

- 08.04.2015 At Inverness on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 the Kirk Session of Crown Church met in the Lower Hall and was constituted with prayer.
- Sederunt* The Reverends Peter Donald and Morven Archer, Mr Farquhar Forbes (Probationer), the Mrs Eileen Arden, Marion Barbour, Lily Baillie, Heather Beck, Anne Bowen, Ruby Coe, Alison Harbison, Ella Low, Judith MacLeod, Elizabeth Matheson, Jean McGowan, Dorothy Mein, Linda Moncur, Angela Murdoch, Evelyn Reid, Morag Russell, Margot Tuley and Miss Irene Whyte; the Messrs Edward Adie, John Akers, Richard Arden, Colin Baillie, John Barbour, Peter Collinson, Charlie Forbes, Alex Grant, Robert Laing, Brian Macgill, David MacKenzie, Alastair MacLeod, Jude Madeleine, Donald Matheson, William Mein, Bruce Merchant, Stewart Robertson and Douglas Taylor.
- Apologies* The Rev Stewart Frizzell, the Mrs Lena Clarke, Pat Crippin, Sheena Ferguson, Janet Fraser, Sandra Gorman, Elizabeth Gray; Miss Eleanor MacKenzie and Mrs Mairi Main; the Messrs David Crippin, Bill Dawson, Ian Fraser, Donald MacKenzie, Theodore MacKenzie, Donald Morrison, Robin Stewart and Neil Stuart.
- Minutes* The minutes of the meetings of 24/01/2015 and 04/03/2015 were presented, amended and approved.
- Opening Remarks* The Moderator announced the sudden death of Mr Donald Kennedy MBE, Elder and the expected funeral arrangements. The condolences of Kirk Session were expressed to his wife and family.
- Vision Statement* A draft was circulated for the consideration of Kirk Session. After some discussion and amendment the headline was as follows:  
 "Crown Church worships and witnesses to Jesus Christ within our community, for the blessing of everyday people; that lives may be transformed by the grace of God!"  
 It was intimated that the current version of the Vision Statement appeared on the Church Facebook page. However after further discussions, it was agreed that the wording should be re-considered. The Moderator requested feedback from Elders following the meeting to allow updating of the draft in good time for the item to be brought back to the June meeting of Kirk Session.
- Church Pews* It was reported that computer graphics were being prepared by Mr Ross Cairns to assist in the process of review by simulating what Crown Church might look like with removal of more pews from the sanctuary. Also, that CARTA had been consulted for their advice in the matter.
- A church plan* There was no draft yet pending other planning work.
- Ad Hoc groups* One update received from 'Mission Group'. Mrs Linda Moncur reported that the plan for the impending visit by a party from North Street Church in Jamaica was going well. A varied programme of events and highlights had been prepared over the two week visit and all Elders were encouraged to participate. The Moderator thanked Mrs Moncur for her considerable efforts in making the visit happen and was grateful to other church groups for financial contributions to the costs involved.
- Communion* It was reported that 225 people took Communion at December 2014 (195 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon). This compared to 258 for December 2013.

At Christmas 2014 there were 36 people taking Communion (30 at Christmas 2013). In March 2015 there were 205 taking Communion (185 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon). This compared to 256 for March 2014.

*Communication* A report was tabled by Mr Bruce Merchant in which he drew attention to the item about the Easter Cards which had been prepared and distributed around the parish in the period before Easter. There was agreement that the higher quality card used made the invitation an altogether more convincing one. After some discussion it was agreed that a wider distribution of similar cards should be considered in the period before Christmas or else again next Easter. Mr Merchant was thanked for his report.

*Newsletters* The topic was introduced by the Moderator in consideration of the excellent work undertaken by Mrs Jane Wilson and her group of Lady Visitors. Elders were invited to seek out new helpers to ensure that Mrs Wilson is adequately supported in maintaining this valued channel of Church communication.

*Presbytery* There were two reports tabled from February and March 2015 respectively. A number of items were drawn to the attention of Kirk Session and Mrs Heather Beck was thanked for making the reports.

*Safeguarding* A report from the Safeguarding co-ordinator Mrs Joan Merchant was noted. Specific recommendations were made in the report as follows:

- *Appointment of Mrs Sue Skelton to work as Safeguarding Officer*
- *Resignation/withdrawal of Mrs Angy MacDiarmid, Janice Worthing and Kirsteen Morrison from regulated work involving children at Crown Church*

Kirk Session approved the above noted recommendations.

