

THE PRINCIPAL

ACTS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE



FREE CHURCH *of* **SCOTLAND**

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 2022

WITH

ACTS

OF THE

COMMISSIONS OF ASSEMBLY

OCTOBER 2021 & MARCH 2022

FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CLASS 1 ACTS – ACTS WHICH HAVE PASSED THE BARRIER ACT

None

CLASS 2 ACTS – ACTS WHICH ARE OF GENERAL INTEREST TO THE CHURCH

Act 1 – Attestation of Records

Number 1 of Class 2

Category: General Assembly

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly declare that in all future examinations of records, the attestation will be in the form of an extract of the proceedings of the General Assembly or its Commissions to Presbytery Clerks. They also declare that this form of attestation be used regarding the records of General Assembly Boards and Committees and regarding congregational records examined by Presbyteries.

Act 2 – Business of Church Courts Conducted on Lord’s Day

Number 2 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly affirm the sanctity of the Lord’s Day according to the scriptures and the doctrinal standards of this Church. They remind Church courts to avoid all unnecessary meetings on the Lord’s Day particularly where business is of a routine or purely administrative nature. Church Courts may meet on the Lord’s Day where a meeting is necessary to advance the Kingdom of God, for example to edify and unite the Church, to admit new members, to admit or ordain office-bearers including ministers, and to further the settlement of a pastor in a pastoral charge.

Act 3 – *In Hunc Effectum* Meetings of Presbytery

Number 3 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly note that from time-to-time, Presbyteries of the Church have delegated powers to their Clerk or to a Committee of Presbytery to set a date for anticipated business requiring an *in hunc effectum* meeting of Presbytery. The General Assembly declare that a Presbytery may agree in principle to meet *in hunc effectum* for a specific purpose, while delegating the selection of a date, location, and time of the meeting to a duly appointed officer or committee of Presbytery. In such cases the Presbytery shall be careful to give information in good time to all members of Presbytery of the details of an *in hunc effectum* meeting so agreed or of the cancellation of such a meeting if it is no longer required. The General Assembly further declare that Presbytery Committees do not have authority to make decisions on behalf of the Presbytery but that they may act within any powers reasonably granted to them by the Presbytery.

Act 4 – Appointments of Presbytery Clerks

Number 4 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly direct that when vacancies arise for the position of Presbytery Clerks, new appointments are made in consultation with the Assembly Clerks’ Office. They instruct the Assembly Clerks’ Office to arrange basic training for

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Presbytery Clerks on their appointment. They further instruct that Presbytery Clerks should be ordained Ministers or Elders of the Church and that their appointments should be according to the terms of Act 10, Class 2, 2015.

Act 5 – General Assessor to the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll

Number 5 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll and grant is crave. They re-appoint Rev. David C. Meredith, Mission Director, to be a General Assessor to the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll for a three-year term from the rising of this Assembly.

Act 6 – Access to Historical Records

Number 6 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly direct that the Assembly Clerk be empowered to grant access to historical records on receiving a request for access from individuals seeking information for the purposes of study and research on a case-by-case basis. They declare that such access will exclude access to reports of a sensitive and confidential nature, which have been taken up by the General Assembly or its Commissions.

Act 7 – Categories and Rolls of Ministers

Number 7 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly, seeking to revise the arrangements regarding categories and records of ministers, enact and ordain that the following rolls and related stipulations shall apply to all ordained ministers and probationers of the Free Church of Scotland.

A. ROLLS OF MINISTERS

1. **Roll A – Ministers with Charges.** The Roll of Ministers in Charges shall comprise all ordained Ministers in pastoral charges, congregations, and church plants. The Roll will also include ordained Ministers in other ministerial appointments in the Church who are granted a seat in the Presbytery by the General Assembly as integral to their appointment.

2. **Roll B – Ministers without Charge.** The Roll of Ministers without Charge shall comprise all ordained Ministers of the Free Church of Scotland who are not presently in a pastoral charge or congregation of the Church and who are eligible for a Call.

2.1 *Ministerial Appointments.* The *Roll of Ministers without Charge* will include ordained Ministers whose fixed-term ministerial appointment has been terminated by the General Assembly.

2.2 *Missionaries.* The *Roll of Ministers without Charge* will include ordained Ministers of the Free Church working under the oversight of Missionary Organisations with which the Church has entered a partnership.

2.3 *Miscellaneous.* The *Roll of Ministers without Charge* will include Ministers who have resigned from their congregation or charge to take up a ministerial appointment external to the Free Church, such as chaplaincy to the Armed Forces.

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2.4 *Term on the Roll.* The names of Ministers on the *Roll of Ministers without Charge* will be retained on the Roll for an initial period of three years, before the end of which the Minister may petition the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides to have his name retained on the Roll for a second three-year term.

2.4.1 Should a Minister desire to have his name retained on the Roll beyond the six years, he must petition the General Assembly through the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides for his name to be retained on the Roll for a further three-year term, renewable for a second three-year term as set out in Paragraph 2.4 above.

2.4.2 The process set out in Paragraph 2.4.1 above will be followed at the end of each subsequent six-term on the Roll.

2.4.3 Ministers who are engaged in work with Missionary Organisations or Ministers who are working with external organisations as Ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, will be exempt from the need to apply to keep his name on the Roll. This exemption will continue until the termination of the appointment.

3. **Roll C – Probationers.** The *Roll of Probationers* comprises all Probationers in good standing licensed by the Free Church of Scotland and who are available for Call and Probationers who have been admitted from another denomination.

1.1 *Definition.* A Probationer is a Candidate for the Ministry who has completed the course of studies required by the Board of Ministry and has been licensed to preach by a Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland but has not yet been ordained.

3.1.1 For the purpose of this Act, a Candidate for the Ministry who has been licensed to preach the gospel by another Presbyterian denomination and admitted to the Free Church by the General Assembly shall also be included as a Probationer.

3.1.2 A Probationer is not eligible to conduct Marriage Services or dispense the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1.2 *Term on the Roll.* A Probationer's name shall remain on the *Roll of Probationers* for six years, before the end of which he may petition the General Assembly, through the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides, to have his name retained on the Roll for a further three years. A Probationer must use the same process of application to the General Assembly, through the Presbytery, every three years, in order to have his name retained on the Roll.

1.3 *Removal from Roll.* Probationers who no longer wish to be available for Call shall inform their Presbytery specifying the reasons. If their request to be removed from the *Roll of Probationers* is granted, the Presbytery shall inform the Principal Clerk of Assembly by extract minute authorising him to remove their name from this list.

1.4 *Disjunction Certificate.* A Kirk Session shall not issue a Disjunction Certificate to a Probationer awaiting a Call without prior reference to the Presbytery.

3.4.1 Where a Disjunction Certificate is granted to a Probationer, the Presbytery Clerk shall forthwith inform the Principal Clerk of Assembly; and likewise, when the Probationer subsequently comes under the pastoral oversight of another Presbytery, the Presbytery Clerk shall inform the Principal Clerk so that the Probationer's name be continued on the Roll of Probationers.

3.4.2 If when granted a Disjunction Certificate, a Probationer does not lodge it within six weeks with another Free Church congregation he shall be deemed to have removed his name from the Roll of Probationers.

4. **Roll D – Resigned Ministers.** The *Roll of Resigned Ministers* shall comprise all ordained Ministers of the Free Church in good standing who have resigned their charge or other ministerial appointment and have not become Ministers of another denomination with the exception of Ministers in Paragraph 2.2 and 2.3 above.

4.1 *General Assembly.* The Roll will also include Ministers who by order of the General Assembly are to be held on the *Roll of Resigned Ministers*.

4.2 *Transfer.* A Minister whose name is on the *Roll of Resigned Ministers* and who desires to have his name transferred to the *Roll of Ministers without Charge* shall petition the General Assembly, or its Commission, through the

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Presbytery within whose bounds he is resident at the time. The Petition shall give positive reasons for transference to it, otherwise it shall not be deemed competent.

4.3 *Ill-health.* The names of Ministers whose pastoral tie is severed under the Church's arrangements for managing Minister's absence from work due to ill-health will also be included in this Roll.

4.4 *Exclusions.* For the avoidance of doubt, the Roll of Resigned Ministers will not include Ministers who have resigned from their congregation, charge, or appointment, and have become Ministers in another denomination.

4.4.1 Such Ministers will follow the application process for re-admission to the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland before being added to this Roll or the Roll of Ministers without Charge.

5. **Roll E – Retired Ministers.** The *Roll of Retired Ministers* shall comprise all ordained ministers of the Free Church in good standing who have retired, including those Ministers who have been admitted to the ministry of the Free Church received from other denominations since retiring.

5.1 *Retirement.* Retirement in this sense, whether by a Minister in a pastoral charge or otherwise, will be in accordance with the Church's arrangements for retirement as such may be amended by the General Assembly at any time.

5.2 *Ill-health.* The names of Ministers who retire on the grounds of ill-health will also be included in this Roll.

6. **Roll G – Ministers under Discipline.** The Roll of Ministers under Discipline will include the names of all Ministers who have been censured by a Presbytery of the Church or by the General Assembly and suspended judicially.

6.1 The Roll will show the date of the censure, the Court of the Church applying the censure, and the duration of the censure.

6.2 For the avoidance of doubt, this Roll will not include Ministers who may be under administrative suspension.

6.3 The name of Ministers who have been deposed from the ministry will not be include on this Roll.

7. **Eligibility for Call.** Only those whose names are placed on Rolls A, B and C shall be eligible for a call to fill a vacancy in a congregation.

8. **Change of Denomination.** If a Minister whose name has been placed on any of the above Rolls is admitted as a Minister of another Church other than by secondment, his name shall be removed from the relevant Roll.

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The General Assembly direct as follows regarding the maintenance of the Rolls of Ministers and roles and responsibilities.

1. **Presbyteries.** Presbyteries shall inform the Principal Clerk if changes regarding ministerial personnel and probationers as follows:

1.1 *Roll of Presbytery.* The Presbytery shall complete the Roll of Presbytery by 31st July annually. They shall forward the up-to-date Roll to the Principal Clerk immediately on completion.

1.2 *Licensing and Ordination.* Clerks of Presbyteries shall send the names and addresses of all who have been licensed to preach the gospel by Presbytery, with dates of licence, within one week thereafter, to the Principal Clerk of Assembly with a copy to the Clerk to the Board of Ministry.

1.3 *Ministerial Changes.* The Presbytery shall complete the Ministerial Changes Form at the end of each calendar year. The Form will include notification of licensing of students, ordinations and inductions, the retirement and resignation of Ministers, the death of Ministers, and Ministers who may be under suspension.

1.4 *Resignations.* When a Minister's resignation of his charge has been accepted by his Presbytery, the Clerk of Presbytery shall inform the Principal Clerk of Assembly by extract minute. The extract minute shall include the resolution of the Presbytery to place the name of the Minister on the *Roll of Resigned Ministers*.

