve God’s gift to Adam. Discuss how the couple met. Realise that it was no coincidence. Need to recognise each other as God’s gift. This should affect the way they view each other and treat each other throughout marriage.

2. Marriage involves a leaving.
   • Leaving home - In an ideal situation this means leaving the parental home to live with each other in marriage. Living with each other is meant to be after marriage not before.
   • Leaving parents - means more than leaving the family home. While maintaining strong relationships with families they must not have priority over wife/husband. This deals with the topic of in-laws and close friends. Looks at need to resolve problems without interference from outside, etc.
   • Leaving singleness – looking at how it is impossible to maintain the single lifestyle in marriage. Discuss the ‘invasion’ (pleasant though it may be) into their life of another person. (For co-habiting couples this would take on a slightly different slant).
   • Leaving personal ambition – look at careers, etc. When work plans/ambitions take priority leads to problems. This will be dealt with in Session 3 also.

Point of this is to recognise that in marriage that a person’s priorities must change. The husband/wife must become the focal point of each others attention/affection.

3. Marriage means holding on.

Genesis 2 gives the picture of hanging on tightly. Speaks of:

• Faithfulness – sexual. Commitment to have no intimate or physical relationship with anyone else.
• Faithfulness – in a broader sense. Unfaithfulness may also involve alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, the lack of support or affection. Vows include much more than just sexual faithfulness.
• Commitment – back-bone of a relationship. This ‘covenantal’ aspect is what makes the difference between marriage and living together. Consider the ‘what ifs’. What if illness, financial troubles, can’t have family, depression etc? Vows are for better, for worse.
• Permanency – ‘till death us do part’. No get out clauses. Marriage not to be entered into ‘to see how it goes’. Life-long commitment being made.

4. Marriage involves two becoming one.

• Sexual union. Bible not prudish. Gift from God but only in marriage. Deal with temptations before marriage. Expectations after marriage not to be dictated by magazines, TV, books etc. (May also be the time to introduce a Christian perspective on contraception)
• Social union. Becoming Mr and Mrs … look at the wider implications of this.
• Union of hopes - look at dreams, aspirations. Have the couple thought about and discussed family plans, work plans, all future plans?
• Spiritual union – This becomes more difficult if a Christian is marrying a non-Christian, but still needs to be confronted. For a couple who are both committed Christians it would deal with service, hospitality etc. For uncommitted couples it would cover church attendance, place of Bible and prayer in marriage, children attending Sunday school and so on. They need to be sure that they are pulling in same direction.

5. An example for marriage (Ephesians 5:21-33)

• Mutual responsibility
• Husbands love – Look at the idea of headship and what that means by way of selfless sacrifice
• Wives submit – to the love and sacrifices of a caring husband.

SESSION THREE – Marriage service

In this session the couple would be given the relevant documentation and guidelines for applying for their marriage schedule. The minister would talk them through it and then would deal with the couple’s plans for the service itself.

Sample order of services would be considered, e.g.
1. Singing
2. Proclamation and call for objections
3. Short prayer
4. Brief address to explain that marriage is a divinely ordained institution
5. Vows*
6. Declaration that the couple are man and wife
7. Exchange of rings
8. Prayer
9. Signing of Schedule (If you prefer this can be done at the end of the service)
10. Singing
11. Scripture reading and brief address  (This may be done earlier in the service)
12. Singing
13. Benediction

* There is no set form of vows in Scotland. It is therefore possible for the couple to have an element of choice as to which vows they wish to take, provided they are acceptable to the celebrant. Sample vows would be provided and each element talked through, for example:

I call upon those present to witness that I ........ take you ........ to be my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honour and cherish, according to God’s holy will, until he separate us by death and this I faithfully promise.

Also this session would introduce couples to various Bible passages on marriage some of which could be used for their wedding service. The idea is that they will go and read the passages of scripture themselves and perhaps choose one or more for the reading at the wedding service. This is intended not just to get them thinking about marriage but to get them reading the Bible together. The minister would quickly run through the passages giving brief comments and then ask them to read them before the arrangements are finalised. Below are some suggested passages:

- Genesis 2:18-25 (to remind us that marriage is from God)
- Song of Solomon (to show that God is not prudish)
- Proverbs 31:10-31 (to correct any wrong ideas about the woman’s role)
- Matthew 5:27-32 (deals with faithfulness)
- Matthew 19:1-12 (deals with divorce)
- 1 Corinthians 7 (Paul on many aspects of marriage)
- 1 Corinthians 13 (the nature of love)
- Ephesians 5:22-33 (political incorrectness that needs explaining)
- 1 Peter 3:1-7 (the weaker partner?)
- 1 John 4:7-21 (love’s greatest gift)

Finally in this third Session a check-list of other things to think about regarding arrangements for the wedding day and the wedding reception needs to be brought to the attention of the couple.

This is only a brief outline of the contents of the proposed marriage preparation course. It would be produced in such a way that it could be adapted to suit different couples and different situations but it would give a platform for ministers to work from. Before a fuller version of the proposed course is developed it was felt that any comments regarding the format or content would be useful from those who would be using the materials.

DONALD M. MACDONALD, Convener

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 direct that the report of the Study Panel be sent to Presbyteries for their comments and suggestions which should be sent to the Study Panel by 31st January 2012.

3. The General Assembly renew the remit of the Study Panel and direct the Panel to report to the 2012 Assembly.
XI.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF MINISTRY

1. Introduction  The central responsibility of the Board is recognising candidates for the ministry as recommended by their Presbytery. The Board is also responsible for supervising such candidates during their university and College training as well as monitoring progress during their studies. The Board is further tasked, for the moment implicitly, by the General Assembly to review all applications to the Free Church ministry from ministers of other denominations.

This remit places the work of the Board at the nerve centre of the Church, for the Confession of Faith asserts that the primary marks of the church of Christ are ‘the reading of the scriptures with godly fear,’ together with ‘sound preaching, and conscionable hearing of the word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence’ (XXI, v). Both Jesus and the apostles highlight the vital significance of teaching sound (or healthy) teaching in the church. Jesus took to task some of the Bible scholars in his own day for nullifying the Word of God by deferring to human tradition (Mark 7.13). Paul in his correspondence to Timothy written against a background in which church leaders were departing from the faith and destroying the faith of some (1 Timothy 2.17-18), highlights the importance Timothy becoming one who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Timothy 2.15). In exercising its care for the students under its supervision, the Board’s desire for them seeks to emulate Paul’s ambition for young Timothy.

The Board met on three occasions over the past twelve months. All its meetings were marked by a warm sense of fellowship and all its decisions were unanimous.

2. Students at the Free Church College  During academic session 2010-11 there were eleven students recognised by the Church as candidates for the ministry and undertaking prescribed courses in the College. These are:

First Year: Neil Macdonald; Daniel Paterson; James Ross
Second Year: Hugh Ferrier, Alasdair Macaulay; Andrew Pearson
Third Year: Donald Mackinnon, Calum Smith, Rory Stott
Fourth Year: Alexander Stewart
Master’s Course: Johnathan Keenan

In addition, Mr Colin Ross, who previously completed the College course as a private student and who later applied and was accepted for recognition as a candidate for the ministry, completed an extra mural course on Free Church Principles and fulfilled the requirement for placement training, and indicated his desire to apply to be licensed.

The Board was encouraged by the reports received from the Church’s external examiners of the high academic standards being achieved by the students.

3. Students granted Recognition as Candidates for the Ministry  The Board is encouraged that young men continue to hear and respond to the Lord’s call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Board is glad to report that during the past twelve months it granted recognition to Mr Daniel Paterson, Perth, Mr James Ross, Dingwall, Mr Thomas Davis, Back, and Mr Sean Ankers, Inverness Free North, as Candidates for the Ministry.

4. Licensing of Final Year Students  While all Final Year students have indicated their intention to apply to Presbyteries for licensing as Probationers, two have raised with the Board concerns as to their position since their personal conviction regarding public worship is to avoid the use of uninspired materials of praise and instrumental music. While the Board is pastorally sympathetic to these concerns, it recognised that it is not within its remit to make recommendations regarding the form of worship in the Church at large.

5. Assessment of Candidates for the Ministry  In response to correspondence with the Strategy Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees to the effect that there may have been a lack of consistency over time in the assessment of candidates, the Board is exploring ways in which assessment be developed more uniformly, and which examines character and gifts in much greater detail and which utilises some objective analysis. The Board will report to the next General Assembly.
6. **Accommodation for Free Church College Students**  
The Board has received assurances from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Administrative Officer that a sufficient number of church flats will be made available to Free Church students. The Board is keeping the accommodation needs of students under review.

*7. Scripture Examination*  
In light of the current UK Border Agency regulations stipulating that international students cannot apply for a visa unless they have an unconditional offer from the College, the Senate has taken the view that it can no longer hold a Scripture Entrance Exam. An Unconditional Offer must therefore be offered to international students. However, the Senate was also of the opinion that Candidates for the Ministry should still be examined in Scripture and that Presbyteries should now organise and set an Entrance Exam prior to students entering College as well as continuing their current practice of setting Scripture Exams for Second Year entrance and subsequent years. The Board acquiesced in this opinion and is proposing legislation to put it into effect.

8. **Student Finance Scheme**  
The Board of Ministry has the responsibility of administering the Student Finance Scheme. The money which goes into the Scheme is now collected from individual congregations through the Administration Levy. The Scheme is means tested. If a student declares annual income over a certain figure (£13,500 at present) then the amount they receive from the Scheme declines in relation to what they declare. Where a Free Church student is married his wife’s income has to date been taken into account.

The purpose of the Scheme is to ensure that our students experience as little financial hardship as possible during their time of study at the Free Church College. On the whole it has worked well but certain inconsistencies have come to light. The Board has undertaken to review completely the mechanics of the Scheme.

In terms of financial support the Board’s direct commitment is through the Student Finance Scheme, the payment of Fees where this is necessary, subsidising student lunches and paying the salary (80% of the Equal Dividend rate) for students during placements. For a student on a three year course and benefiting from all of the above the Board’s financial commitment to his training is in the region of £12,000 to £13,000 a year. The Board will share with the Personnel Committee the relevant documentation of its proposals to update the Student Finance Scheme.

*9. Probationary Placement Legislation*  
Act XLVI Anent Probationary Placements (2008) is due to take effect from May 2012 when the first group of students who were recognised as candidates for the ministry after the passing of the Act will complete their course. The Board is recommending delay in the enactment of this Act in order to allow it to examine in greater detail the budgetary implications for the Board in providing stipends and for congregations in providing housing and meeting expenses. In addition, recent legislation regarding Annual Leave and Sick Leave would need to be written into the Act.

With all this in mind the Board is seeking the permission of the General Assembly to examine the implications of the legislation and report back to the 2012 General Assembly and to delay implementing the Probationary Placement legislation until 2013.

10. **Applications for Admission to the Free Church Ministry**  
During the year the Board received applications for admission to the Free Church from three ministers of other denominations. The Board is recommending to the Assembly that these applications be accepted.

11. **In-Service Training Course and Positively Presbyterian Conference**  
The January In-Service Training course had a strong focus on preaching and pastoral issues. Those who attended spoke highly of the Course. The Board expresses its thanks to Dr Fergus Macdonald, Mr Angus Campbell and Rev. Nigel Anderson for organising the programme. The Board is grateful to Mr Donald Macdonald of Macdonald Hotels for his generosity in providing the Holyrood Hotel for participants at a reduced cost. The Board agreed that the In-Service Course is well worthwhile and hopes to continue running it in future years.

Positively Presbyterian (the successor to the Summer School in Theology) took place in Larbert in late August / early September. The programme reflected a balance between theology and practice which those who attended indicated they found helpful.

12. **Employment of non-EU nationals**  
The Board has spent some time considering the implications of the obligation imposed by the UK Borders Agency on employers to justify the employment in the UK of Non-EU citizens. However, in order to issue a Certificate of Sponsorship under the Tier 2 (Minister of Religion) category, the Church, as employer, must provide details as to how the role that would be fulfilled by any minister under call who is not a Non-EU citizen passes the “resident labour market test”. The official guidance states that to pass the test, the migrant who is being sponsored (employed) must not be displacing or denying an opportunity to a suitable settled
worker. The Board is grateful to Mrs Muriel Macleod, the Church’s Compliance and Risk Management Officer, for her advice, and intends to explore further the implications of this legislation and to report in greater detail to the 2012 General Assembly.

13. **Training Manual for Elders and Deacons** The Board is grateful to Rev. Neil MacMillan for doing further editorial work on this document. It is hoped very shortly to publish the Manual in electronic format and make it available to congregations.

14. **Employment of Free Church Students** The Board has followed up a suggestion made from the floor during the last General Assembly that it explore the possibility of Free Church students being employed by Free Church congregations. After due consideration the Board concluded that any such employment would be difficult to apply ‘across the board’ and that such a venture would be difficult to manage.

15. **Clarification of the Board’s Remit** Act XLVIII, 2008, Anent revising Act XXIV, 2007, Anent Modification of Committee Structure, omitted from the remit given to the Board of Ministry the responsibility to receive and process applications from Ministers or Probationers from other Churches for admission as Ministers or Probationers of the Free Church of Scotland. The Board is proposing legislation that will formally restore this responsibility to its remit.

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 gives thanks to Almighty God that he continues to call and equip men for the ministry of the Church and encourage congregations to be diligent in supporting prayerfully and practically all students and those entrusted with their training.

4. The General Assembly note with gratitude the assurance of the Board of Trustees that a sufficient number of church flats are being made available to students.

5. The General Assembly amend Act XXVI, 2003, by deleting paragraphs 1 and 2 and substituting for them:

   The General Assembly, recognising the importance of candidates for the ministry acquiring a competent knowledge of the whole English Bible, enact that:

   1 All students for the ministry are required to study the English Bible under the supervision of their presbyteries;
   2 Presbyteries are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that by the time they complete their course all students have a competent knowledge of the whole English Bible;
   3 To achieve this end a two-hour written examination in Scripture shall be included by Presbyteries in their regular examination of students before each year of their attendance at College;
   4 This examination shall be held not later than 31st August each year; and that the date of re-sits shall be at the discretion of the Presbytery;
   5 The Syllabus shall be determined by the Board of Ministry in conjunction with Presbyteries.

6. The General Assembly authorise the implementation of Act XLVI, 2008, Anent Probationary Placements, to be delayed until 2012.

7. The General Assembly amend Act XLVIII, 2008, §1.1, by inserting the words ‘and to receive and process applications from Ministers or Probationers from other Churches for admission as Ministers or Probationers of the Free Church of Scotland’ after the words ‘Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees’.

8. The General Assembly thank Dr Fergus Macdonald, Mr Angus Campbell and Rev. Nigel Anderson for organising the In-Service Training Programme. The General Assembly further thank Mr Donald Macdonald of Macdonald Hotels for his generosity in providing the Holyrood Hotel for participants.
XII.
REPORT
OF THE
COLLEGE BOARD

The College Board met on several occasions during the course of the previous year. It remains a cause of gratitude to God that our denomination, notwithstanding our smallness and the many demands on our financial resources, is still in a position to train its own ministers, and in addition is well placed to deliver a theological curriculum for the training of men and women in Christian service.

The Board is aware that there are voices within the Church questioning the feasibility of maintaining a College. As the denomination continues to decline, the support base for the College continues to shrink. This is especially true as the financial resources within the Church continue to be stretched; yet the fact that there has been a small but steady stream of men applying for the Free Church ministry shows that the College still represents an important aspect of the Church’s work and ethos.

Coupled with this is a perennial discussion about whether we ought to outsource the training of our ministry to other Colleges and theological institutions. Of these there are many; and the development of modern technology is such that at a theoretical level it could be possible for our ministers to be trained via the internet by some of the leading Reformed scholars in institutions all over the world.

Yet although the Free Church College is also staffed by Reformed scholars, its ethos is quite different to that of many other seminaries and institutions. The scholarship remains in the service of the church, and the academic work is not carried out for its own sake.

