

A Scotland-wide Network for the 21st Century



Dear Friends

We use the word *friends* as in the original Aramaic word which Jesus used for friend. It is a covenant relationship word. We Christians are, above all other allegiances, part of that covenant of Jesus and His friends. With our separate organisations, structures and denominational affiliations we affirm that our covenant friendship is in Jesus Christ our King and our love for one another is as members of His Body.

We (Doug and Colin) have known each other for quarter of a century or more. We met as part of a team seeking to establish the E.A. in Scotland and have also served together in other capacities. We identify with the associations, coalitions and relational networks of Christians that exist throughout Scotland, from Shetland to the Borders, from the Atlantic coast to that of the North Sea.

These are not single organisations or congregations but rather a dynamic body of Christians with diverse callings joined by the common thread of a biblical faith and the desire for Christ's headship, the glory of God and His Kingdom to come. The variety of relationships, networks and coalitions of believers cover activities from prayer to social action, and from political interface to discipleship, together with the many, many other activities into which the Holy Spirit has led and is leading God's people.

In early October 2019 a [challenge to freedom of expression in Scotland](#) was highlighted by Barnabas Fund and others, and resulted in a series of responses and discussions with a range of individuals and bodies. As an outworking, a meeting was convened on 5 December to discuss the growing trend of aggressive secularism in Scotland. This is particularly evident in civic life and national governance. Martin Parsons of Barnabas Fund set the scene on the 5th December by describing a wider picture of increasing opposition to Christian values set against the ICCPR – the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights.

Those gathered discussed the particulars of the 'poster campaign' produced and issued by the Scottish Government, supported by Police Scotland and approved by a representative from the Church of Scotland. This raised key questions of an underlying and strategic matter; that of having the freedom to express the Christian message and biblical truths as a voice to and into the nation, and the question of the manifestation of the Body of Christ in the land?

Subsequently, we put together a diagram (*appended*) which shows two governmental agencies which are recognised by God: the first is the church, and this includes spheres 1 and 3, 'church' by congregation and denomination, and 'church' by organisational or geographic expression, as well as 'church' by committed 2s and 3s of believers. The other (political) sphere is that of national and regional government and the mechanisms of civil governance.

The 'church' is a Holy Nation, destined to be the Bride of Christ. The 'nation/state' is a geopolitical entity arranged by God with all its imperfections ([Acts 17:26](#)). Jesus acknowledged both of these entities when he said, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." Paul, writing to Timothy ([1 Tim. 2:1](#)) and Titus ([Tit. 3:1](#)), described the relationship between the two entities.

In Scotland, we need to know who we are as part of God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood. What does this mean? And like Joseph, Nehemiah and the Lord Jesus himself, we need to be 'discerning the body of Christ' ([1 Cor. 11:29](#)) whilst living the faith in a nation state; to "shine [our] light before men ([Matt 5:16](#)). We need to be as the 'Sons of Issachar' who "understood the times and new what Israel should do". ([1 Chron. 12:32](#))

In these complicated times in which we live, we are instructed to "hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches" ([Rev. 2:7](#)). We urgently need to learn from him how to move from the unity of the Spirit, to the unity of the faith as described by Paul in the 4th chapter of the Ephesian epistle.

The Covenanters of old resisted Charles II when he said he was head of the church. Today there are some in the governance of the State who seek to ignore the church and deny the authority, even the existence, of Christ who is head of the Church and rightful Ruler over all nations. ([Psalm 2](#)) They work to erase centuries of rich Judeo-Christian heritage in Scotland, UK and much of Europe. They oppose God's laws and Christian values.

For us to remain in disarray is not an option. Remaining fragmented, in a compartmentalised fashion, is a denial of Jesus' earnest prayer, "that all of them may be one as we are one" ([John 17:23](#)).

Paul instructed the believers in Ephesus to "put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and – after you have done everything – to stand." ([Eph 6:13](#)). Jesus Christ, 'the Way, the Truth and the Life', will make the way forward clear for us.