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1.4.1 The Presbytery may request that the name of the resigned Minister be placed on the *Roll of Ministers without Charge* when resignation is due to secondment by a responsible Board or Committee of the Free Church to other pastoral or para-pastoral work. This request will also be made when resignation is due to taking up a commission to serve as a chaplain in the Armed Forces.

1.5 *Annual Review.* Presbyteries shall carry out an annual review of ministers listed in the Roll of Probationers, the Roll of Resigned Ministers, Roll of Ministers without Charge and the Roll of Retired Ministers.

1.5.1 This annual review shall include due investigation that each Minister wishes to continue on the relevant list, that they continue to associate with the Free Church of Scotland, and that they continue to reside within the bounds of the Presbytery.

1.5.2 Should the Presbytery find that circumstances have changed in any instance and that a Minister no longer associates with the Free Church of Scotland, the Presbytery may declare that he is no longer a Minister of the Free Church of Scotland and, after due intimation to the individual concerned, may thus order his name to be removed from the Roll. The individual concerned shall have the right to appear at the Presbytery to be heard before a final decision is taken. He shall also have the right of appeal. The Presbytery shall inform the Principal Clerk of Assembly accordingly.

2. **Ministers.** Ministers who are not in a pastoral charge or in other full-time ministerial appointment shall keep the Presbytery under whose jurisdiction they are found informed of any change in circumstances or location.

2.1 *Ministers without Charge.* A Minister whose name is placed on the *Roll of Ministers without Charge* is also required to notify the Clerk of Presbytery of any change of address. If a minister takes up residence within the bounds of another Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland, he shall also inform the Clerk of that Presbytery of the new address.

2.2 *Resigned Ministers.* A Minister whose name is placed on the *Roll of Resigned Ministers* is required to notify the Clerk of Presbytery of any change of address. If a minister takes up residence within the bounds of another Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland, he shall also inform the Clerk of that Presbytery of the new address.

2.3 *Retired Ministers.* A Minister whose name is placed on the *Roll of Retired Ministers* is required to notify the Clerk of Presbytery of any change of address. If a Minister takes up residence within the bounds of another Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland, he shall also inform the Clerk of that Presbytery of the new address.

3. **Principal Clerk.** The Principal Clerk shall maintain an up-to-date record of the Roll of Ministers in the Free Church of Scotland.

3.1 *Roll of Ministers in Charges.* The Principal Clerk shall extract the relevant information from the Roll of each Presbytery to complete the Roll of Ministers in Charges. The Clerk will produce an up-to-date Roll on 31st March annually.

3.2 *Roll of Probationers.* The Principal Clerk shall prepare and maintain a *Roll of all Probationers* of the Free Church according to date of licence. He shall provide the Board of Ministry annually with a list of all the names and addresses on the Roll, and the Board shall incorporate the list into its report to the General Assembly.

3.3 *Other Rolls.* The Principal Clerk will produce an up-to-date record of all other Rolls of Ministers on 31st March annually.

3.4 *Publication of the Roll.* The Principal Clerk shall produce the complete list of Ministers annually in a way that is accessible to Ministers and Elders.

3.5 *Board of Ministry.* The Principal Clerk will pass the complete up to date record of the Roll of Ministers to the Board of Ministry with the exception of the Roll of Ministers in Charges and the Roll of Ministers Under Discipline. The Board of Ministry shall report appropriately on changes to the Roll to the General Assembly in their annual report.

C. MISCELLANEOUS

The General Assembly declare as follows regarding Ministers without charge, resigned Ministers and retired Ministers:

1. **Membership of Kirk Session.** All Ministers not having a pastoral charge are eligible for election as Ruling Elders in the Congregations to which they attach themselves as communicant members.

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1.1 *Last Charge.* A Minister shall not be eligible for election as a Ruling Elder in a congregation which is his last charge until at least ten years have expired since retirement or resignation from the charge.

1.2 *Representation.* Ministers not having a pastoral charge and who have been elected as Ruling Elders in the local congregation may not represent the Kirk Session in the Presbytery nor may they be commissioned as Elders to the General Assembly.

2. **A Seat in Presbytery.** Ministers not having a pastoral charge may apply for a seat in the Presbytery within his boundaries they reside by way of petition subject to the following conditions.

2.1 *Roll of Presbytery.* The names of Ministers granted a seat in Presbytery will be added to the Roll of Presbytery and the Clerk of Presbytery shall inform the Principal Clerk of Assembly accordingly.

2.2 *Eligibility – Boards and Committees.* Ministers on the Roll of Retired Ministers, the Roll of Resigned Ministers and the Roll of Ministers without Charge shall be eligible for nomination to serve on Boards and Committee of the Church. Presbyteries should record positive reasons for nominating ministers on these Rolls.

2.3 *Termination.* For the purposes of this Act, the Minister's right to hold a seat in Presbytery will be subject to the following conditions.

2.3.1 A minister's right to a seat in Presbytery shall be for a fixed term of five year after which the minister may apply for a further five-year term.

2.3.2 The right to hold a seat in Presbytery shall be terminated on re-location outside of the boundaries of that Presbytery.

2.3.3 A Minister who relocates to take up residence within the boundaries of another Presbytery may apply for a seat in that Presbytery according to the due process of application.

2.3.4 The right of a Minister on the Roll of Ministers without Charge to a seat in the Presbytery within whose boundaries he resides will also terminate on being inducted to a pastoral charge or other ministerial work.

3. **Parity.** The Presbytery and the General Assembly have historically been constituted observing the rules of parity – the membership is comprised of an equal number of ordained Ministers and ruling elders. The General Assembly re-affirm this practice and declare as follows regarding retired Ministers, resigned Ministers, and Ministers without charge.

3.1 *Corresponding Ruling Elder.* A corresponding Ruling Elder shall be elected for each additional seat in Presbytery granted according to the terms of Paragraph 5 above. Such corresponding elders shall retain their seats in Presbytery only for such time as seats are retained by the said Ministers. Presbyteries shall make suitable arrangements for Kirk Sessions within their boundaries to elect an additional Presbytery Elder on a rotation basis to ensure fairness in the allocation of additional seats in the Presbytery over a period of time.

4. **Jurisdiction.** The Presbytery has jurisdiction over an individual who has a seat on the Presbytery or who resides within the bounds of the Presbytery.

4.1 *Retired Ministers.* Ministers on the Roll of Retired Ministers who do not have a seat on the Presbytery is under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose boundaries he resides.

4.2 *Resigned Ministers.* Ministers on the *Roll of Resigned Ministers* shall be under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose boundaries they are resident. If a Minister takes up residence beyond the boundaries of any Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland, he shall remain under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose bounds he last resided.

4.2.1 Ministers who resign their charge and become Ministers in another denomination cannot remain under the jurisdiction and discipline of two denominations, so their names must be removed from Free Church listings.

4.2.2 Should such Ministers wish to re-enter the Free Church they must petition the General Assembly or its Commission through the Presbytery.

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4.3 *Probationers.* Probationers are subject to the oversight of the Presbytery within whose bounds they reside, though the Presbytery may choose to exercise pastoral care through the Kirk Session of the congregation of which he is a member. The Presbytery has a responsibility to meet with Probationers under their oversight regularly and shall meet in private for this purpose.

4.4 *Ministers without Charge.* Ministers on the *Roll of Ministers without Charge* who do not have a seat on the Presbytery shall be under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose bounds they are resident. Presbyteries shall inform the Assembly Clerk of any change in location regarding Ministers whose names are recorded on this Roll.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Transition.** For the avoidance of doubt, the General Assembly declares as follows regarding the implementation of the terms of this Act:

1.1 *Term on a Roll.* The regulations of this Act regarding the fixed term on different Rolls shall become effective from the rising of this Assembly to the extent that the first year of the first term commences at the rising of this Assembly.

1.2 *Seat in Presbytery.* The regulations of this Act regarding the five-year term for a seat in the Presbytery of shall apply from the rising of this Assembly to the extent that the first five-year term commences at the rising of this Assembly.

E. REPEAL

1. The General Assembly hereby repeal Act 8, Class 2, 2019 regarding Categories and Rolls of Ministers.

Act 8 – Ministry Support Workers

Number 8 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Monday 23rd May 2022

The General Assembly, recognising that Presbyteries and Congregations may wish to employ suitable persons to supplement the Church's gospel ministry at a local level, and seeking to regulate such ministry in the Church, enact and ordain as follows:

A. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Act:

1. **Ministry Support Workers.** A ministry support worker is an employee of the Church appointed by a Presbytery or a Congregation to carry out duties which are focussed primarily on the ministry of the Word of God and assisting in the fulfilment of local pastoral ministry.

1.1 *Inclusions.* The following persons appointed to supplement the ministry of the Word of God by the Congregation or the Presbytery shall also come under the terms of this Act:

1.1.1 *Resident Supply.* Persons appointed by Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to carry out resident supply within their designated area will come under the terms of this Act. The Presbytery will liaise with the Board of Ministry before approving the appointment of a person who is not an ordained person or a minister of the Free Church of Scotland as resident supply.

1.1.2 *Probationers.* Probationers appointed to support the regular preaching and pastoral ministry in congregations will also come under the term of this Act. This includes Probationers who have been licensed to preach the gospel in another denomination.

1.1.3 *Minister of Other Denominations.* An ordained Minister of another denomination, appointed by a Kirk Session to support the regular preaching and pastoral ministry in the congregation, will come under the terms of this Act.

1.2 **Exclusions.** For the avoidance of doubt, this Act does not apply to workers who are on Foundation Training Programmes (such as Ministry Apprentices) or Core Training Programmes (Ministers-in-Training), or to those employed by a Congregation or Presbytery to carry out work which is primarily practical, social, or administrative in nature.

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2. Congregational Workers. A Congregational Worker is a Ministry Support Worker appointed by a Kirk Session to assist the Minister in the work of the congregation. This work may involve support of the pastoral ministry, engaging in youth work, assisting with discipleship, and complementing the regular preaching ministry.

3. Presbytery Workers. A Presbytery Worker is a Ministry Support Worker appointed by a Presbytery to assist with ministry across the Presbytery. The work may involve developing youth work within the designated area, assisting with preaching and pastoral ministry in congregations, and areas of the Presbytery which are not able to support a full-time pastoral ministry, or any other activity designed to complement the regular ministry across the Presbytery.

4. Presbytery Oversight. The Presbytery has responsibility for the oversight of ministry within its boundaries. The Kirk Session will seek the support and approval of the Presbytery before a Ministry Support Worker is appointed who is participate in the regular preaching and pastoral ministry in the congregation.

B. DOCTRINAL SUBSCRIPTION

1. Ministry Support Workers will subscribe to uphold the doctrinal position of the Church.

2. Preaching Ministry. Ministry Support Workers whose role description includes regular preaching will answer the Questions and sign the Formula.