While this report is perhaps not the place to try to justify the continued existence of the Free Church College, the Board recognises that part of its function may be to commend the College to the Church as well as to those outside it. The ideal of providing denominationally oriented theological training has been part of the Free Church ethos from the outset, and there are strong arguments for its continuance.

For one thing, the Free Church College exemplifies the principle of men committed to Reformed orthodoxy, spirituality and piety passing on their learning and experience to help shape a new generation of gospel preachers and Christian workers. The apostle Paul spoke about faithful men who could teach others; and we have been singularly privileged as a Church to have had men of proven faithfulness and of sound orthodoxy gifted in the training of successive generations of evangelical preaching.

For another, the College is a reminder that academic theology does not exist for its own sake. It is for the church, and for the people of God. We are running an academic institution, but we are not in the business of furthering academic careers. We are in the business of harnessing minds and lives for the glory of God and for the good of His people.

The College also represents a unique and living Scottish tradition. We ought never to undervalue our history, and a glimpse of the volumes and memorabilia in the Free Church Collection in the Chalmers Hall, for example, is a reminder of the rich diversity of giftedness and of interest there has been in the Church over the almost 170 years of her existence. That collection could be housed in a museum, and be regarded as of purely antiquarian interest; but it properly belongs in a functioning College, where the resources of the past may be dynamically used and critically applied to the life of the Church in the present.

More pertinent than any of these reasons, however, is the fact that the College provides the forum where students, committed to a common theological position, called to a common ecclesiastical work, and training for a common evangelical purpose, can live and learn together. Bonds are forged, fellowship is fostered, friendships are made, and the best interests of Presbyterian ministry are served as those who will work together first learn to train together. The denomination can surely only be enriched and enhanced by continuing to encourage and support such an institution.

However, arguments to justify the continued existence of the Free Church College do not address all the issues raised in connection with the College at the present stage of our life as a Church. The filling of vacant Chairs in the College has proved difficult, as this year’s report explains. The Board may have to ask questions about the delivery of its theological training in view of the reluctance of men to present themselves as candidates for full-time professorial
roles; and perhaps the overdue quinquennial visitation of the College will also address these issues.

The College Board is committed both to the Church as a denomination, and to the College as an institution. That means several things. It means being answerable to the Church for the use of its financial resources while ensuring that no element of theological training is compromised or lost as a result of financial cutbacks. It means serving the College on behalf of the Church, so that the staff and students of the College are encouraged and the whole Church informed. It also means ensuring a balance between principle and practice: while it has been happy to encourage the use of part-time teachers, for example, in the delivery of the Practical Theology component of the course, it longs to ensure that the most fundamental element of that practice - the preaching of the word in a way that is articulate, powerful and comprehensible - is prioritised.

Above all, the Board is committed to the missional aspect of the College’s life and work, as part of the ecumenical mission of the Church to serve others, not just itself. While the main function of the College is to train Free Church ministers, its own ministry is wider than that, and as this Report highlights, the College can be a leader in the development of theological education within the Reformed world.

The Board, therefore, remains a vital link between the wider church and the College, and remains optimistic that a diminishing support base does not mean a diminution of support for the College itself. Its meetings over the past year have ranged over several areas of responsibility and interest, and have always been conducted in a warm spirit of fellowship and (not to put too fine a point on it) collegiality. This year’s report will comment on the main items of business which have been on the agenda of the College Board. The Principal’s Report will deal with matters internal to the College itself.

(A) RETIREMENT OF PROFESSOR DONALD MACLEOD

Last year’s report paid tribute to the work of Professor Macleod as Principal of the College. This year Donald Macleod retires from the Chair of Systematic Theology, a position he has occupied with distinction since his appointment in 1978. It is a matter of gratitude that although he has now passed his seventieth birthday, Professor Macleod remains in good health, and we trust that he will still be able to assist in delivering courses in the College.

In over thirty years of teaching systematics, Professor Macleod has developed a worldwide reputation. He is a wide reader, and is qualified to comment on a vast range of subjects. His passion for his own area of academic expertise is enthusiastic and infectious, and he has demonstrated a mastery in it.

Not only has he shaped the thinking of a generation of ministers, he has also contributed to many areas of theological and historical research and thinking. His volumes on Christology and on Christian doctrine will hold the field in theology for many years. His published books and occasional journal articles are always characterised by clarity of thought, freshness of insight and crispness of expression. They are a joy to read and a reward to contemplate.

Professor Macleod’s legacy as he leaves the post of Professor of Systematic Theology will have been to make a generation of Christians and of Christian ministers think for themselves, reflecting critically on their own heritage and the cherished elements of their tradition. For this, the Church owes him a debt of gratitude. It is difficult to imagine the College without him; but we trust that the closing of this chapter in the College’s story will mean the opening of doors of further usefulness for Professor Macleod himself. We can only thank him for his many years of service, and wish him God’s blessing for the future.

(B) APPOINTMENT OF NEW PROFESSOR

Much discussion in the meetings of the College Board centered around the arrangements for appointing a new Professor of Systematic Theology. In accordance with current legislation, nominations were sought from Presbyteries, and nominees were invited for interview.

The nomination of the Board to the Assembly would normally be presented as a supplementary report, in accordance with Act XLV, 2009). However, three of the nominees declined to attend the interview, and the candidate who was interviewed, and whom the Board was prepared to recommend to the Assembly, declined to allow his name to go forward for consideration.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to get the nominated candidates to reconsider their positions, and given the short time available to re-run the selection process, the Board felt that interim arrangements ought to be made for the delivery of this aspect of the College course. Since Professor Donald Macleod is still available and willing to teach Systematic Theology, the Board is recommending that he be appointed as lecturer for the forthcoming session.
(C) COLLEGE SECRETARY

The Board has greatly benefitted from the appointment of Miss Joan Maclennan as College Secretary. She has applied herself to the secretaryship of the Board with efficiency and with dedication, and the meetings of the Board have been greatly enhanced by her input. We wish her God’s blessing in her continued work as secretary to the Board.

(D) QUINQUENNIAL VISITATION OF THE COLLEGE

The Board wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly to an oversight in its arrangements for 2010. The following legislation was passed by the Assembly in 2006 (as Act L, Class II):

Act anent Quinquennial Review of the College

The General Assembly ordain that future Quinquennial Visitations of the College shall not be conducted by the College Board since, as part of the governance, the Board is itself subject to the Review process. They direct that a Special Review Committee be appointed by the General Assembly to report directly to the General Assembly and not through the College Board. The Review Committee shall be required to submit its Report first to the Senate, the College Board and Training of the Ministry Committee for their response prior to presenting it to the Assembly. They further declare that the Quinquennial Visitation of the College shall hereafter be termed the Quinquennial Review. They further appoint that the next Review shall be appointed by the General Assembly of 2010 to report to the General Assembly of 2011.

Although the legislation specifically states that the Board will NOT arrange the quinquennial review, the Board felt that it was the body in the best position to remind the Assembly that a Special Review Committee ought to be appointed now, to conduct a Review of the College, and to report to next year’s General Assembly.

(E) PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

The Church continues to be grateful to those who are assisting with the provision of training in practical theology. In the view of the Board, the involvement in the training of students of men who serve in different ministries in the Church is invaluable. The Board is grateful to Professor Donald Macleod for having organised this element of the College course, and is glad that he is willing to continue overseeing the provision.

(F) THE 1560 INITIATIVE

Last year’s Assembly approved an initiative to encourage the Board to advertise the College as a centre for Reformed theology and training. There have been no developments in this matter to date, partly because of the excellent work done by Professor John A. Macleod on the development of the College website (http://www.freescotcoll.ac.uk). The Board will, however, continue to work with the Senate in promoting the College as a centre of excellence for academic training.

(G) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Previous College Board reports have highlighted the opportunity the Free Church College affords not only for foundational theological training, but also for further professional training and development. With this in view, the Board communicated with ministers and Deacons’ Courts to encourage ministers to take advantage of the opportunity for continued study and research. The Board is particularly keen that ministers should consider studying for the Master of Theology degree. This is available in two forms, as a research degree (which may be undertaken on a part-time basis over two years), or by taught courses leading to the M.Th. in Scottish Church History and Theology.

As the Board’s letter pointed out, the Board see a twofold advantage to this, first, in allowing ministers to benefit personally through continued training and research, and, second, in allowing congregations to benefit as a result of these continued studies. However the Board recognises that for many ministers the cost of these courses may be prohibitive.

Nonetheless, new sabbatical arrangements are in place which would provide ministers with periods of study, some financial assistance is available from the Church for this purpose. It was also the Board’s desire to encourage Deacons’ Courts to make some financial contribution to their ministers should they be willing to engage in such study.
(H) EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF REFORMED CHURCHES

A conference on Theological Education and Mission was held in Kampen, Netherlands, from 22nd-24th March 2011. The Board is grateful to Professor John McIntosh, who represented the Free Church College at the Conference. The main subjects addressed at the conference were ‘Prepared for a missionary ministry in the 21st century’, ‘Academic excellence, biblical godliness and compassion in Theological Education’, ‘Teaching Systematics in a missionary context’ and ‘Missionary teaching of the Old Testament’. These are noble themes, fully supported by the Free Church College.

Several workshops were also held, and it was agreed that all the colleges represented (which included almost all the Reformed Colleges in Europe) would continue to work towards a commonly-recognised curriculum (i.e., not a common curriculum) which was to be based on the Free Church College syllabus. It was also agreed to work towards a commonly-agreed scheme of assessment which would also be based on the Free Church College system of assessment (which, of course, is that of the University of Glasgow).

The Eastern European colleges saw the system of External Examiners as a most promising way of strengthening the academic credentials of the Reformed colleges in Europe as a whole. It was also agreed that more work needed to be done on the balance between the academic and practical elements of our courses, and in particular on the question of assessment of the practical elements in courses in such a way as would satisfy secular/academic authorities as to their rigour. There was recognition that this would require closer liaison between the colleges and the denominations with which they are connected.

In connection with this aspect, there was strong unanimity that the academic credibility of Reformed theological education should be maintained. This was felt to be particularly essential if the independence and recognition of the newly emerging colleges in Eastern Europe was to be gained and retained. There was a feeling that the two Dutch ‘Theological Universities’ and the Free Church College have particular responsibilities in this area.

It is hoped that the Free Church College can continue to play its part in delivering theological education in the changing landscape of modern Europe in association with other Reformed churches and theological institutions.

(I) OTHER MATTERS

Chalmers Hall Part of the remit of the College Board is the College building refurbishment. During the course of the past year, under the guidance of Professor Donald Macleod, substantial renovation was carried out in the Chalmers Hall, with new decoration and lighting to the ceiling. The effect has been to improve the lighting of the Hall considerably. Although the cost was not insubstantial, it is hoped that this will be a valuable investment for the long-term use of the Chalmers Hall.

Professors’ Reports The Board regularly receives reports from its full-time Professors detailing their teaching responsibilities, their academic responsibilities outwith the College, their responsibilities within the wider Church, their publications, their preaching engagements and other activities in which they have been involved. While this may be a chore for the professors themselves, it is a very necessary element of the supervisory role of the Board in keeping the work of the College teaching staff under Review. The Board is gratified to note the involvement of the College staff in projects within the wider academic world, and wishes to encourage the Professors in continued research and writing.

UK Border Immigration Following last year’s successful registration with the UK Border and Immigration Authority, the College, in common with other institutions, has suffered from bureaucratic red tape which has prevented foreign students from being able to come to study at the College. One student, for example, whose fees were to be covered and who was a bona fide applicant, was denied access to the UK as a student. His case is currently subject to appeal. The situation shows little sign of improving. A visit by a Border Agency officer in March concluded that one student had been allowed to study at the College without a valid visa, and this situation is currently being considered by the Agency, which could alter - or in the worst case scenario, revoke - the licence by which the church admits foreign student to the College. The Church ought to make this a matter for prayer, so that international students can take advantage of the training offered at the Free Church College.

The Board has been occupied with several other routine matters, including College budgets, semester dates, and student fees, accommodation and (through the student representative on the Board) student matters. 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

APPENDIX

REPORT OF THE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

(A) OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR

The year was marked by three new starts: a new College Principal, a new College Secretary, and the commencement of an M.Th. programme in Scottish Church History and Theology. Although only two students enrolled for the new programme in September 2010, it is hoped that a wider measure of publicity will be able to increase the numbers involved. The new Secretary, Miss Joan Macleanman, has already proved her worth in the contribution she makes to the smooth running of the College, and in particular in organising College records in an accessible electronic format.

In that connection our continuing gratitude must be expressed to Professor John Angus MacLeod for his indefatigable activity in maintaining and extending the College’s computing facilities, which are such a necessary feature of any modern teaching establishment. Professor John R. McIntosh continues to act as Post-Graduate Studies Director.

Throughout the year there have been several difficulties with the UK Border Agency. One particularly frustrating occurrence was the inability to gain a visa for Tomás Sáenz from Peru to study with us for a one year M.Th. despite the fact that the Senate had agreed to pay his fees and maintenance through the Macleod Scholarship Fund and the International Missions Board to meet his travel expenses. We trust renewed applications will fare better in the morass of red tape. The Agency seems more interested in loading further burdens of administration and policing on sponsor institutions than in applying common sense. There is also a significant lack of any reciprocal flow of information from the Agency on the grounds of confidentiality.

Relations with Glasgow University continued to be cordial and helpful, and this was particularly evident as regards the interview procedures for nominating a successor to Professor Donald Macleod in the chair of Systematic Theology. Professor Macleod’s staged retirement from the College had begun last year with his relinquishing the post of Principal, but his presence in the College is to be extended for at least a further year. The provisional arrangements for Practical Theology class were put in place for three years and they have still one year to run. Consequently Professor Macleod has consented to continue as course supervisor while the Review of these arrangements is undertaken. It is hoped that this will be done in conjunction with a Quinquennial Review of the College which is (over)due to be initiated by this Assembly.

(B) STUDENT DATA

The following B.Th. students graduated in 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.Th.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hye Young Kim, BA, MDiv</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William A Paterson, BA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morgan Tivatyi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Merit</td>
<td>Jihe Gaius Song, BA, MSc, PhD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Distinction</td>
<td>Jonathan Kirk, BA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Distinction</td>
<td>Winston Tay, BA, BSocSci</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following new students were registered for the B.Th. programme at 31.3.11:

- Neil L. Macdonald
- Daniel J. Paterson, B.A.
- Shiho Soda, BComSt.
- Suraj Kasula
- Omega T. Gwasira

A two-year study plan is being followed by James P. Ross, M.A., B.A.

The following M.Th. students graduated in 2010:

- Matthew Ford, MTheol
- Koji Harada, BA, MDiv
The following M.Th. student will graduate in 2011:
Adam de Jong, M.Econ, BTh.

Students enrolled on M.Th. courses at 31.3.11:
Enock Gwasira (by research, part-time)
John J. Park, BMedSci (taught M.Th.)
Daniel S. Ralph (taught M.Th.)
John W. Reid, BA
Henry M. Smith, BA

The total number of students registered for degree programmes as at the end of March 2011 was 23 (B.Th. 17; M.Th. 6). The total number of candidates for the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland at present studying at the College is 11.

The part-time Certificate and Diploma courses continued to be held on eight Saturdays throughout the year. The number of students registered for the part-time courses was 76. Most of these will make use of the recorded online video and audio lectures which are made available for the duration of the session. The live sessions in Edinburgh are not as well attended as in earlier years, though an appreciative audience still gathers. Video-conference sessions are offered in Stornoway, and Aberdeen hosts a joint session using the archived lectures.

JOHN L. MACKAY, College Principal

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. They especially welcome Miss Joan Maclennan to her post as College Secretary, and as Secretary to the College Board, and wish her God’s blessing.

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 Professor of Systematic Theology with immediate effect. They thank Professor Macleod for his delivery of the systematics course for over thirty years, and congratulate him on his publications and on his academic achievements. They wish him God’s blessing in retirement.