*Elder Reports* A report was tabled but some Elder submissions were outstanding and an updated report would be presented to Kirk Session at its June 2015 meeting. The Moderator asked Elders to consider how visiting, using groups, might be undertaken proactively by Elders and perhaps others. The Rev Morven Archer offered Kirk Session training which might assist in this and other aspects of outreach.

*Youth & Childrens Co-ordinator*

The Moderator recounted the position as it had been at the March 2015 meeting.

An update was then given by Mr Farquhar Forbes: Considerable progress was noted in addressing many questions that had arisen at the previous meeting of Kirk Session. Members of Hilton Church (where a separate venture had been created for the purposes appointing extra staff) had been consulted by members of Crown Church notably involving Mrs Eileen Arden, Mr Alastair MacLeod, Mr Bruce Merchant and the Moderator.

In summary, there were two options open to Crown Church: (1) employ within our church or (2) employ through a legal entity separate from our church. The various arguments to support either option were rehearsed and it was agreed that option (2) would provide the best support for the initiative and merited being progressed.

In the meantime, pledge forms have been distributed to the Congregation to gauge the potential level of financial support for a Youth & Childrens' co-ordinator appointment. An update was given on pledges received to date.

*Youth & Childrens Co-ordinator (continued)*

The proposal around option (2) for a five year appointment was outlined. The recommendation was to set up a company limited by guarantee, its management being handled probably by some five Directors. As the Kirk Session gave its support to the further developments along these lines, it was agreed that the congregation might put money into the formation costs of the limited company. This would be asked for from the Congregational Board.

The Moderator thanked Mr Farquhar Forbes for his highly effective work in leading the ad hoc team to this stage. The Moderator proposed that as matters moved forward, Mr Forbes be discharged from that role and he also thanked team members Mrs Angela Murdoch and Mrs Evelyn Reid who would be stepping down from their roles. The remaining members of the ad hoc team were ready to take the project forward and offer themselves for appointment for nomination as Directors in due course. Kirk Session agreed this position.

- Summer Services* The Moderator noted that a summer service schedule would be considered at a meeting of the Worship Group.
- Commission* A welcome nomination of Mrs Heather Beck to be appointed "a *bona fide* acting Elder of the Congregation, to represent it in the Presbytery of Inverness during the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016", was agreed.
- Conference* A report on the Crown Church Elders Conference January 2015 was noted.
- Elder Districts* The Moderator noted that a preliminary review of Elders Districts has revealed some gaps in the Districts. Elders were invited in the first instance to contact the session Clerk or the Roll Keeper with ideas. There is scope for re-organising some districts within existing Elder numbers.
- Elder Retires* A request was noted from Mr Robin Stewart to retire but he intends to continue to serve households remaining in his District.
- Appointments* It was noted that the following Elders offered themselves for re-appointment to the Congregational Board: The Mrs Judith MacLeod and Dorothy Mein; the Messrs Charlie Forbes, Ted Mackenzie and Douglas Taylor. Resignation: Mrs Jean McGowan has stepped-down from the Board.
- Elder Service* It is customary to recognise long service in the Church of Scotland. Mr William Dawson, senior elder, has attained 60 years since ordination. Also, this year a number of Elders have attained 30 years active service. The Session Clerk will report this to the Church of Scotland Moderator's Office attesting Elders' active service in response to which 'long service certificates' may be issued.
- Schools* Mr Donald Matheson on behalf of all Elders commended the Moderator for his excellent in-schools work, evidenced by an inspiring 'end of term' Service in Crown Church which was fully attended by pupils from the local Primary school.
- Invitation* An invitation has been received from Presbytery to a 'planning consultation' event to be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May. As both Moderator and Session Clerk are unavailable on that day Mrs Heather Beck and Mr Bill Mein volunteered to attend.
- Letter* A letter from Mrs & Mrs Iain MacDiarmid was received expressing warm thanks to Kirk session following the delivery of a farewell gift to them by the Minister and their District Elder.

*Covenant*

A 'Covenant Fellowship Statement' document has been prepared and signed up to by a number of churches within the Church of Scotland following deliberations around the Overture (General Assembly) on same-sex relationships and ministry. In responding to a question on this item, the Moderator agreed to circulate to all Elders a copy of this document for their individual consideration. It was further agreed that a meeting would be convened in due course to allow the whole congregation at Crown Church to consider this document and its impact.

*Date of the Next Meeting*

The next regular meeting of the Kirk Session will be on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

The meeting was closed with the benediction.

*Peter Donald*.....Moderator

*Ben Macgill*.....Session Clerk