2.1 Ruling Elders. Ministry Support Workers who are communicant members of the Free Church of Scotland, but who are not ordained to office within the Church, will answer the Questions and sign the Formula, and be ordained as a Ruling Elder, before being formally appointed to the post.

2.2 Ministers and Probationers. Ministers and Probationers from other denominations appointed as Ministry Support Workers will answer the Questions and sign the Formula at a constituted meeting of the Presbytery before being formally appointed to the post. They shall be under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery for the duration of their appointment.

3. Non-preaching Ministry. Ministry Support Workers appointed to a post that does not include regular preaching of the Word of God, such as youth workers, discipleship workers, etc., will subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith through their contract of employment.

C. THE APPOINTMENT

1. The Term. The appointment of the Ministry Support Worker will be for an initial term of up to two years.

2. A Project Plan. The Presbytery or the Kirk Session will ensure that a project plan for the employment of the Ministry Support Worker has been agreed.

2.1 Role Description. The project plan shall include a role description giving details of the duties involved and accompanied by a person specification. The role description will show clear details of aims and objectives of the job, duties and responsibilities, qualifications, and line-management functions.

3. A Financial Plan. The Financial Plan will show good financial governance and due regard to risk management for the duration of the appointment

3.1 Budget. The project plan will include a detailed financial plan showing budgeted income and expenditure, and confirmed sources of income, for the term of the appointment.

3.2 Approval. The Financial Plan will be approved by the Central Office Finance Manager before proceeding to the appointment.

3.3 Project Costs. The costs of the project and the employment of the Ministry Support Worker will be met locally by the Deacons' Court or the Presbytery, whichever is appropriate in each case. Small start-up grants may be available from the Mission Board or other sources.

4. Restriction. Kirk Sessions may not appoint Ministry Support Workers unless the Congregation has met the requirements of the Church's remittances scheme in each of the previous two years, and on the understanding that such appointments will not adversely affect ongoing remittances to central funds.

5. Employment. The process of employing a Ministry Support Worker will be undertaken ensuring compliance with employment law and will include the following:

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5.1 *Contract of Employment.* A template contract of employment will be provided by the Central Office for use by Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries for workers appointed under the terms of this Act.

5.1.1 The contract of employment will be approved by the Central Office prior to the appointment of the worker.

5.1.2 The contract of employment should be set out as being between the employee and either the Presbytery or the Congregation, as appropriate, and not as between the employee and the Free Church of Scotland.

5.1.3 The contract of employment will include a statement regarding subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith in the case of all Ministry Support Workers who do not answer the Questions and sign the Formula.

5.2 *Line Management.* The contract of employment shall show clear line management functions including oversight and reporting procedures. Presbytery and Kirk Sessions will ensure that a line manager is appointed in each case with roles and responsibilities for the line manager clearly defined and clear guidelines for regular reporting and grievance procedures in place.

6. Remuneration. The remuneration / salary of the Ministry Support Worker will be covered by the Presbytery or the Kirk Session, whichever applies in each case. The rate will be fixed by the Presbytery or the Kirk Session and will set at a rate above the National Living Wage.

7. Review. The Presbytery or Kirk Session will initiate a review of the appointment not less than six months before the first or subsequent term of the post is due to expire.

7.1 *Project Plan.* The review will consider the Project Plan and evaluate whether the major deliverables and aims and objectives of the Project have been achieved. If the Kirk Session or Presbytery agree to continue the appointment for a further term, they will consider what changes to the Project Plan may be required in order to achieve the overall purpose of the post.

7.2 *Finance.* The review will also consider the funding arrangements of the post going, noting variances in actual costs against budgeted costs. If the Kirk Session or Presbytery agree to continue the appointment for a further term, they will ensure that any necessary adjustments are made to the financial plan to ensure the viability of the post for the duration of the term.

7.3 *Restriction.* Kirk Sessions may not re-appoint a Ministry Support Worker for a further term unless the congregation has met the requirements of the Church's remittances scheme in each year of the previous term.

7.3.1 If a congregation fails to meet the requirements of the Church's remittances scheme in any single year of the term, and they can demonstrate that this is due to exceptional circumstances to the satisfaction of the Presbytery and the Board of Trustees, they may proceed with a re-appointment if this is the recommendation of the review process.

D. TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. Conditions of Employment

1.1 Ministry Support Workers shall be entitled to recover approved expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. In the case of mileage expenses, these shall be reimbursed in line with current rates approved by the General Assembly.

1.2 Accommodation shall not normally be provided but Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions may make arrangements for accommodation as local circumstances demand and permit.

1.3 Ministry Support Workers shall be entitled to annual leave as agreed in the contract of employment.

1.4 Ministry Support Workers appointed under this Act shall be entitled to the statutory notice of termination of appointment. Termination of employment shall be determined by the Presbytery, or the Kirk Session in the case of congregational workers, subject to appeal in accordance with procedures set out in the contract of employment.

2. Training. The Presbytery and the Kirk Session shall be satisfied with the theological and professional competence of the applicant. Workers will be required to attend training as directed by the Presbytery or the Kirk Session.

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2.1 *Youth Workers.* Ministry Support Workers employed as youth workers shall undertake a suitable training course as necessary, prior to or as soon as possible after taking up their appointment. This may include training courses such as the Diploma in Christian Youth Worker available at Edinburgh Theological Seminary.

2.2 *Preaching Supply Workers.* Ministry Support Workers employed where the duties include preaching supply shall undertake training corresponding to their duties. This may include attendance at the ETS Saturday Course and other suitable courses available at Edinburgh Theological Seminary.

E. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The General Assembly declare that all new appointments of Ministry Support Workers will come under the terms of this Act.

2. The General Assembly declare that existing appointments under the provisions of Act 10, Class 2, 2006, and of Act 5, Class 2, 2007, will terminate at the end of the current term of the appointment, and that their re-appointment will be under the provisions of this Act.

F. REPEAL

1. The General Assembly repeal Act 10, Class 2, 2006, and Act 5, Class 2, 2007, when existing appointments are terminated.

Act 9 – Loyal and Dutiful Address

Number 9 of Class 2

Category: General Assembly

Tuesday 24th May 2022

1. The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare a Loyal and Dutiful Address to Her Majesty the Queen, which was given by the Moderator. The Report was adopted and in accordance therewith, the address was agreed to and appointed to be duly signed and transmitted to the Secretary of State for Scotland with a letter from the Clerk.

May it please Your Majesty.

We, the Ministers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly on the 23rd day of May 2022, humbly offer Your Majesty the expression of our continued loyalty to Your Majesty's Person and Throne and to the Constitutional Monarchy of which you are the honoured Head and Representative.

We pray for Your Majesty's Parliaments in Westminster and Holyrood, committing to our Great God, the Prime Minister and the First Minister, and their respective Governments, in the many responsibilities that devolve upon Your Majesty's servants at home and abroad.

While it has been over a year since the passing of His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, we continue to express our sincere and prayerful sympathies to Your Majesty, praying that the God of all consolation will grant to Your Majesty, and all of the Royal family, His own continued comfort and strength.

We are thankful for the liberty we now enjoy after the recent pandemic, and we wish to once again thank Your Majesty for your continued expressions of concern over the welfare of our nation. We rejoice in Your Majesty's recovery from COVID-19 and pray for Your Majesty's continued strength over the coming days.

We are also thankful to Your Majesty's Governments for the effort made to protect the people of the United Kingdom from COVID-19. We mourn the loss of so many lives to this virus in our nation, and across the world. We acknowledge with gratitude, those employed within the National Health Service, home carers, and all essential workers, whose tireless work served all our communities during a time of lockdown.

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We join with the nation in heartily congratulating Your Majesty on the occasion of Your Majesty's platinum jubilee. We rejoice in the many years God has given to Your Majesty, and give thanks to God for Your Majesty's faithfulness, extraordinary service, wisdom and example over these years.

We note the dutiful service of several members of Your Majesty's family, who assist in Your Royal and Constitutional duties and promote many charities and good causes.

As we remember the service and sacrifice made by many in previous conflicts, we also express our thankfulness for the continued service and sacrifice of all Your Majesty's Armed Forces, serving at home and abroad. We remember in our prayers all who have lost loved ones, and those who have suffered injury in mind and body. We thank Almighty God for the work of Your Majesty's Chaplains to the Armed Forces, and the ministry of the Soldiers and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association. During a time of global instability, we continue to pray for peace.

Your Majesty, as Ministers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland, be assured that we pray regularly for Your Majesty's person, family and governments. We commit ourselves and our congregations to do so willingly and as we are encouraged to do so by God's Word.

We give thanks to God for our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and our shared faith. The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.

So pray Your Majesty's most faithful subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland, in General Assembly convened.

Act 10 – North Uist, Grimsay and Berneray

Number 10 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Tuesday 24th May 2022

The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Western Isles regarding the five-year terminable/renewable appointment of the Minister in the congregation of North Uist, Grimsay and Berneray and, noting the recommendation of the Mission Board, grant its crave. They grant the congregation the status of a fully sanctioned charge. They note the impending vacancy in the congregation, and they declare that the future minister's appointment be without restriction according to the provisions of Act 1, Class 1, 2018 anent the Sustentation Fund.

Act 11 – Elgin and Forres

Number 11 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Tuesday 24th May 2022

The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross regarding the extension to the current arrangement for ministry in the congregation of Elgin and Forres and, noting the recommendation of the Mission Board, grant its crave. They extend the five-year appointment of Rev. Colin Morison to the Spring of 2023 when Mr Morison is due to retire. They empower the October 2022 Commission of Assembly to receive a report from the Mission Board on arrangements for future ministry in Burghead, Elgin and Forres.

Act 12 – Assistant Minister at St Peter's Dundee

Number 12 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Tuesday 24th May 2022

The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth regarding the appointment of an Assistant Minister to the congregation of Dundee – St Peter's and, noting the recommendation of the Mission Board, grant its crave. They grant permission to the congregation of Dundee – St Peter's to appoint a Minister in accordance with the

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terms of Act 18, Class 2, 2013, anent Assistantships, with such permission to expire at the 2024 General Assembly if no appointment has been made.

Act 13 – Generation

Number 13 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Tuesday 24th May 2022

1. The General Assembly note the title ‘Generation’ as the name for the verbal and visual identity of the Mission Board according to Act 15, Class 2, 2018 anent the name ‘Generation’ as the visible identity of the Mission Board.
2. The General Assembly acknowledges the work of the Mission Board and records their thanks for the progress of the 30x30 project with the Church Planting Director and the work of revitalisation facilitated by the Mission Director.
3. The General Assembly note the Board’s review of the use of ‘Generation’ in fulfilling its remit and the desired focus on church planting and revitalisation.
4. The General Assembly approve the title ‘Generation’ as a missional network, under the oversight of the Mission Board, to facilitate church planting and renewal within the Free Church of Scotland and beyond.
5. The General Assembly repeal Act 15, Class 2, 2018 anent The name ‘Generation’ as the Visible Identity of the Mission Board.