5. The General Assembly confer on Professor Donald Macleod the designation Professor-Emeritus with immediate effect.

6. The General Assembly thank Professor Macleod for his willingness to continue teaching in the College, and appoint him lecturer in Systematic Theology for the coming session on terms to be agreed by the College Board.

7. The General Assembly note the difficulties experienced by the College Board in filling the vacancy in the Chair of Systematic Theology. Recognising that financial constraints and personal considerations may make it difficult to apply current legislation concerning College appointments, the Assembly authorise the Board to Review this situation as a matter of urgency.

8. The General Assembly note the oversight regarding the appointing of a Quinquennial Review Committee to carry out a Review of the Free Church College, and authorise the appointing of a committee to report to the 2012 General Assembly.

9. The General Assembly note the continued difficulties experienced by the Free Church College in connection with the UK Border and Immigration Authority, and trust that the situation will improve to allow international students to study at the College. They commend this situation to the prayers of the Church.

10. The General Assembly thank Principal Mackay for his leadership in the College during his first year as
Principal, and thank him and the other professors for their faithful discharge of their teaching and professorial responsibilities. They commend the Principal and staff of the College to the prayers of the Church.

11. The General Assembly thank Professor John McIntosh for his continued contribution on behalf of the Free Church College towards the integration of theological provision throughout Europe through the European Conference of Reformed Churches, and encourage the College Board to play a full role in this initiative.

12. The General Assembly thank Professor John A. Macleod for his work in the area of IT equipment, and for his work as disability co-ordinator.

13. 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. The General Assembly commend the College part-time course to the prayers of the Church, and encourage further participation in it by members and adherents within the Church. They also encourage Deacons’ Courts to consider making a financial contribution to enable ministers to engage in postgraduate research and study at the College.

14. The General Assembly thank all ancillary College staff, as well as office staff for administrative assistance, and pray God’s continued blessing on their work.
XIII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE TO REVIEW DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Committee held only brief meetings in the course of the year due to the workload of all its members with other church Boards and Committees and the difficulty therefore of scheduling additional meetings.

Further consideration was given, however, to the following matters.

1. **Legal Representation** The issue of legal representation in formal processes before church courts. In particular the Committee considered whether the present restriction on legal representation prosecuting or defending before Church Courts may be in breach of any principles of equity or justice.

2. **The Practice** The Committee also discussed the revision of *The Practice*. There have been a number of changes in church legislation over the past decade - some of substantial importance, such as the appointment of a Judicial Commission and its attendant procedures. The Committee needs to give further thought to how this revision might be carried out in practice but is keen to begin drafting the various stages of the revision over the course of the ensuing year.

3. **Committee Remit and Name** In its deliberations the Committee concluded that it would be beneficial to adjust its remit and purpose somewhat so as to include a “law and advisory” element. Consequently the Committee is asking the Assembly to change its name to “The Committee on Church Practice and Procedures” to reflect this proposed additional aspect of its remit. The intention is that this Committee will act as an advisory Committee to Church Courts and to other Committees and Boards on matters of Church practice and procedure.

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.

4. **Resignation** In the course of the year the Committee received a letter of resignation from Sheriff Alan Mackenzie. The Committee wishes to thank Sheriff Mackenzie for his contribution to the work of the Committee.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

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

2. The General Assembly appoint the Committee, with its existing membership, as an advisory Committee on matters of Church practice and procedure and alter its name to “The Committee on Church Practice and Procedure.” They extend the remit of the Committee to include the issuing of advice on matters of Church practice and procedure to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions and to other Committees and Boards of the Church, subject always to the rules and procedures laid down in *The Practice* and in the legislation of the Church. In addition the Principal Clerk of Assembly shall have authority to approach the Committee for advice on such matters of church law and procedure as he considers may be required in other instances. Issues of practice and procedure which require the consideration of the Board of Trustees shall be passed to them from the Committee through the Principal Clerk.

3. The General Assembly amend Act XXIII, Class II, 2007, paragraph 1, by the deletion of the following sentence, “the Principal Clerk of Assembly shall have the right to approach the Board of Trustees to request that they act as a Law and Advisory Committee with regard to matters of church legislation.”

4. The General Assembly direct the Committee to examine further and report on the other subjects mentioned in the report and any other matters which may arise within its existing remit.

5. The General Assembly thank Sheriff Alan Mackenzie for his period of service as a member of the Committee.
INTRODUCTION

This past year has been a year of change and challenge for the International Missions Board (IMB). We can no longer rely on “a slice of the cake” from central funds to meet all of our budget costs, but are required to raise a percentage of our budget ourselves. While the target of £150,000 to be raised directly by the IMB for 2010 seemed daunting we are grateful to the Lord and our people and congregations that we were able to raise over £130,000 (close to 90% of target). For 2011 the target is £200,000 but there are hopeful signs that congregations and individuals are rising to the challenge. In effect we see this new financial arrangement as an opportunity to make our own people better aware of the exciting projects that we are involved with as a denomination. We, along with our colleagues in the Home Missions Board, have produced missions brochures highlighting the different places and people that comprise our work. As a Board, we now need to make an even more thorough and consistent job of making known the great work that our missionaries and partner churches and agencies are doing.

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 that specialise in particular fields. One such group is Latin Link with whom we shared a very well attended conference in Inverness in June of 2010. We are aware that our people who are called to the mission field may not find opportunities of service in our traditional fields. We have therefore 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 Martyn (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.

While they are mentioned in the body of the report we also want in the introduction to publically recognise and thank those who have or will be returning from years of faithful service on the mission field. Rev. Dr David and Mrs Olwen Ford returned this year from Colombia for health reasons but, it is anticipated, will continue to be able to serve Latin America from the home front. In the months that remain we will be welcoming home Rev. Norman and Mrs Angela Reid and Rev. Dr John and Mrs Elizabeth Ross, both having served faithfully at Dumisani in South Africa. The church is indebted to them and we give them our sincere thanks.

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) LATIN AMERICA

Quotation - “The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.” – Henry Martyn, missionary to India, Persia and Turkey

Promise - “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:58
1. **Overview**  
   For almost a century the Free Church of Scotland has seen Latin America as one of its fields of service. Many Free Church men and women have heard and heeded the mission call to Latin America serving as pastors and preachers, doctors and nurses, teachers and administrators. In the last thirty years, nothing short of an evangelical revival has taken place in South and Central America. By the grace of God, the dedicated service of her workers and the prayers of her people, the Free Church of Scotland has been able to play a part in nurturing and extending a rapidly growing Church. Today, through key personnel and strategic grants, the Free Church of Scotland is a significant partner in providing excellent theological education in Perú and Colombia. In the field of primary and secondary education, Colegio San Andrés in Lima continues to grow and flourish as it approaches its centenary in 2017.

2. **Perú**

2.1 **Lima Evangelical Seminary (www.sel.edu)**  
   Rev. Donnie Smith continues to serve as Rector of SEL. He and his wife Julia have committed their lives to the service of the Peruvian Church and the seminary which now enjoys University status is a testimony to their commitment and zeal in the Lord’s service. Achieving University status is a tangible recognition (by the secular authorities) of the quality education and training provided by the seminary to students from all regions of Peru and countries throughout the region. The Seminary continues to exercise a broad ministry to all levels of the church from Sunday school teachers to seminary rectors. Rev. Donnie Smith is encouraged by a recent discussion with the Principal of the Free Church College concerning cooperation between SEL and the Free Church College. Such collaboration would first require a cooperation agreement between the two institutions. This process may lay the foundations for a relationship that would be a blessing to both institutions and to the wider church in Scotland and Peru.

2.2 **Colegio San Andrés (www.sanandres.edu.pe)**  
   “Timor domini initium sapientiae,” “El Temor de Dios es el Principio de la Sabiduría” - Prov.1:7. When the Lord is at work, the results are obvious. We remain grateful to God for the ongoing blessing enjoyed by the pupils, their families and the entire staff team at Colegio San Andrés.

2.2.1 **Spiritual**  
   The school is the centre of a ministry to almost 700 pupils and their families, who are mostly Roman Catholic. God has been pleased to bless the efforts of the pastoral team through the conversion of many. Both last year and this year, there have been a majority of Christian pupils in the senior years, who are actively involved in the school’s practical Christian ministries programme. The school initiated a newly-formed association of Christian schools, bringing together the many Christian schools both in the capital city, Lima, and throughout the country, to share resources and expertise, and to set and monitor standards.

2.2.2 **Academic**  
   The School continues to benefit from a steady and significant rise in pupil numbers from 475 in 2008, to 525 in 2009, to 625 in 2010 and to 687 in 2011. The school is now at its maximum capacity, with a waiting list in several year groups. The continued growth in pupil numbers has necessitated the hiring of several new staff. The staff team now numbers 110. Staff in-service training, forward-planning and evaluation are intrinsic elements in the ongoing drive to raise academic standards. In 2010, 90% of final-year students gained admission to universities.

2.2.3 **Administrative**  
   The School is self-sustaining financially, has no debts, and in 2010 reported a net profit of £119,000. The annual turnover at Colegio San Andrés now exceeds £1.3 million. The expansion of the past few years has involved considerable building work to accommodate students, and there is now no further room for expansion on the present site. A fund-raising programme among former pupils has begun, with the aim, once the transfer of the school is authorised, of purchasing a greenfield site for playing fields and a future annex.

2.2.4 **Governance**  
   In preparation for transferring the governance of the School and ownership of the school property, a new local educational association has been formed comprised of members from the International Missions Board and Peruvians with education, legal and financial expertise. This is a monumental step in the 94 year history of Colegio San Andrés and cause for celebration. We pray that 2011 will contain similar landmarks in the process of transferring the school to local governance and local ownership.

2.2.5 **Legal**  
   In the midst of encouragement there have been challenges. The court case concerning the deaths of two pupils in Scotland is currently being heard in the Peruvian courts. Every effort has been made (and continues to be made) to resolve this case through a mutually agreeable settlement. The IMB and Board of Trustees have demonstrated a sincere and determined resolve to participate in every effort of conciliation. The International Missions Board renews its call to the church to pray for a fair, rapid and equitable settlement of this case.

2.2.6 **Personnel**  
   Mr Clive and Mrs Ruth Bailey have completed their third year of service. The school has welcomed Miss Catriona Macdonald who will add her teaching and missionary experience to the English department. Catriona reports from Perú:
“My first impressions of San Andrés are very similar to my first impressions of Lima – bustling, dynamic, noisy, youthful, lively and mad traffic at break times/rush hour! I have been in Perú for seven weeks and in the school for six. I am enjoying the freedom of working in a Christian environment and being part of the San Andrés community. In particular I am appreciating the positive attitude and commitment of the staff as well as the closer relationship between teacher and pupil. Within the school I am teaching English to three classes within the primary department. I am also learning Spanish and receive regular lessons from a tutor. I have just started to take an SU group one lunchtime per week and have had the opportunity to take part in the school’s practical ministries programme.”

There is also a steady number of volunteers travelling to Lima to support the work of the school. Rachel Mein and Rosy Fraser are currently at the school. There are always opportunities at Colegio San Andrés for volunteers of any age. Contact Clive Bailey or the International Missions Board to find out how you can serve.

2.2.7 Personal Currently, the Bailey’s are concerned for the health of their daughter Catriona. When Clive returned to Perú for the start of the new academic year, Ruth remained in Scotland to support Catriona and accompany her for medical appointments. Currently the Baileys are praying for a diagnosis and a course of treatment for Catriona. The International Missions Board joins them in this prayer and commends them to the prayers of the wider church.

2.3 Moyobamba

2.3.1 Presbyterian Church (www.presbimoyo.org) Rev. David MacPherson reports:

Last year it was reported that the Moyobamba congregation had planted a new church on the outskirts of the city. The new congregation, in Lluyllucucha, is now served by Pastor Walter Anaya and a Kirk Session and has seen steady growth in the course of the year. The mother congregation in the town centre has largely replaced the 70 members who were commissioned to start the new congregation with 40 new members joining the church by profession of faith in 2010. Pastor Eliderio continues to serve as senior pastor of the congregation. Pastor Oscar Briones has left the leadership team in Moyobamba to take charge of a new church plant in the northern city of Piura.

2.3.2 The Annie Soper Christian School The 2011 school year began with approximately 300 pupils under the leadership of Mr. Arturo Solis as headmaster and strengthened by the addition of Pastor Dario Meza as the new school chaplain.

2.3.3 University of Moyobamba Steps towards the creation of a Christian university in Moyobamba continue to be made. The road to this ultimate objective is still a long and possibly tortuous one. A portion of the land purchased for this project (c. 150 acres) is now being developed commercially with the planting of teak, cedar and mahogany.

3. Colombia

3.1 Fundación Universitaria Seminario Bíblico de Colombia (www.unisbc.edu.co) 2010 was a year of transition and challenge. The seminary, like many in its position, is facing a significant funding crisis. Exchange rates and economic downturn translates into reduced mission expenditure from funding partners in the U.S. and Europe. The Free Church of Scotland remains a key partner for the Seminary. As Rev. Dr David Ford writes, “The most encouraging feature in the past year was the Ministry of Education approval of Latin America’s first professional online course at an evangelical Seminary: the postgraduate specialisation in "Christian Worldview and Ethics” started in January with seven students enrolled. However, the continued financial difficulties, falling day time student numbers and increased violence in the city have made the past year particularly difficult. Those involved in theological education are heartened by the continued demand for a trained leadership from an evangelical church which is growing at about 6% annually.”

Rev. Dr Manuel Reaño has stepped down from his position as rector of the seminary though he remains on staff. Manuel’s health has been a matter of concern to himself, his family and the wider church but he reports that he is feeling much better. He is currently enjoying a period of sabbatical leave and furlough – both of which are well-deserved. The Reaños will be in Scotland in 2011 – a time of rest and renewed fellowship is eagerly anticipated. In September Manuel will resume teaching duties at the seminary. He has been asked to be the editor of the Seminary’s magazine (Ventana Teológica / Theological Window). He is also considering ways of ministering to those whose health and wellbeing have been compromised in their service to the Lord’s cause – this is a growing field of pastoral care.

While in Colombia the Fords exercised a wide-ranging ministry. David taught Synoptics, Greek text, John’s gospel, Biblical Theology, Church History. He managed Recursos Teológicos website and wrote for Ayuda Pastoral (Pastoral help) website. Olwen used her time and talents facilitating Zero Stress sewing room with the running of workshops, helping families in the local community and encouraging local leadership of the project.
David and Olwen Ford returned to Scotland in 2010 – a few months earlier than planned. David’s health was an ongoing concern and all were agreed that the time to return was right. The Fords are enjoying a period of furlough in Lenzie and the IMB and David are in discussion concerning his on-going role in serving the church in Scotland and in Latin America. Technology now means that instruction can take place via the internet or Skype and also many thousands of people each month are making use of the excellent online resources pioneered by David while at the Seminary.

4. Conclusion The door for Gospel work in Latin America remains wide open. The IMB has the right people with the right skills in the right institutions to provide the right training for a new generation of Christians and church leaders. The work is strategic and visionary; the blessings are obvious. In past generations our prayer was that the blessings enjoyed in Scotland would extend to nations like Peru. Now, the situation is reversed. In Latin America, Church growth, dynamic evangelism, and impacting society and culture with the Gospel are typical. The Gospel cause in the British Isles, however, is receding under a tide of materialism, secularism and scepticism. If the Lord showered on Scotland even a small portion of blessing enjoyed by God’s people in Latin America, our churches would be crowded, our college would be over-subscribed and our missionary personnel would increase geometrically.

(B) 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 mercy ministries. To achieve this we are committed, by agreement with the Presbyterian Free Church (PFC), to a progressive annual reduction in its grant while offsetting this reduction through the support of appropriate development projects. We also provide financial support for Christian education and medical work.

As made clear in our strategy, our work in Central India involves supporting our partners in three specific areas of Christian work; the church work of the PFC, the educational ministries (day schools) of the PFC in Lakhnadon and Chhapara, and the medical and community development work of Lakhnadon Christian Hospital (LCH). We will consider each in turn.