Act 14 – Edinburgh Theological Seminary Appointments

Number 14 of Class 2

Category: ETS

Tuesday 24th May 2022

1. The General Assembly welcome and approve the appointment of Rev. Ben Castaneda as Course Organiser and Lecturer in New Testament and grant him a seat on the ETS Senate.
2. The General Assembly approve the appointment of Dr Zachary Purvis to be Course Organiser of Church History at ETS.
3. The General Assembly approve the re-appointment of Rev. Daniel Sladek as Course Organiser and Lecturer in Old Testament.

Act 15 – Travelling Expenses, Preaching fees, and Resident supply

Number 15 of Class 2

Category: Ministry & Mission

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly, seeking to update the legislation relating to travelling expenses, preaching fees, and resident supply, enact and ordain as follows:

1. **Travelling expenses.** Travelling and accommodation expenses incurred when carrying out duties for the Church shall be paid by the relevant body.
 - 1.1. *Boards and Committees.* Expenses incurred while serving the Church on General Assembly Boards and Committees will be reimbursed by the Church Offices on the submission of a claim form and relevant supporting receipts.

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1.2. *Presbyteries.* The Presbytery will reimburse travel expenses for those engaged in Presbytery business, including expenses incurred when appointed as Commissioners to the General Assembly.

1.3. *Deacons' Courts.* The local congregation shall be responsible for meeting the travelling expenses of the Minister(s), church workers, other congregational staff, and of visiting supply preachers.

1.4. *Mileage Rate.* The recommended rate at which mileage claims will be reimbursed will be the current HMRC tax-free maximum.

1.5. Public transport should be used wherever possible.

2. **Preaching Supply.** The recommended minimum weekend supply preaching fee will be set by the Board of Trustees and reviewed on an annual basis. Where supply involves the conduct of only one service on the Lord's Day it is recommended that the fee will be at least half the level fixed for the full day.

2.1. The local congregation shall be responsible for providing accommodation and board for weekend supply.

2.2. A preaching fee does not have to be paid to Ministers in charges, ETS Staff or Mission Board staff.

3. **Residential Supply and Resident Lay Preachers.** Kirk Sessions and Interim-Moderators of vacant congregations may choose to arrange Residential Supply or may seek to appoint a Resident Lay Preacher to cover preaching and pastoral duties during a time of vacancy.

3.1. The Person appointed for Residential Supply will be an ordained minister of the Free Church of Scotland, who is retired or not in a charge, and who is appointed with the approval of the Presbytery.

3.2. A Resident Lay Preacher is a person who is not an ordained Minister, but an ordained Elder of the Church approved by his Kirk Session and by the Presbytery to carry out preaching duties according to the general terms of Act 15, Class 2, 1979.

3.3. The rate for Residential Supply or a Resident Lay Preacher will normally be least 80% of the current rate of ministerial stipend (pro-rata).

3.4. The local congregation shall be responsible for accommodation and travelling expenses for the Residential Supply or Resident Lay Preacher.

3.5. The Deacons' Court or Finance Committee should arrange for a Contract of Employment to be drawn up based on a template approved by the Central Office.

3.6. No appointment involving the occupation of the manse for a period of longer than three months shall be entered into without prior approval of the Presbytery. In all such cases, the Deacons' Court or Finance Committee should arrange for a Caretaker Agreement based on a template approved by the Central Office.

4. **Repeal.** The General Assembly repeal Act 8, Class 2, 1986, Act 12, Class 2, 2014, Act 20, Class 2010, and any other legislation inconsistent with these enactments.

Act 16 – Amending Act 32, 2010 anent Transactions relating to Properties under the Model Trust Deed

Number 16 of Class 2

Category: Governance

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly grant permission for the Board of Trustees to appoint suitable solicitors other than an employee of the Church for the purpose of property conveyancing. They amend Act 32, Class 2, 2010 anent Transactions relating to Properties under the Model Trust Deed to read as follows: 'The General Assembly instruct that transactions relating to properties held under the Model Trust Deed may be carried out by, or under the oversight of, a suitably qualified person in the employ of the Church or by any firm of solicitors approved by the Board of Trustees.'

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Act 17 – Amending Act 2, 1991 anent Occupation of Manses

Number 17 of Class 2

Category: *Governance*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

1. The General Assembly, noting that in certain circumstances, housing the Minister in a Manse creates practical and financial difficulties, declare that in exceptional circumstances it may be permissible to make alternative housing available for the Minister. They further declare that such alternative arrangements will be subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees to whom application should be made.
2. The General Assembly amend Act 2, Class 2, 1991 anent Occupation of Manses as follows: ‘The General Assembly endorse the principle that, in holding a charge, the preferred housing arrangements are that a minister should occupy the manse. They declare that, in exceptional circumstances, alternative arrangements may be made for housing the minister, with such exceptional arrangements to be with the approval of the Board of Trustees, to whom application should be made. They further ordain that authorisation for the sale of a manse on the grounds that a minister may wish to occupy his own house be refused.’ They repeal Act 27, Class 2, 2010.

Act 18 – Retirement of Ministers

Number 18 of Class 2

Category: *Ministry & Mission*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

1. The General Assembly, seeking to clarify and update the legislation governing the retirement of Ministers, enact and ordain as follows:
 1. **Retirement.** For a Minister inducted to a charge, or appointed to a full-time or part-time post the following rules apply:
 - 1.1. Retirement shall normally be at State Pension Age (subject to a minimum age of 65 years).
 - 1.2. If retirement is not at State Pension Age, the Minister shall demit his charge or post with effect from 30th September following his attainment of State Pension Age plus five years (unless with the permission of the General Assembly).
 - 1.3. A Minister may apply for permission to retire up to ten years before State Pension Age.
 2. **Process.** All applications for retirement under the terms set out in Paragraph 1 are processed through the Kirk Session to the Presbytery for their consideration and approval.
 - 2.1. *Kirk Session.* A Minister in a Charge must inform his Kirk Session of his intention to retire and give notice of the proposed retirement date.
 - 2.1.1. **Surrender of Benefits.** The Minister’s retirement shall involve the surrender of the emoluments of the Charge, and the vacation of the manse unless the Deacons’ Court permits continuing occupation for a period.
 - 2.1.2. **Extract Minutes.** The Kirk Session will forward the application to the Presbytery with an extract minute showing receipt of the application and their approval of it. The Extract Minute must show that the applicant has agreed to withdraw from his rights of active participation in the courts of the congregation - his right to respond to a specific request from the Moderator or Interim Moderator of the congregation being unchanged.
 - 2.2. *Presbytery.* The Presbytery, in approving the application, will take note that the agreement to resile from rights in the congregational courts has been duly minuted by the Kirk Session before forwarding the application to the Central Office.

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2.2.1. **Extract Minute.** The Presbytery will forward the application to the CEO with an extract minute showing receipt of the agreement to resile from rights in the congregational courts and stating their approval of the application.

3. **Vacancy.** The Congregation shall be deemed to be vacant, and declared to be vacant, by order of the Presbytery after the specified retirement date has been reached.

4. **Retirement Benefits.**

4.1. *Free Church Pension Scheme.* Those Ministers with qualifying service in the closed Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme shall address applications for payment of retirement benefits to the Scheme Administrator.

4.1.1. For the closed Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme, the Scheme Rules indicate that Normal Retirement Age is 65; annual pension payments are reduced for early retirement and increased for late retirement; benefits must be taken by age 75.

4.1.2. Applications for early retirement on the grounds of ill-health shall be subject to the rules of the closed Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme.

4.2. *Defined Contribution Scheme.* Applications for payment of pension benefits in respect of service after 31st December 2007 shall be directed to the Defined Contribution Scheme Administrator.

4.3. *Financial Advice.* All Ministers are encouraged to seek independent financial advice when considering options for retirement.

5. **Jurisdiction.** The retired Minister is under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery under whose boundaries he resides.

6. **Repeal.** The General Assembly repeal Act 7, Class 2, 1994 anent Church's Pension Fund.

Act 19 – Appointments Group

Number 19 of Class 2

Category: *Governance*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly, seeking to improve the process for filling vacancies which arise in positions in the Church approved by the Assembly, instruct the Board of Trustees to set up an Appointments Group under its oversight as follows:

1. **Remit.** The Appointments Group will be responsible for managing the process of filling vacancies in central position in the Church, approved by the General Assembly, such as Assembly Clerks, Public Engagement Coordinator, Parliamentary Officer, Media Officer, and any other such key positions as may be approved by the General Assembly in the future.

2. **Membership.** Chair of Board of Trustees, the Assembly Clerk, the Assistant Clerks, Chair of Mission Board, Chair of Board of Ministry, Chair of Seminary Board, and CEO. A quorum shall be three members provided always that one member is the Assembly Clerk or an Assistant Clerk, except where the appointment is of the Principal Assembly Clerk.

3. **Nominations Process.** Nominations for the positions will be sought from Presbyteries.

3.1 The Group will be responsible for identifying the needs and skills for the position and advertising as appropriate to encourage Presbytery nominations.

3.2 The Group will be free to decide on its process for choosing from among those nominated via Presbytery, subject to the principles that it should pursue a fair and objective selection process, including an interview with a panel of at least three nomination group members (or their alternate), as far as practicable.

3.3 The Appointments Group shall recommend any persons selected by this process to the General Assembly for approval or otherwise.

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Act 20 – Office-bearers Facing Legal Action

Number 20 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

1. The General Assembly set up a committee to report to the 2023 General Assembly concerning ministers and elders facing potential legal action. The General Assembly instruct the Committee to report on what potential support the Free Church of Scotland should make available to ministers or elders facing potential legal action, produce a robust set of criteria by which the availability of financial support is to be determined, and proposals concerning an appropriate board, committee, or group to assess each case according to the said criteria.

3.1 The Committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly and comprise six members, including the CEO *ex officio*, the Principal Clerk *ex officio*, the Public Engagement Coordinator *ex officio*, and three additional members appointed by the General Assembly, including at least one other minister, at least one other elder and at least one member of the Board of Ministry.

Act 21 – Training for Ministry

Number 21 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

1. The General Assembly, seeking to give further clarification to Act 1, Class 2, March 2022 Commission of Assembly regarding Training for Ministry, enact and ordain as follows:

SECTION A – TRAINING GENERAL

1. **Definitions.** The General Assembly note the following definition of terms related to training:

1.1 *Foundation Training:* a Training Programme for men and women involving various aspects of church life, but not necessarily leading to pastoral ministry.

1.2 *Core Training:* a Training Programme that is specifically intended to prepare men for pastoral ministry.

1.3 *Specialist Training:* additional Training that may supplement Core Training, such as training for Church Planting, or cross-cultural mission.

1.4 *Ministry Apprentice:* a participant on a Foundation Training Programme.

1.5 *Minister-in-Training.* The term Minister-in-Training refers to a Candidate for the Free Church ministry placed in a congregation as part of their Core Training Programme.

1.6 *Training Church.* The term Training Church refers to a local congregation where a Candidate for the Ministry is placed as part of their training for pastoral ministry programme.

2. **Priorities.** The General Assembly endorse the following priorities for Core Training:

2.1 *A Confessional Education* at Edinburgh Theological Seminary.

2.2 *Practical Training* in a local church.

2.3 *Robust Expectations* in Assessment and Accountability.

2.4 *Pastoral Care* at every stage.

2.5 *Excellent Administration* at Board, Presbyteries and Congregations.

2.6 *Provision of Resources* to support training.

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2.7 *Sustainable Finances* for the Church and the individual.

3. Oversight of Training. The Board of Ministry will have overall oversight of the training of Candidates for Free Church Ministry. In terms of the provision of Core Training, the Board of Ministry will:

3.1 Ensure there is good communication to and between Candidates, Training Churches, and Presbyteries.

3.2 Provide a curriculum of Training Seminars for Minister-in-Training. (See Section 2)

3.3 Provide regular training for Ministers/Assistant Ministers who have or intend to have Minister-in-Training in their congregations.

3.4 Ensure that Training Churches are meeting the expectations set out in this Deliverance.

3.5 Ensure that Presbyteries are meeting the expectations set out in this Deliverance.

3.6 Ensure that ETS is providing an appropriate theological education for training Candidates for ministry.

3.7 Provide assessment and reporting structures for Ministers-in-Training and Training Churches.

3.8 Facilitate partnership across Training Churches and Presbyteries.

3.9 Provide resources to help develop training across the denomination.

4. Training Components. The General Assembly adopts the following four key components of the Training Programme for Minister-in-Training:

4.1 *Learning* from others.

4.2 *Preaching* to others.

4.3 *Serving* with others.

4.4 *Placement* among others.

5. Training Outcomes. The General Assembly endorse the identification of Character, Convictions, Competence and Cooperation as a summary of the Scriptural outcomes for training for pastoral ministry.

6. Training Period. The General Assembly instruct that the normal period for training will be four years, during which a Candidate will normally study the BTh programme at ETS and serve as a Minister-in-Training at a Training Church.

6.1 The Board of Ministry may from time to time, and in consultation with ETS, extend the training period to five or six years.

6.2 The Board of Ministry may also set a training programme of three years full-time study without a placement in a Training Church as a Minister-in-Training if the applicant is over the age of 30 and has extensive experience of being involved in congregational life.

6.3 In exceptional circumstances when a Candidate has prior theological education, the Board of Ministry, in consultation with ETS, may set an individual study programme in place of the full BTh course.

6.4 All Candidates must complete the Presbyterian Church Ministry Module.

6.5 Candidates must attend a minimum of 40% of classes at ETS in person across the whole of their course.

6.6 The Board of Ministry and the ETS Centre for Mission will partner to provide regular training seminars each year which Candidates are required to attend.

SECTION B – MINISTER-IN-TRAINING

1. **Expectation of a Candidate.** The General Assembly adopt the following as the expectations of a Candidate for the Ministry on a Core Training Programme:

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- 1.1 Candidates for Ministry will be under the oversight of their local Presbytery.
- 1.2 Candidates will complete the annual examination required by a local Presbytery.
- 1.3 Candidates serving as Ministers-in-Training will be expected to become members of the congregation where they are serving and thus under the oversight of the Presbytery within whose bounds the congregation lies.
- 1.4 Candidates will be required to complete a theological education at ETS. This will normally be the BTh programme, but some exceptions may be made by the Board of Ministry in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.
- 1.5 Candidates will be expected to participate actively in the life of the local congregation where they serve as a Minister-in-Training.
- 1.6 Candidates are to preach at least 10 times per year.
- 1.7 Candidates will be expected to move into the local area served by the congregation where they are a Minister-in-Training.
- 1.8 Candidates will adhere to all requirements in relation to compliance.
- 1.9 Candidates will be expected to follow the financial arrangements set by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.
- 1.10 Candidates will be expected to complete the assessment and record keeping requirements set by the Board of Ministry.
- 1.11 Candidates will complete a summer placement in a vacant congregation as part of their training. This will be regarded as equivalent to the 'second placement' and will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Act 21, Class 2, 2001 – Act anent Student Placements. Placement in a Training Church as a Minister-in-Training will be considered as functioning in place of the 'first placement'.
- 1.12 Training for Candidates from North America will remain under the provisions made in Act 30, Class, 2017 anent Theological Training for North America Candidates for the Ministry.

2. **Transition to Candidacy.** The General Assembly instruct that if an individual applies to become a Candidate having already begun a theological education at ETS, the Board of Ministry will normally require additional church-based training to be undertaken after completing studies at ETS if there is not sufficient time left to combine theological study with a Minister-in-Training role at a Training Church. This will normally be for a minimum of one year and will normally require moving to a different congregation.

3. **General Provisions.** The Board of Ministry will ensure that no application for ministry will be prejudiced if applications made by a Candidate for financial grants are unsuccessful. The Board of Ministry will also ensure that no Candidate for Ministry is disadvantaged during their training programme due to their position on Public Worship.

SECTION C – TRAINING CHURCHES AND PRESBYTERIES

1. **Training Church - Expectations.** The General Assembly adopt the following as the expectations of a Training Church:

- 8.1 A commitment to the principles and priorities set out in the Introduction of the Board of Ministry's Training for Ministry document.
- 8.2 A commitment to allow adequate time for a Candidate's theological studies.
- 8.3 A commitment to allow Candidates to participate in the Training Seminars and other training elements provided by the Board of Ministry.
- 8.4 A commitment to provide Candidates with a good variety of live ministry opportunities with appropriate support, feedback and responsibility.
- 8.5 A clear plan for the pastoral support, mentoring and discipling of the Candidate.

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- 8.6 A commitment to be willing to set aside some of the Minister/Assistant Minister's time to meet regularly with the Candidate for training purposes.
- 8.7 A commitment to allow for a progression of responsibility during the period of training.
- 8.8 A commitment to adhere to all employment and compliance requirements.
- 8.9 Evidence of adequate financial resources for the duration of the programme and a commitment to meet the minimum financial commitments set by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.
- 8.10 A commitment to complete the Assessment and Reporting requirements set by the Board of Ministry.
- 8.11 A commitment to receive feedback and recommendations for the Board of Ministry for developing training in the local church.
- 8.12 For Training Churches outwith commuting distance to ETS, local Deacons' Courts are instructed to consider whether they can offer financial support to help cover travel expenses for the occasions when Candidates need to attend classes in person.

2. Training Church – Initial Steps. The General Assembly instruct that if a congregation wishes to serve as a Training Church, the following initial steps should be taken:

- 2.1 The Kirk Session will meet to discuss the expectations for local Churches set out in the Training for Ministry: Expectations for Candidates, Congregations and Presbyteries document, and confirm a commitment to meet these.
- 2.2 The Deacons' Court will meet to confirm willingness and ability to meet the financial commitments involved.
- 2.3 The Kirk Session will then inform the Board of Ministry and the local Presbytery that they wish to be considered as a potential Training Church. Representatives of the Kirk Session will meet with representatives of the Board of Ministry to confirm the congregation's commitment to meet the expectations for a Training Church set out above.
- 2.4 The Board of Ministry Student Team will meet quarterly with the Conveners of Presbytery Committees responsible for training to monitor the implementation of the Training Programme in Training Churches.

3. Training Church - Vacancy. The General Assembly instruct that vacant congregations will not be eligible to have a Minister-in-Training to be placed there while the vacancy is ongoing. In the event of a Training Church becoming vacant while a Minister-in-Training is in place, local Presbyteries, in consultation with the Board of Ministry, must ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the ongoing training of the Candidate.

4. Full-time Working. The General Assembly instruct that Ministers-in-Training are not to be given responsibilities equivalent to a full-time worker while their theological studies are not completed. This would include having main responsibility for leading a Church Plant, looking after a vacant congregation, or leading a part of a linked charge.

5. Eldership. A Training Church may elect a Minister-in-Training as an Elder in the congregation.

6. Presbyteries. The General Assembly adopt the following expectations for Presbyteries regarding Ministers in Training:

- 6.1 Training is to be regularly prayed for and discussed at ordinary meetings of Presbytery, both in terms of an earnest pleading with the Lord of the harvest to raise up workers and in terms of sharing best practice and mutually encouraging one another.
- 6.2 Presbyteries will include the development of training within their CPD programmes.
- 6.3 Presbyteries shall appoint mentors for Candidates for Ministry under their care in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021 anent Journey into Ministry (2021) (Mentors will usually, but do not need to, be members of the Presbytery.)
- 6.4 Presbyteries, in consultation with Training Churches and the Board of Ministry, shall ensure that pastoral care is in place for Candidates' wives.
- 6.5 Presbytery shall undertake annual Presbytery examinations of Candidates according to the guidelines provided by the Board of Ministry.

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6.6 Presbyteries must receive reports from ETS, the Training Church and the Board of Ministry on each Candidate under their care in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021 anent Journey into Ministry.

6.7 Presbyteries should include Ministers in Training at their ordinary meetings (excluding items taken in camera).

SECTION D – PLACEMENT OF CANDIDATES IN TRAINING CONGREGATIONS

1. The General Assembly instruct that when deciding in which congregation a Candidate for the Ministry is placed as a Minister-in-Training, discussions should take place between the Candidate (and wife), the Kirk Session of the potential Training Church, the Presbytery under whose oversight the Candidate is currently placed, and the Board of Ministry.

1.1 In the initial stages, informal conversations should take place between the Candidate and the potential Training Church and the Student Team of the Board of Ministry.

1.2 If the Candidate and potential Training Church agree, the Candidate should inform his current Presbytery and the Board of Ministry.

1.3 The Presbytery (or Student Committee thereof) should meet with both Candidate and the Minister of the potential Training Church. If the Presbytery is in favour of the placement, they should inform the Board of Ministry.

1.4 The Board of Ministry (or representatives thereof) should meet with both Candidate and the Minister of the potential Training Church. The Board must be satisfied that the Training Church is able to meet the expectations of the Training Programme set out above.

1.5 Normally, the decision for where a Candidate will be placed should be made before 31st January of the year in which the Candidate expects to begin working at the Training Church.

2. **Training Needs.** The training needs of each Candidate will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Board of Ministry recognises the importance of giving Candidates opportunities to gain experience across the different settings within the denomination during the training process. The following pathways are examples of potential options to achieve this goal:

2.1 A Candidate may serve in two congregations. For example, a Candidate who has been in his home congregation for many years may stay in this congregation for the first year or two of his training period before moving to a new training church for the final two or three years of his training. Normally at least one of these congregations will be within commuting distance of ETS.

2.2 A Candidate may serve in one new congregation. If a Candidate moves to a new congregation near the start of his training programme as a Minister-in-Training he would normally remain there for the duration of the programme, provided he can fulfil the in-person attendance requirements at ETS.