1. Presbyterian Free Church (PFC) The PFC is a small denomination consisting presently of four congregations; Premnagar and Vijainagar (in the city of Jabalpur) and one in each of the small towns of Lakhnadon and Chhapara.

There is much cause for encouragement in the evangelistic work of the PFC, particularly in the villages surrounding the towns of Lakhnadon and Chhapara. In eleven villages surrounding Lakhnadon there are 125 new believers or seekers with weekly Sunday services in three of these villages. In Chhapara the outreach work is conducted in partnership with an Indian missionary organisation called Grace Ministries under the leadership of Vinay Das, an elder in the Chhapara congregation. In the last three years there have been 110 baptisms and many of these are now members in the Chhapara congregation. A discipleship course has recently begun for 30 young people.

In the midst of much encouragement there are, as we should perhaps expect, difficulties and discouragements. As reported previously in 2009 the Premnagar congregation effectively separated from the PFC. IMB delegates who visited India in 2011 were asked by the Presbytery to assist in taking steps towards reconciliation; sadly the efforts made proved unsuccessful.

2. Educational ministry This consists of the day schools at Chhapara and Lakhnadon run by the Education Committee of the PFC. Both schools are highly regarded in their respective communities, evidence of which is to be seen in growing pupil numbers (c. 800 in Chhapara and c.500 in Lakhnadon). The growth, though welcome in one regard, has brought with it significant financial and administrative challenges. The fees charged are very modest and prove insufficient to provide even very low salaries for the very committed staff. Such a situation is unsustainable in the medium term and the Education Committee are faced with the challenge of tackling and overcoming the financial shortfall.

Thought is being given, in discussion with the Education Committee, of the possibility of establishing a pupil sponsorship scheme that would allow supporters in Scotland and elsewhere (including India) to assist in the payment of school fees for the poorest children.

3. Lakhnadon Christian Hospital (LCH) The IMB delegates to India in January 2011 were greatly encouraged to witness the progress being made by the hospital under the energetic and visionary leadership of Dr Heman Prasad (Medical Supervisor) and his team. Dr Prasad is ably assisted by Mr. Albert Chandu
(Administrator) and Mr Raj Singh (responsible for Community Development). Other key players include Dr Jewel (wife of Dr Heman) and Mrs Sheetal (wife of Albert Chandu). We limit ourselves to noting the following highlights;

- Vast improvement to the outpatient department facilities largely funded by funds provided by Women for Mission (WfM)
- Purchase of ambulance (also funded by WfM)
- Building and inauguration of new staff quarters for medical personnel. These buildings consist of two apartment blocks with accommodation for 18 families in spacious and comfortable surroundings and have been funded with the support of De Verre Nasten (the mission wing of the Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt).
- Continuing expansion of the community development work in c. 200 villages that includes health education, preventative health work, HIV/AIDS programme, and water / irrigation projects (wells and / or dams).

It is also worthy of note and thankfulness to God that there is now an excellent relationship existing between the hospital and its leadership team and the local PFC congregation. Mr Raj Singh is an elder in the congregation and the families of Dr Heman and Mr Albert Chandu are active and supportive members. As a Church we are grateful to God for such able and godly men and women serving at LCH and are confident that the modest support we are able to provide is being wisely and effectively utilised.

**Conclusion** As commented in the Report 2011 provided an opportunity for IMB delegates to visit India and it is only right to acknowledge the generous and kind hospitality received from all connected with the PFC, LCH and the schools. Finally we are very pleased to report on the visit to Scotland in April 2011 of the Rev. Samit Mishra and Mr Pradeep Kumar (minister and elder respectively of the Chhapara congregation). This provided many the exciting opportunity to hear at first hand of the Lord’s work in Central India.

**(C) SOUTH AFRICA**

**Overview** The IMB joint strategy for South Africa is to work with Dumisani Theological Institute and the Free Church in Southern Africa in achieving their financial dependence 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.

The following report from our missionaries in South Africa gives a good account of the current situation there:

1. **Free Church in Southern Africa** Over the past year there have been many occasions for praise and thanksgiving in view of the evidence of God’s blessing on the Free Church in Southern Africa. In a recent conversation with a member of another South African Presbyterian denomination it transpired that there existed much good will and respect for the FCSA’s clear and faithful testimony to the Gospel. Surely nothing is more important than that, although that is not all that can be said about the Church. Before detailing some of the positive factors, it is as well to share some of struggles and difficulties faced by the FCSA.

Despite our Lord’s solemn injunction to ‘maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ there are parts of the Church where unhelpful tensions and rivalries threaten its unity and peace. Another obvious and easily identifiable challenge is the proper governance of the Church’s affairs, including satisfactory financial management. When able and well informed elders face-up to these challenges they can sometimes be resented as if they were seeking power and influence for themselves. In most districts, both in the Transkei and the Southern Presbytery, there is a long established shortage of men. In many congregations men are significantly out-numbered by women, and this gives a poor impression to male followers of traditional religion who often consider Christianity to be a women’s religion. Another challenge faced by some congregations is that their ministers are not resident in their districts and, therefore, have minimal involvement with their charges. And then, of course, there is money. With a membership base that is largely rural and impoverished, the FCSA struggles to pay adequate stipends and to maintain its buildings in good repair. As is so often the case at home, the grip of church traditions can exclude the radical restructuring that might make the Church sustainable in its own context. Such tribulations, struggles, battles and hindrances are nothing new and have been forever the adjuncts of gospel ministry. The much loved Rev. Norman Reid retires to Ireland this summer. His invaluable and diligent service to the FCSA over many years has been greatly appreciated and will leave a significant gap in the ranks of the Southern Presbytery.

On a more positive note, over the last year, progress has been made in the King William’s Town district, as elsewhere. The church building at Club View progresses towards completion. The floor was recently re-laid after the previous cement finish broke up and furnishings have been provided for the main meeting area, and the Sunday School room. The Sunday morning congregation is steadily growing as members become more consistent in their
attendance and as new members join. The Sunday School continues to flourish. The services are normally led by the local elders, who, along with district elders, frequently preach. Dr John Ross often takes a number of consecutive weeks, preaching in English. The singing, both of the Psalms and the Lord’s Prayer and Apostles’ Creed, leaves little room for improvement and with the whole congregation willing to lead the singing, official precentors are redundant. Rarely do district communions come to pass without new members and baptisms; often there are ordinations of elders and deacons too.

News, both positive and of difficulties, like Paul’s ‘wide door for effective work’ with ‘many adversaries,’ (1 Cor. 16:9), comes in from Southern Presbytery districts around King William’s Town – Knox, Pirie, Dewar, Nonzwakazi, Burnhill, East London – as well as the two more remote districts of Dordrecht and Somerset East, and the congregations in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. Sometimes changes of interim-moderators, the settling of congregations with newly inducted ministers, or the diligence of active elders have all contributed to the blessings experienced. But, one suspects, it has mainly been the prayerfulness of some of the older women that has averted disasters and maintained the testimony of the Church. As ‘Rabbi’ John Duncan once admonished an Assembly, it is such praying women, often living in remote places – like St Kilda, in his example – that contribute to the good of the Church far more than people imagine.

The story of the last twelve months in the Transkei districts of Tabase, Embo and Ngcingwane has been one of hard working ministers, conscientious elders and deacons, growing congregations and spiritual blessing. One cause of great encouragement has been the licensing of Umfundisi (Rev.) Mason Nkwelo, a successful businessman and gifted elder, who, whilst pursuing private studies at Dumisani Theological Institute, offered himself for the ministry of the Church. As a part-time student, Umf. Nkwelo graduates Bachelor of Theology next year. The Transkei Presbytery meetings, usually held in Mthatha, are characterised by warmth and friendliness, with substantial time being given to reports from the districts. It used to be the custom to provide a meal in the church at the end of business, before members travelled home, but a recent trend, indicating the depth of fellowship that exists, is for one or other of the local elders to invite the whole Presbytery to his home for the meal in a more relaxed setting.

A very encouraging and growing development in some of the more remote villages, both in the Transkei and the Southern Presbytery, is for district moderators and interim-moderators to undertake pastoral home visits after the Sunday service.

A number of FCSA men, recognised by the Church as candidates for the ministry, are currently studying at Dumisani. There can be no doubt that the greatest contribution the Free Church of Scotland can make to its sister church in South Africa is to provide for its theological education in a context that is doctrinally Reformed and also warmly evangelical.

2. Dumisani Theological Institute

Following on from Dumisani’s 30th anniversary in 2009, we rejoice that it continues to provide high quality training and theological education, publication of Christian literature and generally giving invaluable support to the Church in South Africa.

There is no doubt, however, that the past year has been a particularly difficult year in the history of Dumisani, brought about in part by the financial challenges resulting from a combination of factors, including the fluctuating exchange rate of the rand against sterling, and rampant inflation in South Africa.

Nonetheless, there have also been notable encouragements in the work and it is important that we look at some of these before examining the difficulties.

2.1 Encouragements

2.1.1 Graduating Students

In 2010, a good number of students made progress in their studies and several students completed their degrees. The latter were recognised at the Awards Ceremony in March 2011, where the visiting speaker was the Rev. Noel Due from Australia, remembered warmly by many from his time in Scotland. Among the successful graduands were the Rev. Buntu Mushe, a minister of the Free Church in Southern Africa, who completed his BA Honours degree; Mr Wayne Grätz who completed his BTh degree (with outstanding results) and Mrs N. Masabalala who also completed her BTh. It is a particular achievement for Mrs Masabalala who has been doing her studies part-time over a total of eight years by attending evening classes. In addition to these three students, another student, Fezile Mathiso, completed all the requirements for his BTh from North West University with excellent results.

2.1.2 Sunday School Work

The year began with a great encouragement in that Rev. Victor Nkatha joined the staff as Sunday School Project Worker and Junior Lecturer, as a result of funds raised for Sunday School work by children of the Free Church of Scotland. Throughout the year, the team who lead the regular workshops gave
direction and encouragement to dozens of Sunday School Teachers, including a record attendance of around 110 at one workshop!

2.1.3 Building Project It was very exciting to see a proposal in drawings and then a 3D digital model for a proposed new building which would allow Dumisani to work much more effectively as a college. The issue of buildings had been discussed by the Board of Governors for many years and so there was a real sense of progress and anticipation as the drawings and model were unveiled.

2.1.4 Visitors There were numerous visitors to Dumisani during the course of the year. These visits are always encouraging for the Dumisani community and often they provide an opportunity to serve the wider Christian community. Notable among the visitors in 2010 were Professor I. Howard Marshall in March and, in October, Dr Jamie Grant (a former colleague of the Principal) and Rev. David Meredith, Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland.

2.2 Challenges Along with these significant encouragements, however, there were numerous serious challenges, in three areas in particular:

2.2.1 Financial The staff had known for around two years that the international economic climate was becoming more difficult and that this would inevitably affect their income. What had not been anticipated was that the strength of the Rand against the Pound Sterling (as well as against some other currencies) would have a devastating impact on their income. In a frighteningly short period, Dumisani went from having a very encouraging income stream to facing a significant deficit which quickly ate into reserves. Towards the end of 2010, it became clear that drastic action was required to safeguard the institution.

2.2.2 Staff retrenchments With deep regret, the Board of Governors agreed to “retrench”, or make redundant, two of the administrative staff, Mr Ikho Magodla and Mrs Lilitha Mshweshwe. This was an extremely painful decision to have to reach and the impact on the morale of the remaining staff was very negative.

2.2.3 Family circumstances In addition to the difficulties faced by Dumisani, several family members of the staff team have experienced difficult times. Bethany Wilson and Tara Lombard have both faced significant health challenges and have been in hospital for surgery. One student also lost three members of his immediate family over a period of six months. Then towards the end of last year, Elizabeth Ross was attacked by a dog in a shop which has left some ongoing health issues and has had a major impact on the Rosses’ plans for return to the UK. More recently, the Rev. Norman Reid’s father passed away in Northern Ireland. Between these various issues, staff commented more than once of their awareness of a spiritual battle going on hidden from their eyes.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Finances Humanly speaking, all the future plans for Dumisani, including any building project, really depend on increasing income so that it meets expenditure. Of course, while the staff must plan and work, this really depends on God moving his people. The staff team has been deeply touched by the support of the Lord’s people all over the world. Please pray with them that God will continue to provide for them through his church

3.2 New Staff Dumisani will be greatly diminished by the departure of Norman and Angela Reid in July 2011 and John and Elizabeth Ross in October/November 2011. These are two very experienced and very well-qualified pastors and teachers; their wives have made numerous invaluable contributions to the work. It is still not clear what funding and suitable personnel will be available to replace one or both of these men. Please join the Dumisani team in prayer for clarity about available finance and for a clear call for those who the Lord intends to carry this work forward.

3.3 Thanks The International Missions Board expresses its warmest appreciation for the marvellous contribution of Dr. Wilson and his team, particularly in view of the very difficult circumstances which they have gone through in the past year. The Board has made an emergency additional payment of £10,000 from its reserves to help address the extreme financial challenges, and hopes to be able to help further later in the year.

The Board is very grateful for the help of Mr. Adam de Jong, a business analyst and Free Church elder, who has gone out to Dumisani to assess the situation there and report back to the Board to enable them to make as informed decisions as possible as they prayerfully consider how best to address the situation and ensure, by the grace of God, the firm establishment and further development of this vital work.
(D) MARTYN PROJECT

1. **Overview**  Over the past few years the Board has invested time, personnel, and money in this important work of the church. We are aware that it is a challenging field of service. However, with suitable, gifted individuals we believe that we are making an impact, with God’s help, at home and abroad.

2. **India**  Delegates visited Rahmat in January 2011 and were pleased to see him upbeat and focused on his work. It was evident that he and his family have a positive outlook on the work in Dehradun and Rahmat’s ability to continue in this strategic ministry.

3. **West and Central Asia**  Colin Macleod has been involved in a project to produce contextualised Bible study materials. With numerous visits throughout the year to the area, Colin was and is able to assess the needs of the church there and therefore is able to teach and encourage those who are ministering with limited resources.

Since the summer of 2009, S and S have been based in Glasgow. They are grateful to God for the great door of opportunity that has been opened for them there amongst the people group with which they had been working overseas. In addition to the well attended weekly Bible Study in their home, they are involved in pastoral visitation and practical support of believers and seekers. The City of Peace meetings are an integral part of teaching and discipling those they come into contact with especially since few are fluent in English. Many are asylum seekers and refugees so this brings with it its own set of challenges but S and S are grateful for the prayerful support of the Lord's people and have been upheld through the ups and downs.

In order to regularise his position, the International Missions Board is petitioning the General Assembly that the Rev. Seoras MacGillivray be granted a seat in Presbytery based on his residency within the bounds of the Presbytery and being engaged in the work of Asiian Ministry

Adam has spent three months in Central Asia in the spring of 2011. His primary objective is to help, encourage and serve the Christian communities in whatever way he can as they face many difficulties. Along with that, Adam serves in Europe and North America where home Bible Fellowships are set up. Thousands have heard the Gospel in these gatherings and many have come to faith in our Lord.

4. **Deputation and Prayer**  The sensitive nature of the work means that we can’t publicise our work as much as we would like. Again, we would encourage our congregations to invite those involved in the Martyn Project to speak about their work. We also value your prayers for this exciting work which we believe is ‘cutting edge’ in our day and in our society.

(E) CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL

The Council of Management of Christian Witness to Israel has sent greetings to the 2011 General Assembly and asked that we convey to the Assembly their grateful thanks for the prayerful and material support received during the last year.  The following details of the ministry of CWI are selected for the interest of the General Assembly:

1. **Personnel**  In the last year, CWI has mourned the passing of two remarkable people. On 22nd December 2010, at the age of 97, CWI’s “patriarch” Ernest Lloyd passed into the presence of the Lord he had loved and served for almost eighty years. In a life that spanned almost the entire 20th century, Ernest travelled more than a million miles by land, sea and air, and preached more than 20,000 times in the cause of ministry to the Jewish people.

Ernest was loved in the Free Church as a preacher, teacher, friend and zealous servant of Messiah. Ernest’s life was an eminent example of that self denial which lies at the heart of missionary service and he longed for more missionaries to his people to be forthcoming from the Free Church.

In January 2011, after a year-long battle with leukaemia, May Foo also departed to be with Christ, which “is far better”, but leaving Jonathan bereft of a beloved wife and helper. Before her death, May had the joy of knowing that a Jewish lady in Leeds who had resisted the gospel for twelve years had been drawn to Messiah through her radiant witness. Jonathan returned to the UK in April but, without May to support him, he is uncertain about his future.

At the end of November, David Bond retired after 25 years of devoted service with CWI in North West London. In April, Paul and Judy Morris returned to the UK after serving in Australia for nine years – five years more than was originally intended. Both have suffered from ill health and on their return the Society allowed them a lengthy sabbatical before commencing work again.
2. **Outreach to New Agers and Orthodox Jews** At the time of writing, members of our London staff have just concluded an outreach to New Agers at the Vitality exhibition at Earls Court in London. Donald Stewart, a London City Missioner from Kyle of Lochalsh, was also a member of the mission team. Several thousand people, including a greater number of Jewish people than ever, visited The Jesus Experience stand, many of them queuing to hear a “Life Reading” that presented the Christian message. During the week of the General Assembly, another outreach to New Age devotees will be taking place at the Mind, Body, Spirit Festival and the prayers of Assembly attendees are requested for this vital ministry.

In March, leaflets advertising a CD-ROM of the Bible in a number of languages, including Hebrew and Yiddish, were posted to homes in the ultra-Orthodox Stamford Hill district of London. The response was not encouraging. A number of phone calls complaining about the leaflets were received by head office. Nevertheless, an email was received from a Christian, who praised our efforts to reach his neighbours with the Word of God.

Last summer’s outreach to ultra-Orthodox holidaymakers will be repeated this year. A number of contacts were established and one of the men, Abraham, willingly accepted a Bible CD-ROM.

3. **Communications** A number of significant improvements have been made to the Communications and Promotions Department. The websites have been improved and the number of visits to the sites has increased. The “Mike’s Musings” blog on the promotional site attracts a growing number of visitors as does the weekly commentary on the synagogue readings on the evangelistic site (www.shalom.org.uk). The newly designed sites have generated an increased interest in CWI and an increase in subscriptions to the CWI Herald, which can now be received via e-mail.

The most dramatic success in terms of electronic communication has been the “Rosh Pina Project” blog (http://roshpinaproject.com), founded by one of CWI’s missionaries. The blog, which attracts many thousands of visitors, including anti-missionaries is a focus for heated debate on a multitude of subjects related to the Faith, Israel, Judaism, the Jewish people and Jewish believers.

The fourth volume of the modern Hebrew Bible covering Job, Psalms and Proverbs, was published at the end of 2011 and was well received. The fifth and final volume of the Old Testament is due for publication at the end of next year. There is a possibility that a major publishing house will take over the production and distribution of the Bible. If that happens, it will be a giant step forward for Christian publishing in Israel. Please remember this matter in prayer.

4. **Forthcoming Projects** The CWI Summer School of Jewish Evangelism is due to take place in London from 12th to 21st July and there are a few places still available. CWI would especially welcome young people from the Free Church. In a recent report to the IMB, the Vice Chairman of CWI, Alex Cowie has suggested that Deacons’ Courts might help interested younger members of their congregations to attend Summer School by assisting them with funding.

Asher Norman’s influential book Twenty-Six Reasons Why Jews Don’t Believe in Jesus has been endorsed and recommended by a number of rabbis, academics and former Messianic Jews. Instead of responding to the book in print, we plan to produce a number of short YouTube videos that will expose the book’s logical, intellectual and biblical shortcomings.

The mission is also sponsoring two young Israeli believers who are studying at the EMW College in Welwyn.

(F) **GENERAL**

1. **Publications** The Board expresses its thanks to Mr Charles and Mrs Daphne Douglas for the excellent work they do in editing the From the Frontiers material each month for The Record and the Frontiers annual. We are also most grateful to Daphne for compiling the monthly Missionary Prayer Notes — a work she has been doing faithfully now for 20 years. The Board also thanks the Editors of The Record, The Instructor and Free for promoting missionary interest.

2. **WfM** (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:

We thank God for His blessing on the various activities undertaken to support home and international mission workers. We would also like to thank everyone involved in the work of WfM and to let them know it is greatly appreciated.
2.1 Committee  Meg Millar has handed on the responsibilities of secretary to Hazel Morrison but is staying on the committee. We are sorry to have said farewell to Margaret Smith, Daphne Douglas and Maggie Macleod all of whom have served faithfully for many years. We are happy to welcome Sarah Cumming and Rona Matheson as new members on the committee.

2.2 Day Away 2010  The Away Day took place on Saturday 25th September last year in Macdonald Conference Centre, Aviemore and all who attended were blessed by the ministry of Ann Benton. We look forward to the next Away Day in 2012.

2.3 Disaster Fund  Since the last Annual Meeting, sales of recipe books 1 and 2 have enabled WfM to give the following donations through the Disaster and Relief Fund to areas of natural disaster:

- £3000 in September 2010 to Blythswood for Pakistan
- £500 in October 2010 Tearfund for West Africa – Mali Appeal

The sale of WfM Christmas Cards has also raised over £2000 for this fund.

2.4 International Missions Board  Christine Mackenzie and Anne Mackay (Golspie) represent WfM at Board meetings. Kirsty Boyd and Christine are able to support women missionaries home on furlough. They have interviewed Olwen Ford and Ruth Bailey on home-leave from the Church’s mission fields. Sarah Cumming is now also available to help in this area.

2.5 Link People  Sarah Cumming is now overseeing WfM Link people to ensure relevant information is passed from the Committee to WfM groups and individual women throughout the Church.

2.6 ICT Committee  This group consists of Alison MacDonald, Joan Montgomery and Kirsty Boyd, who have produced high quality leaflets and posters to advertise WfM’s work.

2.7 WfM Page  Alison Macdonald continues to edit the page in The Record.

2.8 Support-a-Volunteer  During 2010/11, there were seven young Free Church members who received financial support to help them serve as volunteers in mission areas. Information about Support-a-Volunteer can be found on the Free Church Website on: www.freechurch.org/missions/wfm.

2.9 Project  At the time of writing, the ‘Home and Away’ project has already provided funds to the following:

- Weekly Lunch Club – Leith Free Church
- Mums and Toddlers Group – Cross Free Church, Ness
- Bible Study Material – Neil White, African Outreach

2.10 Annual Theme and Bible Study  The Annual Theme for this year has been ‘Living for God’s Glory’. Bible Study material was available on the website.

3. Support Groups and Young People  The Board greatly values the work done each year by the three Mission Support Groups in raising awareness and funding for mission projects. The effort they make each year makes a big difference to so many in our various mission fields. The Board also commends the young people of the Church for all they achieve in raising funds for Mission through the Youth Project.

4. Furlough Flat  The Board is indebted to Mrs Mary MacMillan and Miss Anna MacDonald for the great work they do in looking after the furlough flat in Edinburgh. They always go the second mile in making the flat ready for the visiting missionaries and this is greatly appreciated.

5. Eastern Europe for Christ  The Board continued its annual support of the excellent work of EEFC providing them with a grant of £2,500.

6. Partnership with other Churches  The work of the Board is greatly helped by the keen mission interest and support of Mr Ernest Brown who serves as the representative of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland. We value our continued partnership with them in mission. The Board also greatly appreciates the continued prayerful and active support of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.
7. **Disaster Fund**  The following amounts were received and paid out during 2010:

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Balance at 1st January 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amounts received</td>
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<td>WFM Donation</td>
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<td>Congregational Donations</td>
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<td>Gift Aid Recovered</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amounts paid</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blythswood - Buckets of Love</td>
<td>£8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tear Fund - Haiti and Pakistan</td>
<td>£35,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance at 31st December 2010</td>
<td>£15,165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DAVID MACPHERSON  *Chairman*

IAIN MACASKILL *Vice-Chairman*

**APPENDIX**

**Petition: Rev Seoras MacGillivray**

To the Venerable the Generable Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet at Edinburgh on 23rd May 2011 the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll humbly shews:

1. Whereas Rev. Seoras MacGillivray was ordained by the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll for the work of Asian Ministry on 1st December 2006 in accordance with Act II, Commission of Assembly, October 2006 at the request of the International Missions Board;

2. Whereas Mr MacGillivray has been engaged from 2007 in language study in preparation for the work for which he was ordained;

3. Whereas in the providence of God he has been unable to continue this study or take up an appointment overseas in the furtherance of this work because of visa difficulties;

4. Whereas since September 2009 he has been working temporarily in Asian Ministry in Glasgow under the oversight of the International Missions Board until such time as it is possible to go abroad again;

5. Whereas there appears no immediate prospect of this becoming possible;

6. Whereas it is desirable that his position be regularised and he be placed on a standing similar to the other Asian Outreach Workers in Glasgow;

7. Whereas he is resident in the city of Glasgow and attends Govanhill Free Church within the bounds of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll;

Wherefore may it please the General Assembly to grant to Mr MacGillivray a seat in the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll so long as he remains resident within the bounds of the Presbytery undertaking the work of Asian Ministry on condition that he submit an Annual Report through the Glasgow and Argyll Presbytery to the International Missions Board for consideration by the Joint Asian Outreach Committee; or do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the International Missions Board and thanks the Board, especially the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.
2. The General Assembly greet all our missionary personnel and assures them of their continued support. It gives thanks for safety and security for all the mission workers over the last year and prays for their ongoing well-being in circumstances that can be precarious.

3. The General Assembly commend the work of the gospel in ‘closed’ countries and among migrants and refugees who now live in the United Kingdom.

4. The General Assembly commend S and S and their family to the prayers of the Church.

5. The General Assembly send 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 for his safety and blessing in the work.

6. The General Assembly send 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 for his safety and blessing in the work.

7. The General Assembly commend Rev. Colin MacLeod and his family to the prayers of the Church.

8. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the International Missions Board and grant its crave. They grant to Rev. Seoras MacGillivray a seat in the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll so long as he remains resident within the bounds of the Presbytery undertaking the work of Asian Ministry on condition that he submit an Annual Report through the Glasgow and Argyll Presbytery to the International Missions Board for consideration by the Joint Asian Outreach Committee.

9. The General Assembly send 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 send greetings to the Education Committee in India and encourages them in their efforts to improve the finances of the schools so that this vital ministry can continue.

11. The General Assembly commend 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 send greetings to Dr Heman Prasad and the staff of Lakhnadon Hospital and Chhapara Health Centre commending them for their ministry of Christian care and compassion.

13. The General Assembly commend Lima Evangelical Seminary for training and equipping a new generation of church leaders in Perú and throughout Latin America.

14. The General Assembly note with approval the possibility of cooperation between SEL and the Free Church College, and encourage those involved to explore the feasibility of such arrangements.

15. The General Assembly commend Rev. Dr Donnie and Mrs Julia Smith for their lifelong commitment to serving the church of Jesus Christ in Perú.


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 commend 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 commend 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 greet 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.
The General Assembly acknowledge the valuable contribution made to mission life and work by Mrs Angela Reid, Mrs Jenny Wilson and Mrs Elizabeth Ross.

The General Assembly greet the Free Church in Southern Africa and assures her of our continuing prayers for God to bless and prosper her.

The General Assembly greet the Board of Dumisani Theological Institute and pledge the Church’s continued support for the work it undertakes.

The General Assembly assure 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.

The General Assembly send sincere thanks to Rev. Norman Reid for his dedicated and excellent work in Dumisani and for his significant involvement in the Free Church in Southern Africa for many years. The General Assembly also pays tribute to the valuable contribution made by Mrs Angela Reid during their years in South Africa and wishes them every blessing in the Lord for their retirement.

The General Assembly send sincere thanks to Rev. Dr John Ross for the excellent contribution he has made in Dumisani and also for the help he has given in the Free Church in Southern Africa. The General Assembly also expresses its thanks to Mrs Elizabeth Ross for her keen involvement in the work and gives thanks for the good measure of recovery following her illness. The General Assembly and wishes Dr and Mrs Ross every blessing in the Lord for their retirement.

The General Assembly greet all the staff, students and Board of Governors of the Dumisani Theological Institute and gives thanks for their dedication and encourages them to maintain the present range of activities associated with Dumisani.

The General Assembly greet 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.

The General Assembly encourage members of the Free Church of Scotland to prayerfully consider opportunities for service within CWI.

The General Assembly greet all our Free Church members working outwith areas of direct Free Church missionary operation and assures them of our prayerful and practical support.

The General Assembly thank Mr 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.

The General Assembly acknowledge 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.

The General Assembly gratefully acknowledge 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 on the Board, Mrs Christine Mackenzie and Mrs Anne MacKay.
XV.
REPORT
OF
NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee met in March of this year, having been in correspondence by email for four months previously.

(A) RESIGNATIONS

The Committee noted with regret the resignation of the following members from the Boards and Committees of the Church: Rev. Ronald F. Morrison, Board of Trustees; Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean, Communications Committee; Rev. Alex J. MacDonald, Home Missions Board. The Committee also noted the resignation of Rev. Kenneth Stewart from the congregation of Dowanvale Free Church, Glasgow, and the intimation that Mr Campbell Brown was no longer a *bona fide* acting elder of the Church. The Committee records its thanks to all retiring members of Boards and Committees, and in particular to Rev. Alex J. MacDonald and Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean, for their contribution to the work of the Church as Chairman of the Home Missions Board and Convener of the Communications Committee respectively.

The Committee also noted that Mr Iain Gillies, member of the Board of Trustees, had been unable to attend meetings of the Board between the 2010 General Assembly and January 2011 due to other commitments, and that such an absence shall be considered a resignation of membership according to Act XLVIII, Class 2, 2008, Paragraph 8. The Committee records its thanks to Mr Gillies for his contribution to the work of the Board of Trustees.

(B) COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a replacement for Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean as Convener of the Communications Committee and agreed to recommend the appointment of Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell. The Committee noted that Dr Campbell completes a full term of service on the College Board at the 2011 General Assembly, and that Act 48, Class 2, 2008, Paragraph 2, states that a person serving a full term on any Committee or Board specified in this Act, 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. It was agreed to ask the General Assembly to waive this restriction and to accept the Committee’s recommendation to appoint Dr Campbell as Convener of the Communications Committee.

(C) HOME MISSIONS BOARD

The Committee noted the concerns raised by the Home Missions Board with regard to the fact that six of the current members of the Board were due to complete their term of appointment at the 2012 General Assembly. It was agreed to request the General Assembly that the four-year restriction placed on the term of appointments to the Home Missions Board by Act XLVIII, Class 2, Paragraph 1.3, be waived in the case of Rev. David Meredith in order to allow Mr Meredith to serve on the Board until the 2013 General Assembly. It was also agreed to request the General Assembly that the appointment of Rev. Gordon Martin be extended for one year in order to terminate at the 2013 General Assembly.

JAMES MACIVER, Convener

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

(A) GENERAL

1. The General Assembly thank Rev. Alex J. MacDonald and Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean for their services to the Church on the Home Missions Board and the Communications Committee respectively.

2. The General Assembly waive the restriction of Act XLVIII, Class 2, 2008, Paragraph 1.3, which states that appointments to the Home Missions Board are for a four year term, with regard to Rev. David Meredith, and appoint Mr Meredith as Chairman of the Home Missions Board for a two year term.

3. The General Assembly waive the restriction of Act XLVIII, Class 2, 2008, Paragraph 2, which states that a person serving a full term on any Committee or Board specified in this Act, 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, in the case of Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell, and appoint him as Convener of the Communications Committee.