2.3 A Candidate may serve in their home congregation. In exceptional circumstances, a Candidate who already has broad ministry experience in a variety of settings may remain in his home congregation for the duration of the training programme, provided he can fulfil the in-person attendance requirements at ETS and can provide satisfactory evidence to the Board of Ministry that such an arrangement is in the best interests of his training.

3. **Final Decision.** The final decision for where a Candidate will be placed lies with the Board of Ministry.

SECTION E - PASTORAL CARE AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The General Assembly instruct that there are two key roles involved in caring for Candidates on the training programme; each Minister-in-Training will be assigned a **Training Church Supervisor** and a **Presbytery Mentor**.

1.1 **Training Church Supervisor.** The Training Church Supervisor will be the primary contact with the Minister-in-Training, both in terms of supervising their weekly work and in nurturing growth and maturity in spiritual life of the Candidate.

1.1.1 The Training Church Supervisor who will also be functioning as Line Manager.

1.1.2 Training Church Supervisors (Line Managers) will normally be the Minister/Assistant Minister of a Training Church but may also be another suitably qualified person connected to the Training Church.

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1.1.3 Training Church Supervisors will meet with Ministers-in-Training for dedicated Line Management meetings every two months.

1.1.4 Training Church Supervisors will follow Line Management guidelines provided by the Board of Ministry.

1.1.5 Training Church Supervisors will complete an annual Character and Competency Assessment Framework provided by the Board of Ministry as part of the annual report submitted by the Training Church in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.

1.2 **Presbytery Mentor.** The Presbytery Mentor will provide additional contact and support, ensuring that a meaningful pastoral contact is maintained between the candidate and their Presbytery. This role is equivalent to the Training Mentor appointed by Presbyteries in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.

1.2.1 Presbyteries may appoint the Training Church Supervisor to serve as Presbytery Mentor, but in this situation, the Presbytery must also appoint an additional contact person in the Presbytery who must contact the Candidate at least four times per year. (Usually this will be the Convener of the Presbytery committee responsible for training of Candidates).

1.2.2 The Board of Ministry will provide guidelines for the Presbytery Mentors of Candidates/Ministers-in-Training.

2. **Pastoral Care.** The Board of Ministry will ensure that appropriate pastoral care is provided for Candidates wives in partnership with local Presbyteries.

3. **Employment.** The General Assembly instruct that Ministers-in-Training be employed by their Training Church according to the contract template provided by the Free Church Offices and in accordance with the Financial Model set out by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.

SECTION F – FINANCING TRAINING

1. **Minister-in-Training Funding.** Funding for the Minister-in-Training will come from three sources:

1.1. *Paid Employment.* The Minister-in-Training will be paid a salary by the Training Church.

1.1.1. *Employed Hours.* Ministers-in-Training will typically be employed by the Training Church for 10 to 15 hours per week. These hours will be used for pastoral work and preparation and administration related to activities in the Training Church.

1.1.2. *Board of Trustees.* The Board of Trustees will make budgetary provision annually to allow for Training Churches with Ministers-in-Training to receive a grant towards the Minister-in-Training's salary.

1.1.3. *Board of Ministry.* The Board of Ministry will have responsibility for managing the awarding of grants for the Training Programme. The grant must be used only as a contribution towards the cost of the Minister-in-Training's salary.

1.1.4. *Training Church.* The Training Church will contribute towards the Minister-in-Training's salary on top of the grant received from the Board of Ministry. It will ensure that the Minister-in-Training is paid above the minimum wage for his contracted hours.

1.2. *External Funding.* The Minister-in-Training will apply for funding from external grant giving bodies and trusts, with assistance from the Training Church and the Board of Ministry.

1.3. *Personal Contributions.* The Minister-in-Training will raise some of their annual budget from their own personal funds, which may include donations from private and personal supporters.

1.4. *Funding Target.* The combination of the three sources of funding should normally result in annual income of at least 60% of stipend.

2. **Hardship Fund.** A hardship fund will be used to help Ministers-in-Training who need additional financial support.

2.1. *Board of Trustees.* The Board of Trustees will make budgetary provision for the Hardship Fund.

2.2. *Board of Ministry.* The Board of Ministry will have responsibility for managing the awarding of support from the Hardship Fund each year. An application form will be provided.

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2.3. *Criteria.* Support will be means tested on the basis of family income and savings. Priority will be given to a Minister-in-Training with dependent children, and to those who need help with housing costs. Evidence of attempts to secure other funding will be expected.

3. **Other.** The following stipulations also apply:

3.1. *Eligibility.* Only individuals who have been recognised by the Board of Ministry as Candidates for Free Church Ministry will be eligible for support under the financial provisions of the Training Programme.

3.2. *Student Fees.* Students for the Free Church ministry who meet the required criteria will receive funding from SAAS for their student fees at ETS. The Board of Ministry will pay the student fees for Ministers-in-Training if they are not eligible for SAAS funding.

3.3. *Other Training.* Ministers-in-Training will not be charged for training and supervision and support provided by the Training Church and the Board of Ministry.

3.4. *Students without a Training Church.* Students without a Training Church may be awarded a reduced grant at the discretion of the Board of Ministry.

3.5. *Student Loans.* If students are eligible to take out a student loan, and chose to do so, they are responsible for repaying the loan if their income goes above the repayment threshold.

SECTION G – REVIEW AND REPEAL

1. **Review.** The General Assembly instruct the Board of Ministry to review this new Training Model after 4 years and a report given to the 2026 General Assembly.

2. **Repeal.** The General Assembly repeal Act 3, Class 2, March 2022 Commission of Assembly.

Act 22 – Amending Act 23, 2021 anent Journey to Ministry

Number 22 of Class 2

Category: *Mission & Ministry*

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly direct that the present system of annual Scripture Examinations will be replaced with a new Scripture Engagement Programme to be overseen by the Board of Ministry and governed by the following regulations. They instruct that Act 23, Class 2, 2021 anent Journey to Ministry be amended to the extent that the new Programme be inserted as new Section (E) in the Act with the following section renumbered accordingly.

1. **Scripture Engagement Coordinator.** The Board of Ministry will appoint a Scripture Engagement Coordinator who will be responsible for the following programme of assessment.

2. **Outcomes.** The Programme will be aimed at achieving the following four outcomes:

2.1. *Character:* The Programme seek to promote regular reading and meditation on Scripture to grow in godliness.

2.2. *Convictions:* The Programme seeks to build knowledge of the whole counsel of God revealed in Scripture in order to cultivate a biblical worldview.

2.3. *Competence:* The Programme seeks to help foster skills in understanding and handling Scripture.

2.4. *Cooperation:* The Programme seeks to encourage sharing and discussing God's word with others.

3. **Candidate Groups.** In June each year, candidates will be assigned by the Board of Ministry into small groups with other candidates and will be given a group coordinator by the Board of Ministry. Candidates will be assigned to different groups each year.

4. **Bible Engagement Plan.** By the end of August, each group must present the Board of Ministry with a written proposal for a Bible Engagement Plan for the coming academic year. This plan must include a strategy for Bible reading

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that involves both personal reading and group discussion. This plan must be formally approved by the Board of Ministry. The Board may make amendments to the plan as required.

5. **Engagement Strategies.** Options for engagement strategies would include:
 - 5.1. Memorisation (i.e., selecting a key passage for intentional memorisation).
 - 5.2. Special Introduction (i.e., considering an individual book with regard to date, authorship, original setting, content, structure, issues addressed, etc.).
 - 5.3. Thematic Study (i.e., exploring a theme running across the whole Bible, e.g. Temple, Family, City, Law, Kingdom, Culture etc.)
 - 5.4. Genre Exploration (i.e., choosing a particular genre of biblical books for general study).
 - 5.5. Original Language Development (i.e., seeking to work together through a biblical book in its original language).
6. **Number of Meetings.** Each small group must meet at least six times, with dates reported to the Board of Ministry.
7. **Report.** In June each year, the group will present an oral report to the Board of Ministry and will be given a pass or fail from the Board as measured against the group's proposed Bible Engagement Plan.
8. **Bible Reading Plan.** In addition to the above, students must read through the whole of the Bible during the course of their training. Students must submit a Bible reading plan at the start of their training which is reviewed in June each year to show the books they have read. All 66 Canonical Books must be read over the course of a candidate's training.
9. **Repeals.** The General Assembly repeal Act 38, Class 2, 2015 anent Scripture Examinations and Presbyterial Oversight of Students.

Act 23 – Pastoral Teams and Related Matters

Number 23 of Class 2

Category: Mission & Ministry

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly, recognising the pressures of the work of full-time ministry, and desiring to update and revise arrangements for the support of ministers and their wives and families, enact and ordain as follows to coordinate with the work of the Board of Ministry and its Pastoral Team:

1. **Presbytery Pastoral Team.** The General Assembly instruct each Presbytery to appoint a team to provide pastoral care for Ministers and their wives and families. The Team will be called the Presbytery Pastoral Team (PPT).
 - 1.1. *Remit.* The PPT will have the responsibility for making suitable provision for the guidance and counselling of Ministers within the bounds of the Presbytery and for their wives and families as required.
 - 1.2. *Membership.* The membership of the PPT will be appointed by the Presbytery. The composition will include two ministers, (one of whom will be the Mentoring Coordinator) with additional members made up of those who possess relevant professional and pastoral experience, including at least one female member.
 - 1.3. *Referrals.* Ministers and their families shall be encouraged to consult with the PPT in situations of personal need. The PPT should be advised of cases of sickness and domestic difficulties to permit them to take the initiative in offering and providing necessary support for the Minister and his family.
 - 1.4. *Reporting.* The PPT shall report in general terms to the Presbytery at least twice a year.
2. **Pastoral Care Guidelines.** The Board of Ministry will produce and keep under review Pastoral Care Guidelines for the Church. The Presbytery will ensure that all its members, as well as members of the PPT, are aware of, and have access, to the pastoral care guidelines document.

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3. **Mentoring.** Mentoring is a longer running relationship where a more experienced Minister (or Elder) is encouraged to meet regularly with a younger, or less experienced colleague, to disciple, encourage, advise, and support. The practice of mentoring is a way of developing stronger spiritual relationships, support, and accountability.

3.1. *Mentoring Coordinator.* The General Assembly instruct each Presbytery to appoint to their PPT a Minister of Presbytery with special responsibility to oversee mentoring arrangements of Ministers within their bounds and keep a record of arrangements made. Such a member shall be known as the Presbytery Mentoring Coordinator, and he shall have responsibilities in the following areas:

3.2.1. To liaise with the Mission Board on the appointment of newly ordained Ministers to ensure the appointment of a coach. (The plan for Gospel coaching is to provide church planters, ministers in their first congregation and ministers on the Development Track to have a coach)

3.2.2. To ensure that each Minister in the Presbytery who is not being coached, has a Mentor appointed. This can be done in liaison with the various parties involved.