(B) APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

The General Assembly appoint the following membership of Committees and Boards:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Trustees</th>
<th>Chairman: Mr James M. Fraser</th>
<th>Clerk: Chief Administrative Officer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr James M. Fraser</td>
<td>Mr Iain K. Macleod</td>
<td>Mr Murdo Murchison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Neil Campbell</td>
<td>Mr Donald Crichton</td>
<td>Rev. Donald A. Macdonald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Donald Crichon</td>
<td>Rev. Neil MacMillan</td>
<td>Dr Allan MacPherson</td>
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<td>Rev. Donald A. Macdonald</td>
<td>EP</td>
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<td>Dr Allan MacPherson</td>
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<td>Rev. Chris Smart</td>
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<td>Dr John Morrison</td>
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<td>Mr Murdo Macleod</td>
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<td>Principal Clerk</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance: Mr Colin Macdonald</td>
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<td>Mr Iain Mackenzie</td>
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<td>Strategy: Mr Norman Macleod</td>
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<td>Dr David Forbes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assembly Arrangements</th>
<th>Convener: Chief Administrative Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Clerk ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator Designate</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery Clerks</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synod Clerks</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. James Beaton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Donald G. Macdonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Chris Macrae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth A. Macleod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 members appointed by Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Joe MacPhee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. George Maclean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Colin Mackay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Chairman:** Rev. Fergus A. J. Macdonald  
**Clerk:** Rev. Nigel Anderson

### College Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>John L. Mackay, <em>ex officio</em></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 other members of Senatus</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman Board of Ministry</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Chairman Board of Ministry</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President SRC</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Iver Martin</td>
<td>WI [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Colin Dow</td>
<td>GA [1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Iain A. Mackinnon</td>
<td>WI [1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ian A. Macdonald</td>
<td>SWR [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Peter Morrison</td>
<td>GA [1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chairman:** Rev. Neil Macmillan  
**Clerk:** College Secretary

### Communications Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell</td>
<td>WI [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister from HMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder from IMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Angus Mackay</td>
<td>WI [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo Macleod</td>
<td>WI [2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Stephen Allan</td>
<td>EP [2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “Monthly Record” <em>ex officio</em></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “Free” <em>ex officio</em></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Officer <em>ex officio</em></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Convener:** Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell  
**Clerk:** Mrs Heather Akroyd

### Ecumenical Relations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator Designate</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair or Vice Chair HMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair or Vice Chair IMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk <em>ex officio</em></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson</td>
<td>WI [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Iain A. Macdonald</td>
<td>ILR [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Convener:** Rev. K. M. Ferguson  
**Clerk:** Principal Clerk

### Home Missions Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Calum I. Macleod</td>
<td>WI [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. David Meredith</td>
<td>ILR [2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Angus J. Howat</td>
<td>GA [1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Gordon Martin</td>
<td>ILR [2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Daniel Sladek</td>
<td>SWR [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Evan Macdonald</td>
<td>GA [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr David Kirk</td>
<td>WI [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Roderick Macleod</td>
<td>EP [2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Sandy Finlay</td>
<td>ILR [4]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## International Missions Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. R. J. Akroyd</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Angus Morrison</td>
<td>GA</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo H. Macleod</td>
<td>SWR</td>
<td>4/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Tim Donachie</td>
<td>GA</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. David MacPherson</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>2/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth J. Macleod</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>2/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Martin Cameron</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>2/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Norman Macleod</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>2/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Finlay Mackenzie</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>4/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Donald W. Matheson</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>4/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Iain Macaskill</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>3/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “From the Frontiers” ex officio</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chairman:** Rev. Iain MacAskill  
**Clerk:** Mr Calum Ferguson

## Nominations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk ex officio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alasdair Macdonald</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. William D. Graham</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Farquhar Renwick</td>
<td>ILR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. James Maciver</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr James Skinner</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Marten Walker</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Convener:** Rev. Alasdair Macdonald  
**Clerk:** Rev. James Maciver

The Panel of Pastoral Advice is appointed according to the terms of ActXVII, Class 2, 2008. There is no fixed term of service for members of the Panel.

## Personnel Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Duncan Macleod</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Howard Stone</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Gordon Matheson</td>
<td>SWR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Neil D. M. Macleod</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Charles Anderson</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Callum Macdonald</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Convener:** Mr Callum Macdonald  
**Clerk:** Mr Norman Cumming
### 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 6th October 2010

1 Commission constituted Which day a quorum of the Commission appointed by last General Assembly being met, Rev. David C. Meredith 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 Tabling of Acts of Assembly A printed copy of the Acts and Proceedings of last General Assembly was laid on the table.

4 Committee to nominate Moderator The Commission took up consideration of Report of the Committee to nominate the Moderator of the General Assembly for 2011 which was given in by the Convener who addressed the Commission thereanent.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

The Commission of Assembly receive the Report of the Committee to nominate the Moderator of next General Assembly and approve the appointment of Rev. James Maciver, minister at Knock.

5 Board of Trustees: Committee and Board Budgets for 2011 The Commission took up consideration of Report of the Board of Trustees: Budget for 2001 in the following terms:

Introduction

At the 2010 General Assembly, the Board of Trustees was asked to draw up final income and expenditure budgets for 2011 and to present these to the Commission of Assembly for approval.

2011 Draft Budgets

The first draft of income and expenditure budgets for 2011 showed a projected deficit of around £150,000 for the year. Included within the budgets was an assumption that remittance income would remain at the levels budgeted in 2010. This in effect amounts to an assumed increase in remittances since the transitional relief on gift aid is due to end in April 2011. This is likely to have a negative impact of around £75,000 on the Church’s gift aid recovery. The draft budgets also assumed an increase in stipend of £1,500 to a level of £21,000 per annum. This was in line with a recommendation from the Personnel Committee.

The Board is strongly of the view that the Church has a responsibility to strive to balance its budget. In recognition of this, committees and boards were invited to review their budgets in order to identify savings with a view to bringing the consolidated budget back into balance. This exercise identified a range of savings, but a deficit of some £110,000 remained.

In order to produce a balanced budget, the Board, assisted by its Finance Sub-Committee, undertook a further review of budgets to identify areas of possible saving and areas where increases in income might be generated. This further review has identified a range of measures to produce a small budgeted surplus.

Proposed Changes to Draft Budgets

The Board has reviewed all income and expenditure budgets and proposes the following:
1 Income
The Board does not consider that it would be prudent to assume further increases in remittance income or investment income. As noted above it is assumed that the reduction in gift aid recovery will be met by an increase in overall remittances. The Board believes that this is already a challenging target given the economic uncertainties facing many contributors at present and the additional impact on individuals’ budgets of increases in the costs of household items including those resulting from an increase in the rate of VAT. However, the Board took the view that there was room to increase the assumed level of legacies in 2011 from £30,000 to £50,000. Although legacy income varies considerably from year to year, it is felt that there is still sufficient prudence in the revised assumption.

The Board understands that a number of initiatives are underway to develop the excellent work of the Free Church Youth Camps. In recognition of this, it is suggested that we should assume that the camps will generate a further £5,000 compared to the original draft budgets.

2 Interest payments to congregations
The Board holds funds on behalf of a number of congregations and pays interest to these congregations based on the investment income received on these funds. Following a further review, it was noted that a number of congregational balances have reduced as congregations have drawn down on their balances and therefore a saving of £5,000 in interest paid to congregations has been assumed. The Board is content that the level of investment income assumed within the budget adequately reflects the balances held and the expected market returns.

3 Stipend
The Board is supportive of the aspiration of the Personnel Committee to implement a programme of annual increases aimed at bringing the level of stipend up to a more acceptable level. This prompted the Board to carry out its review of income and expenditure with the aim of protecting as much of the planned increase as possible. It is therefore with considerable reluctance that the Board has arrived at the conclusion that, even after identifying a range of income and expenditure stretch targets, the Church does not have sufficient funds to meet the full £1,500 increase in stipend included within the draft budget. The Board proposes that an increase of £1,000 be implemented from 1st January 2011. This brings the level of stipend to £20,500 and results in a saving of around £58,000 compared to the draft budget.

4 Other Savings
The table below shows the additional savings that have been identified for each committee and board. The Board plans to provide a revised budget to each committee or board showing where it suggests these savings can be achieved. It will be for the individual committee or board to decide how savings will actually be achieved, provided that they operate within the constraints of the overall budget shown.

The Board wishes to draw particular attention to the proposed efficiencies in the area of committee expenses. The Board is firmly of the view that more can be done by individual committee and board members to reduce costs to the Church by ensuring that cost effective travel arrangements are made. Similarly, the Board would encourage committees and boards to do more to reduce their costs by making greater use of technology such as telephone or video conferencing. This has the added advantage of reducing the time involved in attending meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee/Board</th>
<th>Budget Saving</th>
<th>Proposed sources of saving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
<td>Committee expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Missions Board</td>
<td>£9,100</td>
<td>Committee expenses, grants, other expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>£8,000</td>
<td>Publishing annals, King James Version Commemoration, bookshop website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Missions Board</td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td>Committee expenses, mission expenses, grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Board</td>
<td>£3,500</td>
<td>Committee expenses, property repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psalmody</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Committee expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Ministry</td>
<td>£2,200</td>
<td>Committee expenses, other expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Committee expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Savings</strong></td>
<td><strong>£30,300</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion
The combined effect of the assumed increases in income together with proposed cost savings is an improvement from the draft budgets of around £118,000. Implementing these measures produces a revised budget that shows a surplus of around £8,000.

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.

JAMES M. FRASER, Chairman

Dr Allan MacPherson addressed the Commission thereanent.

First Motion: It was moved and seconded 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 and instruct budget holders to operate within the constraints of these budgets.
4. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Board to provide budget holders with details of the proposed savings contained within the revised budgets.

Second Motion: It was also moved and seconded that:

Paragraph 3 of the Deliverance be amended to read:

The Commission of Assembly approve the committee and board budgets included as an Appendix to the Board’s Report with the exception of the level of the stipend which they amend to £20,000, and adjust the Appendix accordingly. They and instruct budget holders to operate within the constraints of these budgets.

On a vote being taken between the Second Motion and the First Motion, the First Motion was declared carried by a majority.

Finding: Wherefore

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 and instruct budget holders to operate within the constraints of these budgets.
4. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Board to provide budget holders with details of the proposed savings contained within the revised budgets.

Assembly Clerks: Presbytery Records  The Commission took up consideration of a Report from the Assembly Clerk in the following terms:

The Records of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth and of the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross were submitted and examined as instructed by last General Assembly.

The record of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth was found to be in order except that the Presbytery had appointed a meeting for the ordination and induction of a probationer prior to the ordination trials being sustained. The record was attested.

The record of the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross was found to be in order except that:
1. Blank spaces left after the end of minutes were not scored off. This had been referred to the 2009 General Assembly but not carried out.

2. These other instructions of the 2009 Assembly have not been implemented:

   (1) The adjustment on page 57 has not been initialled.

   (2) In the Minute of 28th October 2008 the adjustment of the reference of the minute of 29th September should read 23rd September.

The Principal Clerk addressed the Commission thereanent.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

The Commission of Assembly directed that the Record be attested and that the abovementioned defects be made good.

7 Minutes The Minutes of this sederunt were read and approved.

8 Close There being no further business, the meeting was closed with prayer.

Wednesday 2nd March 2011

On Wednesday 2nd March 2011, there being no business, the Commission did not meet.

JAMES MACIVER, Clerk
MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

PLENARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF

THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

At Edinburgh and within the Free Assembly Hall
the 18th day of November 2010 years at 6 o’clock evening

1 Assembly constituted Which day the Ministers and Elders, Commissioners from Presbyteries appointed to meet this day in terms of Act I, May 2010, were convened, and after sermon by Rev. David C. Meredith, Moderator of last General Assembly, who preached from John 16: 1 – 15, the General Assembly was constituted.

2 Roll of Assembly The names of Commissioners, having been presented in a printed list and acknowledged as correct, were allowed to stand as follows:

WESTERN SYNOD

Presbytery of the Western Isles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Elders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Donald Macdonald, Retired</td>
<td>Mr Iain A. Mackinnon, 27 Gress, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0NB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alister Montgomery, Retired</td>
<td>Mr Angus J. Smith, 34 Lower Barvas, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0QY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alexander Smith, Retired</td>
<td>Mr Malcolm J. Macaulay, 2 Stonefield, Breasclete, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9EA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth Macleod, Retired</td>
<td>Dr George Macleod, Carloway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Neil Shaw, Retired</td>
<td>Mr Iain Macsween, 20 North Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Robert Sinclair, Retired</td>
<td>Mr. Alex G. Mackinnon, 20 Crossbost, Lochs, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson, Cross</td>
<td>Mr Donald N. Maclean, 4 Lever Terrace, Leverburgh, Harris, HS5 3TU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Donald A. Macdonald, Kinloch</td>
<td>Mr Angus Mackay, 1 Balallan, Isle of Lewis, HS2 1PN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. James Maciver, Knock</td>
<td>Mr Donald Macleod, 5 Lower Bayble, Point, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0QA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Iain D. Campbell, Point</td>
<td>Mr John Maclean, 22 Ranish, Lochs, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9NN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth I. Macleod, Assistant, Stornoway</td>
<td>Mr Murdo Macleod, 32 Leurbost, Lochs, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9NU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Malcolm Macdonald, Callanish</td>
<td>Mr Stan Gowdy, Skyeview, Lochport, North Uist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HS6 5EX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Murdo M. Martin, Stornoway</td>
<td>Mr William G. Lucas, 37 Springfield Road, Stornoway, HS1 2PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Roderick J. Campbell, North Tolsta</td>
<td>Mr Donald Morrison, “Ealigro”, 24 South Bragar, Isle of Lewis, HS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Malcolm Macleod, Shawbost</td>
<td>Mr John M. Macdonald, 51b North Tolsta, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Calum I. Macleod, Barvas</td>
<td>Mr Murdo Macleman, 15 Marvig, South Lochs, Isle of Lewis, HS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alasdair Macleod, Lochs</td>
<td>Mr Donald Crichton, 21 Swordale, Point, Isle of Lewis, HS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth J. Macleod, Carloway</td>
<td>Mr Angus M. Macleod, The Old Bakery, Tarbert, Harris, HS3 3DJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Iain T. Campbell, Park</td>
<td>Mr Joseph MacPhee, 65 Plasterfield, Stornoway, HS1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Ruairidh Maclean, Harris</td>
<td>Mr David Kirk, Myrtle Cottage, Lochboisdale, South Uist, HS8 5TN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Ewen Matheson, North Uist and Grimsay</td>
<td>Mr Donald Macleod, 52 North Shawbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9BQ</td>
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</tbody>
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Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross

Ministers
Rev. Donald G. Macdonald, Portree
Rev. John H. Maclean, Trotternish
Rev. Roderick Rankin, Plockton and Kyle
Rev. Marcos Florit, Lochcarron and Applecross
Rev. Alasdair Macleod, Lochbroom and Coigecach
Rev. Daniel Sladek, Duirinish
Rev. Jeremy E. Ross, Poolewe and Aultbea
Rev. Gordon Matheson, Sleat and Strath
Rev Alasdair B. Ferguson, retired

Elders
Mr Donald Mackenzie, Park House, Dunvegan, Isle of Skye, IV55 8GU
Mr Atta Macrae, 47 Mellon Charles, Aultbea, Ross-shire, IV22
Mr Murdo H. Macleod, Dunaros, Erbusaig, Kyle of Lochalsh, IV40 8BB
Mr David Jones, Swallow Cottage, Elphin, IV27 4HH
Mr Roderick Grant, Isle Ewe, Aultbea, Ross-shire, IV22
Mr Alasdair J. F. Fraser, Druimuan, Church Road, Kyle of Lochalsh, IV30 8BB
Mr John A. Gillies, Torwood, 1 Peiness, By Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9LW
Mr John N. MacDonald, An Sgriob Harrapool, Broadford, Isle of Skye, IV49 9AQ
Mr Ian MacDonald, 8 Linicro, Kilmuir, Isle of Skye, IV51 9YN

SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA

Presbytery of The Great Lakes and Western Canada

Ministers
Rev. D. Allan Macleod, Toronto
Rev. Kenneth D. Macleod, Livonia

Elders
Mr Roderick C. Finlayson, 41 Snowshoe Cres., Thornhill, Ontario, Canada, L3T 4M7
Mr Duncan Macleod

NORTHERN SYNOD

Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross

Ministers
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Rev. Donald K. Macleod, Retired
Rev. W. Kenneth Stone, Retired
Rev. John A. M. Mackay, Glenurquhart and Fort Augustus
Rev. Gordon Mair, Fort William and Kilmonivaig
Rev. Douglas Mackeddie, Retired
Rev. James C Abernethy, Burghead
Rev. David C Meredith, Smithton-Culloden and Nairn
Rev. Farquhar Renwick, Knockbain
Rev. Alexander Sutherland, Fortrose
Rev. Angus MacRae, Dingwall and Strathpeffer
Rev. Christopher D. Smart, Resolis and Urquhart
Rev. Gordon Martin, Urray and Strathconnon
Rev. Colin F. J. Morison, Elgin and Forres
Rev. Dr Malcolm MacLean, Greyfriars-Stratherrick

Elders
Mr Calum M. Morrison, 9 Drumossie Avenue, Inverness, IV2 3SL
Mr Iain A. Macdonald, 3 Wimberly Way, Inverness, IV2 3XZ
Mr Robert Henderson, 8 Community Way, Lossiemouth, Moray, IV31 6RL
Mr Donnie Cumming, 3 Raddery, Fortrose, Ross-shire, IV10 8SN
Mr Angus I. Campbell, 24 Culloden Road, Balloch, Inverness, IV2 7HQ
Mr Andrew Murchison, “Riverdale”, Lower Balmacaan, Drumnadrochit, IV63 6WU
Mr Charles Anderson, Seana Bhraigh, Tower Brae South, Westhill, Inverness, IV2 5BW
Mr Murdo MacArthur, The Lodge, Pelaig, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9TY
Dr Archie Fraser, 23 Kingsmills Road, Inverness, IV2 3JX
Mr Norman Kennedy, 7 Borlum Road, Inverness, IV2 4RN
Mr James MacArthur, 18 Seabank Road, Nairn, IV12 4EU
Mr David MacQueen, Dalmagarry Farm, Moy, Tomatin, Inverness-shire
Mr Craig Murray, Clova, Campbell Road, Banavie, Fort William, PH33 7PX
Mr James Fraser, The Old Manse, Camault Muir, Kiltarlity, Inverness-shire, IV4 7JH
Mr David Topping, 26 Drumsmitthal Road, North Kessock,
Rev. Christopher Macrae, Kilmallie
Rev. John Wagner, Assistant, Free North
Rev. Ricki Macdonald, Badenoch
Rev. Murdo Macleod, Assistant, Smithton-Culloden and Nairn

Mr Colin Swan, Ormond Cottage, Strathbran Place, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire, IV7 8HE
Dr Ian Maciver, 11 Balmatua, Culbokie, Ross-shire, IV7 8JQ
Mr Donald R. Macaskill, 7 Fraser Road, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9RE
Mr William S. Wyllie, 41 Drumsptittal Road, North Kessock, Inverness, IV1 3JU

Northern Presbytery

Ministers
Rev. Neil Macdonald, Retired
Rev. Kenneth Macdonald, Retired
Rev. Donald Maciver, Retired
Rev. Ranald F. Morrison, Retired
Rev. Eric Paterson, Golspie
Rev. Howard Stone, Orlig, Watten and Bower
Rev. Iain Macaskill, Roskeen
Rev. Kenneth Macleod, Thurso and Reay
Rev. John Forbes, Bonar and Lairg
Rev. Calum Macmillan, Assistant, Roskeen

Elders
Dr James Skinner, 28 St Vincent Road, Tain, Ross-shire, IV19 1JR
Dr John Morrison, 1 College Court, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7QQ
Mr James Morrison, Free Church Manse, Main Street, Lybster, Caithness, KW3 6AQ
Mr Peter Whitfield, 10 Golfview Terrace, Invergordon, Ross-shire, IV18 0HL
Mr David Lipp, 69 Obsdale Park, Alness, Ross-shire, IV17 OTR
Mr Donald Stirling, 4 Kendal Cres., Alness, IV17 0UF
Dr Donald G. Mackay, 20 Ben Bhraggie Drive, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6SX
Mr John Matheson, Clashmugach Crofthouse, Clashmore, Dornoch, IV25 3RQ
Mr Hector Maclellan, Dalmichie, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4AA
Mr John Laing, 49 Dempster Street, Wick, Caithness, KW1 5QB

SOUTHERN SYNOD

Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth

Ministers
Rev. Alistair G. Ross, Retired
Rev. Dr. Fergus A. J. Macdonald, Retired
Rev. Professor Donald Macleod, Free Church College
Rev. William D. Graham, Retired
Rev. Alex J. MacDonald, Buccleuch and Greyfriars
Rev. John MacPherson, Retired
Rev. Murdo Macleod, Retired
Rev. Principal John L. Mackay, Free Church College
Rev. Alastair I. Macleod, St. Andrews
Rev. Duncan Macleod, Perth and Pitlochry
Rev. Robert Macleod, Chaplain, Forth Valley Health Board
Rev. David A. Robertson, Dundee
Rev. David D. Miller, Cobham
Rev. Professor John A. Macleod, Free Church College
Rev. Professor Emeritus, Donald M. MacDonald, Retired

Elders
Mr Donald W. Matheson, Dun Aluinn, Stirling Road, Kinross, KY13 0NR
Mr William Ford, 31 Blenheim Place, Stenhousemuir, Larbert, FK15 4PW
Mr Donald Jack, 29 Summerside Place, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 4NZ
Mr John Scoales, 74 Harrison Gardens, Edinburgh EH11 1SD
Mr Charles Douglas, 28 Learmonth Crescent, Edinburgh EH4 1DE
Mr J. Bethune, 17 East Restalrig Terrace, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 8ED
Mr Donald Macleod, 19 Mermicmuir Place, Dundee DD3 9AH
Mr Bryan Kee, 14 Blake Avenue, Broughty Ferry. DD5 3LH
Mr Donald Gillies, Muirhead Cottage, St Cyrus. DD8 4PR
Mr Neil Campbell, 54 Strachan Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3RG
Mr Iain D.Gill, 5 Paisley Gardens, Edinburgh, EH8 7JN
Mr Roddy Macleod, 76 Relugas Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2LZ
Mr Peter Rourke, 3 Torphichen Street, Edinburgh
Mr Tom Muir, 14/7 Southfield Place, Portobello, Edinburgh
Mr Calum Ferguson, 10 Burdiehouse Road, Edinburgh
Rev. Derek Lamont, St. Columba’s
Rev. Neil Macmillan, Evangelism Coordinator, Edinburgh
Rev. Professor John R. McIntosh, Free Church College
Rev. Angus Lamont, London
Rev. David MacPherson, Aberdeen
Rev. Douglas N. Campbell, Dunfermline
Rev. Dr. Robert Akroyd, Assistant, Buccleuch and Greyfriars
Rev. Captain Colin Macleod, Chaplain H.M. Forces
Rev. Norman Mackay, Falkirk
Rev. Nigel Anderson, Livingston
Rev. Colin Macleod, Leith
Rev. John Johnstone, Kirkcaldy, Kinglassie and Glenrothes
Mr Colin Rogerson, Glencourse House, Fettes College, 2 Carrington Road, Edinburgh
Mr Neil D. M. Macleod, 8/2 Edina St, Edinburgh
Mr Donald MacCaskill, 32 Finlay Terrace, Pitlochry PH16 5EU
Dr Thomas S. M. Maclean, 12 Kirk Road, Lochinver, Sutherland IV27 4LT
Dr George M. Coghill, 15 Bингhill Drive, Milltimber, Aberdeen AB13 OJE.
Mr S. Smith, ‘Marvig’ Northburn Avenue, Aberdeen AB15 6AH
Mr I. Smith, Church Flat, 2 Stevenson St., Aberdeen AB25 1NH
Mr B. MacLelland, ‘Skerryvore’ 91 Westburn Drive, Aberdeen AB25 2BU
Dr I. R. MacDonald, 24 Hillview Drive, Cults, Aberdeen AB15 9SA
Mr D. Mein, 186 Sutherland Way, Knightsridge, Livingston EH54 8JA
Mr C. W. Reid, Mayfield House, 2A Trystings Close, Claygate, Surrey, KT10 0TF
Mr A. Cumming, 31 Doune Park, Dalgety Bay, KY11 9LX

Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll

Ministers
Rev. David Karoon, Arran
Rev. Thomas C. Donnachie, Retired
Rev. Kenneth Stewart, Dowanvale
Rev. D. Iain Macdonald, Cumbernauld
Rev. Iain Thomson, East Kilbride
Rev. Kenneth P. Boyd, Govanhill
Rev. Donald Morrison, Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside
Rev. Alex Cowie, Partick
Rev. Alasdair Macdonald, Dunblane
Rev. Dr. Colin Dow, Glasgow City
Rev. Iain Beaton, Lennoxtown
Rev. James Beaton, Oban and Kilbrandon
Rev. Finlay H. Mackenzie, Service to Overseas Students
Rev. Duncan Peters, Asian Outreach
Rev. Colin Macleod, Asian Outreach
Rev. Kenneth W. R. Cameron, Retired
Rev. Angus J. Howat, Retired
Rev. William M. Mackay, Retired

Elders
Mr John Murray, 84 Kelvin Court, Glasgow, G12 0AH
Mr John Macleod, 12a Brisbane Court, Giffnock, Glasgow, G46 6LX
Mr William McAllister, Braehead Farm, Sliddery, Isle of Arran
Mr Iain K. Macleod, 5, Gardenside Avenue, Uddingston Glasgow, G71 7BU
Dr Allan MacPherson, 24 Westfield Road, Ayr, KA7 2XN
Mr Norman Smith, 48 Crofthead Road, Ayr, KA7 3ND
Mr Murdo Murchison, Dinning House, Gargunnock, FK8 3BQ
Mr Colin MacDonald, 43, Meadow View, Cumbernauld, Glasgow, G67 2B2
Mr Norman Cumming, 9, Nithsdale Place Noblehill, Dumfries, DG1 3HT
Mr Chris Redman, 87, Pinewood Avenue Lenzie, East Dunbartonshire
Mr Ray McCabe, 77, Carnwath Avenue, Newlands, Glasgow, G43 2HJ
Mr John MacIntyre, 85 Norse Road, Glasgow, G14 9EF
Mr Walter Matheson, 9, Glenfarg Crescent, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 2AN
Mr Colin Campbell, 2 Caird Drive, Glasgow, G11 5DF
Mr Innes Macleod, 13 Dickies Wells, Alva, Clackmannanshire, FK112 7DR
Mr Peter Morrison, 5 Kilmardinny Drive, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 3PD
Mr Evan Macdonald, 38 Essex Drive, Glasgow G14 9NA
Mr John MacKenzie, 78 Kilmardinny Crescent, Bearsden, Glasgow, G613NW.

Assembly Arrangements

The General Assembly then called for the Report of the Committee on Assembly Arrangements, which being printed and in the hands of members, was referred to by the Convener, who addressed the Assembly thereon.
Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

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

2. The General Assembly approve and adopt the programme recommended by the Committee and authorise the Committee to meet at a suitable point between sessions of the Assembly if adjustments to the business are required.

4 Assembly Arrangements: Supplementary Report The General Assembly then called for the Supplementary Report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee which was submitted in the following terms:

The Committee met on Thursday 17th November to make final preparations for the Plenary Assembly due to open later that day. The Committee was presented with an amendment to their report from Rev. Alex J. MacDonald in the following terms:

1. That Paragraphs 4 and 5 of Standing Order No. III.4 be deleted and replaced with the following paragraph 4 (paragraph 6 to be renumbered 5, and the reference in III.4.2 be changed to Standing Order No. III.4.4):

2. That when there are three or more motions concerning the same matter before the House, there shall be a vote between the three or more motions, each member casting their vote only once. The motion gaining the lowest number of votes will fall. This process shall be repeated as necessary until there are only two motions before the house, when the procedure shall be as in Standing Order No. III.4.3.

The Committee noted that Standing Orders for the Plenary Assembly had already been set by the Assembly in May 2010, as stated in their report, and that there was a measure of uncertainty over whether these could now be adjusted by amendment. The Committee decided that they would present this Supplementary Report recommending that the amendment be received and requesting that the Assembly itself decide the matter.

DOUGLAS MACKEDDIE, Convener

Rev. James Maciver addressed the General Assembly thereanent.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

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

2. The General Assembly receive the amendment from Rev. Alex J. MacDonald and approve the Committee’s recommendation that the amendment be put against the Committee’s Proposed Deliverance.

First Motion: Following upon the preceding finding it was moved and seconded that:

The Standing Orders as in the print be taken as the Standing Orders of this Assembly.

Second Motion: It was also moved and seconded that:

Paragraphs 4 and 5 of Standing Order No. III.4 be deleted and replaced with the following paragraph 4 (paragraph 6 to be renumbered 5, and the reference in III.4.2 be changed to Standing Order No. III.4.4):

That when there are three or more motions concerning the same matter before the House, there shall be a vote between the three or more motions, each member casting their vote only once. The motion gaining the lowest number of votes will fall. This process shall be repeated as necessary until there are only two motions before the house, when the procedure shall be as in Standing Order No. III.4.3.

On a vote being taken between the Second Motion and the First Motion, the First Motion was declared carried by a majority.

Finding: Wherefore:

It was agreed that Paragraphs 4 and 5 of Standing Order No. III.4 be deleted and replaced with the following paragraph 4 (paragraph 6 to be renumbered 5, and the reference in III.4.2 be changed to Standing Order No. III.4.4):
That when there are three or more motions concerning the same matter before the House, there shall be a vote between the three or more motions, each member casting their vote only once. The motion gaining the lowest number of votes will fall. This process shall be repeated as necessary until there are only two motions before the house, when the procedure shall be as in Standing Order No. III.4.3.

The Report was adopted.

5 Board of Trustees

The General Assembly then called for the Report of the Board of Trustees, which being printed and in the hands of members, was referred to by Mr Iain K. Macleod, who addressed the Assembly thereon.

First Motion:

It was moved and seconded that:

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, recognising the divisive nature of the issue dealt with in this Report, affirm their commitment to unity and urge officebearers and members to find ways of continuing in unity after the Assembly has determined the issue.

3. The General Assembly, recognising that the majority of Kirk Sessions have not been persuaded by the arguments presented for change and therefore either support the current worship practice or have no desire to move from this practice, affirm that the practice of the Free Church of Scotland in public worship shall be to avoid the use of uninspired materials of praise and of instrumental music.

4. The General Assembly stipulate that public worship occurs when a Kirk Session or a superior court of the Church call God’s people to assemble to worship him, in contradistinction to meetings called for testimony, fellowship and other purposes.


6. The General Assembly amend paragraph 2 of Act V, Class II, 1905, by inserting therein (a) immediately after the word “enjoin” the words, “in respect of worship,” and (b) immediately after the word “period” the words, “the practice then observed being to avoid the use in public worship of uninspired materials of praise and of instrumental music.”

7. The General Assembly ordain that Act V, Class II, 1905 as thus amended be reissued as a new Act of this Plenary Assembly and that this new Act be given the status of a Class I Act.

8. The General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to focus on promoting improvements in congregational praise and in the quality of praise leaders.

9. The General Assembly instruct Presbyteries to organise a day of prayer within their own bounds, at a suitable date after the Church has determined the matter, to focus on maintaining the unity of the Church.

Second Motion:

It was also moved and seconded that the following addendum be added to the First Motion:

10. The General Assembly instruct the Psalmody Committee to investigate, collect and, if necessary prepare from within the resources of the Church appropriate portions of Scripture, other than the 150 Psalms, in a form which accurately renders the thought of the original and is suitable for singing in public worship. The Committee is empowered to seek the cooperation of others with the requisite linguistic, theological, literary and musical skills and is required to report progress to the 2011 General Assembly.