3.2.3. To ensure that all Mentors within the Presbytery are aware of their responsibilities and have been given the mentoring guidelines – produced by the Board of Ministry for the whole denomination.

3.2.4. To ensure that line managers, and supervisors of Presbytery Workers or Ministry Support Workers have access to the same guidelines.

3.2.5. To informally review the effectiveness of the mentoring relationships, and report to the Presbytery and the Board of Ministry annually as to progress or improvements needed.

4. **Coaching.** The General Assembly recognise the role that Gospel Coaches alongside the mentoring programme. The Gospel Coach is a Minister in the Free Church who has undertaken coaching training under the auspices of the Mission Board. The Gospel Coach may also be a similarly trained Minister outwith the Free Church, known and approved by the Mission Board.

4.1. *The Purpose.* Gospel coaching aims to promote intentional Gospel conversations with focused discussions about a leaders relational, personal, missional, and spiritual life.

4.2. *Scope.* Gospel Coaches will be appointed for Church Planters, newly ordained Ministers, and Ministers who have taken part in the Mission Board Church Development programmes.

4.3. *Short-term Coaches.* Gospel Coaches will also be available to Ministers who request such support at different stages in life and ministry.

4.4. *Appointment.* The Presbytery, before the ordination and induction of a Minister to his first pastoral charge, shall appoint a Gospel Coach in consultation with the Mission Board and the parties involved. The new Minister will meet regularly with the Coach during the first two years of his ministry to discuss progress, challenges, and opportunities. Oversight and training of coaches to be provided by the Mission Board.

5. **Restrictions.** The following restrictions will apply to newly inducted and ordained Ministers.

5.1. *Presbytery Appointments.* Presbyteries shall not normally appoint Ministers in the first three years of their ministry to be Moderator of Presbytery or to be appointed as Interim-Moderator of a congregation. In the event of exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to appoint such a Minister as an Interim-Moderator, the appointment shall be for one year only with the opportunity for renewal at the end of the year if the same circumstances obtain. In such cases the Presbytery, when making or renewing such an appointment, shall record in their minutes the reasons for their doing so.

5.2. *Mission Board – Development Track.* Ministers of congregations on the Mission Board Development Track and in Church Planting appointments shall not be appointed as Interim-Moderator during the first five years of their appointments except in special circumstances. When such circumstances are deemed to exist, the details should be recorded as in Paragraph 4.1 above and reported to the supervising Assembly Committee.

5.3. *Boards and Committees.* A Minister shall not normally be appointed a member of a General 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.

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6. **Repeals.** The General Assembly repeal Act 24, Class 2, 2003, as amended by Act 12, Class 2, 2013.
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Act 24 – Pastoral Care of Ministers and their Families

Number 24 of Class 2

Category: Mission & Ministry

Wednesday 25th May 2022

The General Assembly enact and ordain as follows to contribute to the pastoral care of Ministers and their families.

1. **Board Pastoral Team.** The General Assembly instruct the Board of Ministry to appoint a team to assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to provide pastoral care for ministers and their families, namely the Board Pastoral Team.

1.1. *Membership.* The membership of the Pastoral Team will be comprised of a member of the Board, three Ministers of the Church with at least ten years of experience, and two female members, chaired by a member of the Board. The Board shall be at liberty to enlist such additional expertise from around the Church as might be required to deal with situations as they arise.

1.2. *Remit.* The remit of the Pastoral Team is to ensure the pastoral care of Ministers and their families as follows: to consider ways of providing and improving the pastoral care of Ministers and their families and to support Presbytery Pastoral Teams (PPT) in the delivery of pastoral care at the local level.

2. **Board Reference Team.** The Board will appoint a Board Reference Team (BRT) to support and advise the BPT. The BRT will be comprised of people with a professional background and experience in pastoral care. This Team will also act as the point of contact for the Board of Ministry in matters arising through the Discipline and Pastoral Care Act

3. **Presbyteries.** The Team will maintain regular contact with the Conveners of the PPTs to assist them in fulfilling their remit. The Team will meet in-person with Conveners at least twice annually to share good practice and to develop the best pastoral care possible across the denomination.

4. **Ministers.** The Team will encourage PPTs to make personal contact with all active Ministers in the Church at least once a year. They will be especially vigilant in monitoring situations in which a Minister may need special support and encouragement.

5. **Confidentiality.** The Team will ensure strict confidentiality in all matters referred to them except for matters which could be the subject of Church discipline.

6. **Referrals.** The Board's Pastoral Care Team may respond to referrals made directly to them on the grounds that a referral to the Presbytery Pastoral Team is considered inappropriate by the person making the referral.

7. **Reporting.** The Team will report to meetings of the Board as required during the year and will do so at least on a quarterly basis.

8. **Review.** The Team will keep all pastoral care practices and procedures under review and will bring proposals for review and improvement to the attention of the Board.

9. **General Assembly.** The Board will include a section on Pastoral Care in its report to the General Assembly each year.

10. **Repeals.** The General Assembly repeal Act 40, Class 2, 2017 anent the appointment of a Pastoral Support Worker, and Act 41, Class 2, 2017 anent the remit of the Panel of Pastoral Care.

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Act 25 – Appointing the Commission of Assembly

Number 25 of Class 2

Category: General Assembly

Thursday 26th May 2022

The General Assembly hereby appoint a Commission consisting of all the members of this General Assembly along with Rev. Derek Lamont named by the Moderator to be their Commission.

1. **Meetings.** This Commission is appointed to meet at Edinburgh on Tuesday 4th October 2022 and on Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 7 o'clock in the evening, and at other times and places as may be required with power to choose their own Moderator.

1.1. *Exceptional Circumstances.* The General Assembly declare that it shall be competent for the Commission to meet virtually under the terms of Act 33, Class 2, 2010, and Act 4, Class 2, 2020 should there be restrictions on in-person meetings at the time.

1.2. *Virtual Meetings.* The General Assembly declare that it shall be competent to meet virtually with the use of audio-visual technology, under the terms of the above-mentioned Acts of Assembly, at the discretion of the Moderator and the Assembly Clerk in consultation with the Assembly Business Committee.

1.3. *Quorum.* The quorum shall be any twelve or more of their number, of whom four at least are always to be ministers.

1.4. *Business.* Items of business to be included in the Note of Business of the Commission shall be submitted to the Assembly Clerks' Office at least ten days before the Commission is due to meet.

1.5. *Church Courts.* The General Assembly declare that no other Court of the Church may meet on the dates on which the Assembly has appointed its Commission to meet.

1.6. *Continuance.* This Commission shall remain in being until another Commission is appointed. All members are required to attend the diets of the Commission.

2. **General Powers.** The General Assembly empower this Commission to take up and dispose of any matter referred to them by the General Assembly or arising out of any Act or finding of the Assembly in accordance with the instructions given by the Assembly.

2.1 *Interests of the Church.* The Commission shall give attention to the interests of the Church in every respect to ensure that the Church does not suffer or incur any prejudice which it is possible for their powers to prevent, as they will be answerable.

2.2 *Public Engagement.* The Commission shall take up a report from the Public Engagement Group as required to give such a lead as they are able on moral issues and provide advice and assistance to Presbyteries, Board and Committees of the General Assembly.

2.3 *Exclusions.* The powers granted above shall not apply to particular affairs or processes before Presbyteries which have only a local relevance and have no reference to the whole Church.

3. **Review.** The General Assembly empower this Commission to receive appeals, complaints, petitions and references from individuals and from the lower courts of the Church, and all such matters as were previously directed to Provincial Synods.

3.1 *Procedure.* The General Assembly declare that the procedure for the submission of papers, etc., regarding references, appeals, complaints, and petitions be such that these be forwarded to the Principal Clerk of Assembly for inclusion in the business of the Commission as this is set out in the 2020 Act on the Dissolution of Synods.

4. **Admissions.** The General Assembly empower this Commission to receive applications for admission to the Free Church as follows.

4.1 *Applications from Ministers.* The said Commission is hereby authorised to receive and dispose of applications duly submitted through Presbyteries and the Board of Ministry from ministers of other denominations seeking admission to the Free Church ministry

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4.2 *Applications from Congregations.* The said Commission is authorised to receive and dispose of applications through Presbyteries from any congregation wishing to join the Free Church of Scotland submitted in accordance with the procedures laid down by the General Assembly.

4.3 *Ministerial Rolls.* The said Commission is authorised to receive and dispose of petitions received from Presbyteries regarding the transference of the name of a minister from the Roll of Resigned Ministers to the Roll of Ministers Without Charge Eligible for Call.

5. **Board of Trustees.** The General Assembly empower this Commission to receive applications from the Board of Trustees as follows:

5.1. *Church Plants and Preaching Stations.* The said Commission is empowered to receive a report from the Board of Trustees on protocols for the governance and financial arrangements of Church Plants and Preaching Stations, including the protocols surrounding the securing of charitable status and congregational status.

6. **Mission Board.** The General Assembly empower this Commission to receive applications from the Mission Board as follows.

6.1. *Church Development.* The said Commission is empowered to receive and dispose of applications from preaching stations and church plants to be raised to fully sanctioned charges submitted through the Mission Board.

6.2. *Consolidation.* The said Commission is empowered to receive and dispose of applications from the Mission Board to link or unite two or more congregations following upon a Report from the Board.

6.3. *Global Mission.* The said Commission is empowered to receive and dispose of applications from the Mission Board to appoint Ministers and workers in fulfilling the Church's commitment to global mission following a report from the Board.

6.4. *Assistant Ministers.* The said Commission is empowered to receive and dispose of an application for the appointment of an Assistant Minister for the congregation of Cornerstone, Edinburgh.

6.5. *Govan.* The said Commission is empowered to receive a report from the Mission Board on the arrangements for ongoing ministry in Govan.

6.6. *Burghead, Elgin and Forres.* The said Commission is empowered to receive a report from the Mission Board on the arrangements for ongoing ministry in Burghead, Elgin and Forres.

7. **Limited Powers.** The General Assembly declare that it is not competent for the Commission to become involved in matters other than those committed and referred to them as above. All their proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the Acts and Constitution of the Church, avoiding anything which is contrary or prejudicial to such Acts and Constitution.

7.1 *Accountability.* The General Assembly further declare that in all their proceedings they shall be accountable to and censurable by next General Assembly as they may find reason arising from the above introduction to Paragraph 6.

7.2 *Appeals.* The General Assembly affirm that in general terms the findings of the Commission of Assembly are final and not subject to appeal. However, they declare that, in the case of Complaints, Appeals, Petitions, and References, it shall be competent for parties in the review process to appeal to the General Assembly.

Act 26 – Appointing the 2023 General Assembly

Number 26 of Class 2

Category: General Assembly

Thursday 26th May 2022

The General Assembly appoint the next General Assembly to meet on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 6.00pm.

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ACTS OF THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

Act 1 – London City Presbyterian Church

Number 1 of Class 2

Category: Mission & Ministry

Tuesday 5th October 2021

1. The Commission of Assembly note that the congregation of London City Presbyterian Church has received an offer to purchase their Manse at 91 Grosvenor Gardens, Woodford, Essex IG8 0AR. They also note that the 2021 General Assembly agreed to the sale of the Manse in general terms. In accordance with this finding, they authorise the disposition of the said property in concurrence with the requirements of the title deeds regarding the sale of the same.
2. The Commission of Assembly authorise the Board of Trustees of the Free Church of Scotland to enter into such contracts as are necessary to give effect to that disposition, and that any three of the current members of the Board of Trustees are authorised to execute such documents as are necessary to give effect to that disposition.

Act 2 – General Assessors to the Presbytery of Skye & Wester Ross

Number 2 of Class 2

Category: Mission & Ministry

Tuesday 5th October 2021

The Commission of Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Skye & Wester Ross and grant its crave. They appoint Rev. David Meredith, Rev. Ivor Macdonald, and Rev. Gordon Martin as General Assessors to the Presbytery of Skye & Wester Ross for a period of two years, with the appointments to be reviewed at the 2024 General Assembly.

Act 3 – Interim Act anent Training for Ministry

Number 3 of Class 2

Category: Mission & Ministry

Tuesday 1st March 2022

The Commission of Assembly adopt the following deliverance, based upon the Board of Ministry's Training for Ministry: Expectation for Candidates, Congregations and Presbyteries document, as an Interim Act governing the placement of Ministers-in-Training in Training Churches.

1. The Commission of Assembly adopt the term Training Church to refer to a congregation where a Candidate for the Ministry is placed as part of their training for pastoral ministry.
2. The Commission of Assembly adopt the term Minister-in-Training to refer to a Candidate for the Ministry placed in a congregation as part of their training for pastoral ministry.
3. The Commission of Assembly endorse the identification of Character, Convictions, Competence and Cooperation as a summary of the Scriptural outcomes for training for pastoral ministry.
4. The Commission of Assembly instruct that if a congregation wishes to serve as a Training Church, the following initial steps should be taken:
 - 4.1. The Kirk Session will meet to discuss the expectations for local Churches set out in the Training for Ministry: Expectations for Candidates, Congregations and Presbyteries document, and confirm a commitment to meet these.

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- 4.2. The Deacons' Court will meet to confirm willingness and ability to meet the financial commitments involved.
- 4.3. The Kirk Session will then inform the Board of Ministry and the local Presbytery that they wish to be considered as a potential Training Church. Representatives of the Kirk Session will meet with representatives of the Board of Ministry to confirm the congregation's commitment to meet the expectations for a Training Church set out below.
- 4.4. The Board of Ministry Student Team will meet quarterly with the Convenors of Presbytery Committees responsible for training to monitor the implementation of the Training Programme in Training Churches.
- 5.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that when deciding which congregation a Candidate for the Ministry is to be placed in as a Minister-in-Training, discussions should take place between the Candidate (and spouse), the Kirk Session of the potential Training Church, the Presbytery under whose oversight the Candidate is currently placed, and the Board of Ministry.
- 5.1. In the initial stages, informal conversations should take place between the Candidate and the potential Training Church and the Student Team of the Board of Ministry.
- 5.2. If the candidate and potential Training Church are in agreement, the Candidate should inform his current Presbytery and the Board of Ministry.
- 5.3. The Presbytery (or Student Committee thereof) should meet with both Candidate and the Minister of the potential Training Church. If the Presbytery is in favour of the placement, they should inform the Board of Ministry.
- 5.4. The Board of Ministry (or representatives thereof) should meet with both Candidate and the Minister of the potential Training Church. The Board must be satisfied that the Training Church is in a position to meet the expectations of the Training Programme set out below.
- 5.5. Normally, the decision for where a Candidate will be placed should be made before 31st January of the year in which the candidate expects to begin working at the Training Church.
- 5.6. The training needs of each Candidate will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Board of Ministry recognises the importance of giving Candidates opportunities to gain experience across the different settings within the denomination during the training process. The following pathways are examples of potential options to achieve this goal.
- 5.6.1. A Candidate may serve in two congregations. For example, a Candidate who has been in his home congregation for many years may stay in this congregation for the first year or two of his training period before moving to a new training church for the final two or three years of his training. Normally at least one of these congregations will be within commuting distance of ETS
- 5.6.2. A Candidate may serve in one new congregation. If a Candidate moves to a new congregation near the start of his training programme as a Minister-in-Training he would normally remain there for the duration of the programme, provided he can fulfil the in-person attendance requirements at ETS.
- 5.6.3. A Candidate may serve in their home congregation. In exceptional circumstances, a Candidate who already has broad ministry experience in a variety of settings may remain in his home congregation for the duration of the training programme, provided he can fulfil the in-person attendance requirements at ETS and can provide satisfactory evidence to the Board of Ministry that such an arrangement is in the best interests of his training.
- 5.7. The Board of Ministry will ensure that no application for ministry will be prejudiced if applications made by a Candidate for financial grants are unsuccessful.
- 5.8. The Board of Ministry will ensure that no Candidate for Ministry is disadvantaged during their training programme due to their position on Public Worship.
- 5.9. The final decision for where a Candidate will be placed lies with the Board of Ministry.
- 6.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that the normal period for training will be four years, during which a Candidate will normally study the BTh programme at ETS

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- 6.1. Occasionally, the Board of Ministry, in consultation with ETS, may extend this to a period of five or six years.
- 6.2. The Board of Ministry may also set a training programme of three years full time study without a placement in a Training Church as a Minister-in-Training if the applicant is over the age of 30 and has extensive experience of being involved in congregational life.
- 6.3. In exceptional circumstances when a Candidate has prior theological education, the Board of Ministry, in consultation with ETS, may set an individual study programme in place of the full BTh course.
- 6.4. All Candidates must complete the Presbyterian Church Ministry Module.
- 6.5. Candidates must attend a minimum of 40% of classes at ETS in person across the whole of their course.
- 6.6. The Board of Ministry and the ETS Centre for Mission will partner to provide regular training seminars each year which Candidates are required to attend.
- 7.** The Commission of Assembly adopt the following as the expectations of a Candidate for the Ministry on a Core Training Programme:
 - 7.1. Candidates for Ministry will be under the oversight of their local Presbytery.
 - 7.2. Candidates will complete the annual examination required by a local Presbytery.
 - 7.3. Candidates serving as Ministers-in-Training will be expected to become members of the congregation where they are serving and thus under the oversight of the Presbytery within whose bounds the congregation lies.
 - 7.4. Candidates will be required to complete a theological education at ETS. This will normally be the BTh programme, but some exceptions may be made by the Board of Ministry in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.
 - 7.5. Candidates will be expected to participate actively in the life of the local congregation where they serve as a Minister-in-Training.
 - 7.6. Candidates are to preach at least 10 times per year.
 - 7.7. Candidates will be expected to move into the local area served by the congregation where they are a Minister-in-Training.
 - 7.8. Candidates will adhere to all requirements in relation to compliance.
 - 7.9. Candidates will be expected to follow the financial arrangements set by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.
 - 7.10. Candidates will be expected to complete the assessment and record keeping requirements set by the Board of Ministry.
 - 7.11. Candidates will complete a summer placement in a vacant congregation as part of their training. This will be regarded as equivalent to the 'second placement' and will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Act 21, Class 2, 2001 – Act anent Student Placements. Placement in a Training Church as a Minister-in-Training will be considered as functioning in place of the 'first placement'.
- 8.** The Commission of Assembly adopt the following as the expectations of a Training Church:
 - 8.1. A commitment to the principles and priorities set out in the Introduction of the Training for Ministry document.
 - 8.2. A commitment to allow adequate time for a Candidate's theological studies.
 - 8.3. A commitment to allow Candidates to participate in the Training Seminars and other training elements provided by the Board of Ministry.

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- 8.4 A commitment to provide candidates with a good variety of live ministry opportunities with appropriate support, feedback & responsibility.
- 8.5 A clear plan for the pastoral support, mentoring & discipling of the Candidate.
- 8.6 A commitment to be willing to set aside some of the Minister/Assistant Minister's time to meet regularly with the Candidate for training purposes.
- 8.7 A commitment to allow for a progression of responsibility during the period of training.
- 8.8 A commitment to adhere to all employment and compliance requirements.
- 8.9 Evidence of adequate financial resources for the duration of the programme and a commitment to meet the minimum financial commitments set by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.
- 8.10 A commitment to complete the Assessment and Reporting requirements set by the Board of Ministry.
- 8.11 A commitment to receive feedback and recommendations for the Board of Ministry for developing training in the local church.
- 8.12 For Training Churches outwith commuting distance to ETS, local Deacons' Courts are instructed to consider whether they can offer financial support to help cover travel expenses for the occasions when Candidates need to attend classes in person.
- 9.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that if an individual applies to become a Candidate having already begun a theological education at ETS, the Board of Ministry will normally require additional church-based training to be undertaken after completing studies at ETS if there is not sufficient time left to combine theological study with a Minister-in-Training role at a Training Church. This will normally be for a minimum of one year and will normally require moving to a different congregation.
- 10.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that a congregation function as a Training Church will normally be given the opportunity to elect a Minister-in-Training as an Elder in the Training Church.
- 11.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that vacant congregations will not be eligible to have a Minister in Training to be placed there while the vacancy is ongoing.
- 11.1. In the event of a Training Church becoming vacant while a Minister-in-Training is in place, local Presbyteries, in consultation with the Board of Ministry, must ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the ongoing training of the Candidate.
- 12.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that Ministers-in-Training are not to be given responsibilities equivalent to a full-time worker while their theological studies are not completed. This would include having main responsibility for leading a Church Plant, looking after a vacant congregation, or leading a part of a linked charge.
- 13.** The Commission of Assembly instruct that Ministers-in-Training be employed by their Training Church according to the contract template provided by the Free Church Offices and in accordance with the Financial Model set out by the Board of Ministry and Board of Trustees.
- 13.1. Ministers-in-Training will be appointed a Training Church Supervisor who will also function as Line Manager. This will be in addition to the Training Mentor appointed by Presbyteries in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.
- 13.2. Training Church Supervisors (Line Managers) will normally be the Minister/Assistant Minister of a Training Church but may also be another suitably qualified person connected to the Training Church.
- 13.3. Training Church Supervisors will meet with Ministers-in-Training for dedicated Line Management meetings every two months.
- 13.4. Training Church Supervisors will follow the Line Management guidelines provided by the Board of Ministry.

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13.5. Training Church Supervisors will complete an annual Character and Competency Assessment Framework provided by the Board of Ministry as part of the annual report submitted by the Training Church in accordance with Act 23, Class 2, 2021.

14. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Board of Ministry to provide guidelines for the Presbytery Mentors of Candidates/Ministers-in-Training.

15. This new Training Model is to be reviewed after 4 years and a report given to the 2026 General Assembly.