Third Motion:

It was also moved and seconded that the following Addendum be added to the First Motion:

10. The General Assembly do now recall their 2009 endorsement of the Board of Trustees view that ‘the debate as to practice should be conducted in a free and open way where the expression of views on either side of the debate is entirely permissible’. The General Assembly declare that it is divisive and therefore disruptive to the unity and peace of the Church to promote views which are contrary to the position reaffirmed in the amended Act V, Class II, 1905, anent Public Worship.

The General Assembly further call on all ministers and office-bearers to assert, maintain, and defend the practice as reaffirmed in the amended Act V, Class II, 1905, which practice the Ordinand pledges to observe when signing the
Formula, and to avoid following any divisive course of action in the matter for the sake of the peace and unity of the
Church:

**Fourth Motion:** It was also moved and seconded that

The following Addendum be added to Paragraph 4:

However, even at such meetings and indeed at all times, any act of worship must always be offered in the light of the
definition of worship stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 21, namely that worship consists of any
one or any combination of the following: prayer, the reading of Scripture, sound preaching, conscionable hearing,
singing of Psalms, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments besides religious oaths, vows and
solemn fastings, and thanksgivings upon special occasions.

**Fifth Motion:** It was also moved that:

Paragraphs 3 to 8 of the Deliverance be deleted and replaced with the following paragraphs (paragraph 9 in the
Deliverance to become paragraph 11):

3. The General Assembly, recognising that, after consideration of the Biblical and theological questions and
widespread consultation throughout the Church on the question of the form of worship presently practised, there are
equally conscientious and Biblically grounded but differing views on the subject, ordain and enact in the following
terms.

4. The General Assembly hereby repeal Act V, Class II, 1932; Act I, Class I, 1910; Act VI, Class II, 1910; Act
VII, Act V, Class II, 1905; Act of Assembly, of date 31st May 1883, entitled “VII. Act anent Instrumental Music
(No. 4 of Class II)”; and resolutions authorising and sanctioning the use of uninspired hymns, of dates 3rd June 1872;
27th May 1881; 26th May 1896; and 24th May 1897.

5. The General Assembly declare that purity of worship requires that every aspect of worship services,
including sung praise, be consistent with the Word of God and with the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith
approved by previous Assemblies of this Church.

6. The General Assembly ordain that every service of congregational worship shall include the singing of
Psalms.

7. The General Assembly ordain that, with regard to the sung praise of congregations in worship, each Kirk
Session shall have freedom, either to restrict the sung praise to the Psalms, or to include paraphrases of Scripture, and
hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the doctrine of the Confession of Faith; that each Kirk Session shall have
freedom whether to permit musical accompaniment to the sung praise in worship, or not.

8. The General Assembly advise that, notwithstanding the foregoing, no Kirk Session should agree to a change
in sung praise or musical accompaniment against the wishes of the minister of the congregation, and that a visiting
minister, presiding at a service in a congregation where the aforementioned freedom to use uninspired materials of
praise and musical instruments has been exercised, may exercise that freedom or not as he sees fit.

9. The General Assembly ordain that in meetings of Church Courts the use of uninspired materials of praise
and of instrumental music shall be avoided.

10. The General Assembly appoint a Special Committee (using consultants as required) to investigate the
feasibility and desirability of producing a recommended list of paraphrases of Scripture and hymns and spiritual
songs consistent with the Word of God and the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, and whether the Free
Church ought to produce a praise resource supplementary to the Psalter, and to report to the 2011 General Assembly.”

6. **Adjournment** The General Assembly did then adjourn to meet again in this Hall on Friday at 9.00
o’clock forenoon, whereof public intimation having being given, the sederunt was closed with prayer.
Friday 19th November, Forenoon

Session 2

At Edinburgh and within the Free Assembly Hall, the
19th day of November 2010 years at 9 o’clock forenoon

1 Assembly constituted

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with devotional exercises, when the following took part at the request of the Moderator:

Rev. Alasdair Macdonald, Dr Ian Maciver, Rev. Dr Fergus A. J. Macdonald, Dr George M. Coghill, Rev. Angus J. Howat, Rev. John H. MacLean, Mr B. MacLelland, Rev. Iain Macaskill, Mr Iain A. Macdonald, Rev. Roderick Rankin, Mr Joseph MacPhee, Rev. James Maciver, Rev. David Karoon, Rev. Dr Peter Wallace, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rev. Calum I. Macleod and Mr David Jones.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the previous day’s sederunt was read and approved.

3 Board of Trustees

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the Fifth Motion. The Motion was seconded.

Sixth Motion:

It was also moved and seconded that:

Paragraph 3 – 7 inclusive of the Proposed Deliverance be deleted, and that the following be inserted as paragraph 3, the remaining paragraphs to be re-numbered 4 and 5 respectively:

The General Assembly, recognising that there is lack of clarity in the provisions of Act V. 1932: Act anent Requirements at Ordinations and Inductions, hereby amend those provisions in the following manner:

By inserting after the words ‘Purity of worship as presently practised in this Church’ the following:

“which expression is to be taken as meaning for each Congregation the services ordinarily held on the Lord’s Day and all the services of Communion Seasons, all of which are opened with a Call to Worship and closed with the pronouncement of a Benediction;

If passed by the General Assembly, the Act would then be passed down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and would read:

“The General Assembly enact ad interim that at Ordinations and Inductions the presiding Minister shall, prior to putting the appointed questions to the Ordinand make the following intimation, namely: “It is my duty to explain to you, and also to the Congregation here present, with reference to that part of the question which will be put to you as to ‘Purity of Worship as presently practised in this Church’ which expression is to be taken as meaning for each Congregation the services ordinarily held on the Lord’s Day and all the services of Communion Seasons, all of which are opened with a Call to Worship and closed with the pronouncement of a Benediction;”

Seventh Motion:

It was also moved and seconded that:

Paragraphs 3 to 8 of the Deliverance be deleted and replaced with the following paragraphs (paragraph 9 in the Deliverance to become paragraph 7):

3. The General Assembly recognise that, after several years’ consideration of the biblical and theological questions and widespread consultation throughout the Church on the question of the form of worship presently practised, differing views remain each of which claims to be biblically grounded.


5. The General Assembly ordain that in public worship congregations use only inspired materials of praise, drawn from both the Book of Psalms and other suitable portions of Scripture, and that Kirk Sessions be granted the
freedom to permit musical accompaniment to sung praise in worship should Minister and Session so decide after due consideration.

6. The General Assembly instruct the Psalmody Committee to produce a recommended list of faithful paraphrases of Scripture passages outwith the Book of Psalms appropriate for use in public praise and to report progress to the 2011 General Assembly.

At the request of the Moderator Rev. W. D. Graham engaged in prayer.

On a vote being taken between the Third Motion and the First Motion, the First Motion was declared carried by a majority.

On a vote being taken between the Fourth Motion and the First Motion, the First Motion was declared carried by a majority.

The Assembly then proceeded in accordance with their finding of the First Sederunt to vote between the First, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Motions when it was found members had voted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
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<tr>
<td>First Motion</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>Fifth Motion</td>
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<td>Sixth Motion</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Seventh Motion</td>
<td>4</td>
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The Sixth Motion accordingly fell. With permission of the Assembly the Seventh Motion was withdrawn.

The Assembly then proceeded to vote between the Second Motion and the Fifth Motion when with permission of the Assembly the mover of the Fifth Motion accepted the Second Motion.

Finding: Wherefore:

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, recognising the divisive nature of the issue dealt with in this Report, affirm their commitment to unity and urge officebearers and members to find ways of continuing in unity after the Assembly has determined the issue.

3. The General Assembly, recognising that, after consideration of the Biblical and theological questions and widespread consultation throughout the Church on the question of the form of worship presently practised, there are equally conscientious and Biblically grounded but differing views on the subject, ordain and enact in the following terms.

4. The General Assembly hereby repeal Act V, Class II, 1932; Act I, Class I, 1910; Act VI, Class II, 1910; Act VII, Class II, 1910; Act V, Class II, 1905; Act of Assembly, of date 31st May 1883, entitled “VII. Act anent Instrumental Music (No. 4 of Class II)”; and resolutions authorising and sanctioning the use of uninspired hymns, of dates 3rd June 1872; 27th May 1881; 26th May 1896; and 24th May 1897.

5. The General Assembly declare that purity of worship requires that every aspect of worship services, including sung praise, be consistent with the Word of God and with the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith approved by previous Assemblies of this Church.

6. The General Assembly ordain that every service of congregational worship shall include the singing of Psalms.

7. The General Assembly ordain that, with regard to the sung praise of congregations in worship, each Kirk Session shall have freedom, either to restrict the sung praise to the Psalms, or to include paraphrases of Scripture, and hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the doctrine of the Confession of Faith; that each Kirk Session shall have freedom whether to permit musical accompaniment to the sung praise in worship, or not.

8. The General Assembly advise that, notwithstanding the foregoing, no Kirk Session should agree to a change in sung praise or musical accompaniment against the wishes of the minister of the congregation, and that a visiting minister, presiding at a service in a congregation where the aforementioned freedom to use uninspired materials of praise and musical instruments has been exercised, may exercise that freedom or not as he sees fit.
9. The General Assembly ordain that in meetings of Church Courts the use of uninspired materials of praise and of instrumental music shall be avoided.

10. The General Assembly appoint a Special Committee (using consultants as required) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of producing a recommended list of paraphrases of Scripture and hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the Word of God and the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, and whether the Free Church ought to produce a praise resource supplementary to the Psalter, and to report to the 2011 General Assembly.”

11. The General Assembly instruct this Committee to investigate, collect and, if necessary prepare from within the resources of the Church appropriate portions of Scripture, other than the 150 Psalms, in a form which accurately renders the thought of the original and is suitable for singing in public worship. The Committee is empowered to seek the cooperation of others with the requisite linguistic, theological, literary and musical skills and is required to report progress to the 2011 General Assembly.

12. The General Assembly instruct Presbyteries to organise a day of prayer within their own bounds at a suitable date after the Church has determined the matter, to focus on maintaining the unity of the Church.

Dissents: The following intimated their dissents from this finding:

Eighth Motion: It was moved and seconded that:
The Finding of the Assembly be passed to Presbyteries under the terms of the Barrier Act, on the grounds that:
(1) The terms appointing this Assembly made no provision for its plenary composition to be regarded as an alternative to Barrier Act procedure;
(2) The constitutional position of the Church in legislating important laws gives no place to Plenary Assemblies taking over from Barrier Act procedure. If this were to be changed the Assembly would need to approve this after obtaining the view of presbyteries via the Barrier Act.

Ninth Motion: It was also moved and seconded that:
Bearing in mind the unity of the Church and the several years’ discussion, debate and papers on the subject of worship, and taking into account the purposes of the Barrier Act of 1697 to ensure that no sudden alteration or innovation in either doctrine or worship be enacted without the more general opinion of the Church being agreed;
The Plenary General Assembly hereby declare that the decision of the Assembly as put forward by Rev. Alex. MacDonald has already fulfilled the purposes of the Barrier Act of 1697 and therefore does not require to be sent down under that Act.

On a vote being taken between the Ninth Motion and the Eighth Motion, the Ninth Motion was declared carried by a majority

Finding: Wherefore:
Bearing in mind the unity of the Church and the several years’ discussion, debate and papers on the subject of worship, and taking into account the purposes of the Barrier Act of 1697 to ensure that no sudden alteration or innovation in either doctrine or worship be enacted without the more general opinion of the Church being agreed;
The Plenary General Assembly hereby declare that the decision of the Assembly as put forward by Rev. Alex. MacDonald has already fulfilled the purposes of the Barrier Act of 1697 and therefore does not require to be sent down under that Act.

Dissents: The following intimated their dissents from this finding:
Kenneth Stewart, Donald Jack, Kenneth Donald Macleod, John Wagner, Donald MacDonald, Farquhar Renwick, David A. Topping, John Scoales, Joseph MacPhee, Alex Cowie, Duncan MacLeod, Rod Finlayson, Christopher Redman, I. T. Campbell, Douglas MacKeddie, Colin Campbell, James Maciver, Angus J. Howat, John Forbes, Donald Macleod, Malcolm Macleod, Andrew Murchison.

4 Appointment of Special Committee  In accordance with their earlier finding the General Assembly proceeded to appoint the members of the Special Committee to prepare suitable items of praise. It was moved, seconded and agreed that the following be appointed:


5 Thanks  The thanks of the Assembly were accorded to:

The Moderator and Clerks of Assembly; Mr Evan Macdonald, Assembly Precentor; Mr John Scoales, Assembly Officer; Mr Ally Oliver, Miss Becky Robertson, Mr Andrew Fraser, Mrs Katriona Lamont and others who helped them with the sound system and screens; those on door duty; Mrs Sharon Fraser, Miss Louisa Young, and other Offices staff who were involved in preparations for the Assembly; the Deacons’ Court of St Columba’s for use of the Hall and other arrangements.

6 Minutes  The Minutes of this day’s Sederunt were read and approved.

7 Closure  The General Assembly was closed with prayer, the singing of Psalm 72: 17 – 19, and the Apostolic Benediction.
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 OF PAPERS FOR THE ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE
1. That 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 of the Assembly Arrangements Committee referred to in VI.2.10 below. 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 Assembly Arrangements 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.

2. That all papers intended to be transmitted to the Assembly - namely, Memorials, Overtures, Petitions, 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 - shall be transmitted to the Clerk of Assembly not later than 15th April 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. The Clerk of Assembly shall lay such papers before the Assembly Arrangements 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. That Presbyteries shall transmit to the Clerk of Assembly their Returns to Overtures not later than one week before the meeting referred to in VI.2.10 below; 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.

4. 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.

5. That these regulations shall not apply to Petitions for authority to sell congregational property, which Petitions shall not be transmitted through the Assembly Arrangements 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.

6. 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 ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

1. That the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall 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:

a) 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;
b) the periods of informal discussion rather than formal debate that the Assembly may wish to take up;
c) all other items of business due to come before the Assembly and estimated time thought to be required for each;
d) the number of delegates expected at the Assembly;
e) any Appeals, Dissents and Complaints, Overtures, Petitions or References or any other cases coming to the Assembly from the inferior courts.
2. That 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. That the 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.

4. 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 such papers shall be printed by the Clerk, except any papers which he considers may lead to discussions in the Assembly Arrangements Committee; 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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. Committee for Printing the Acts

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) a report from any meeting of the Nominations Committee subsequent to its meeting in March 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 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. Sessions of Informal Discussion

1. That sessions for informal discussion may be held during the Assembly in addition to the formal discussion specified in 4 above, 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. The Sessions shall be chaired by the Moderator.

2. That Committees and Boards 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 informal 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.

6. 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 complainer, 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 Assembly Arrangements Committee, for its information immediately after its appointment;

5.2 That the Assembly Arrangements 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 Assembly Arrangements 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.

7. 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.

8. *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.

9. *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.

10. 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.

11. 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 Assembly Arrangements Committee, who shall advise the Moderator as to the way of disposing of them.

12. 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 Assembly Arrangements 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 Assembly Arrangements Committee, that they may advise in the matter.

13. Visitation of Synod and Presbytery Records, and Examinations of Minutes of Boards and Committees

1. That the Synod and Presbytery 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 Synods and Presbyteries, 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 and Presbytery Books.
14. **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.

15. **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.

16. **Standing Orders**

That the Standing Orders be read, or, by vote, be held as read in the First Sederunt and immediately before the appointment of Committees of the Assembly, and that they be printed in the first day’s proceedings.

17. **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.

18. **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.

19. **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 Monthly 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, appointed by the General Assembly annually on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee consisting 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 its own Convener and Vice-Convener from its own membership. The Convener and Vice-Convener shall be appointed by the Committee at its 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.

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. 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.