Colin Wilson

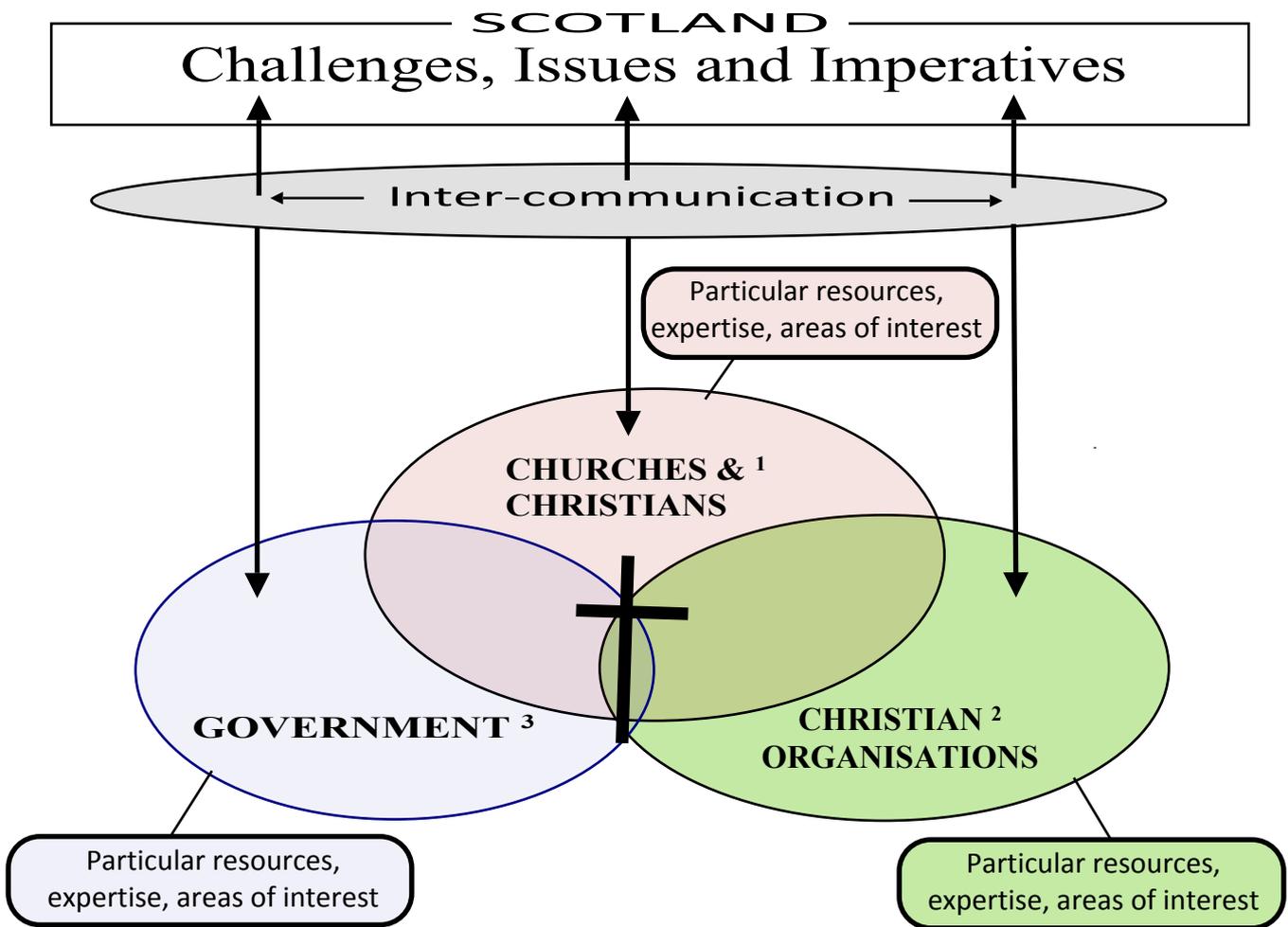
Douglas Flett

A Scotland-wide Network for the 21st Century



Along with the very important issue at that time, a meeting in Edinburgh on 5 Dec 2018 highlighted the increasing need for Christians in Scotland to 'stand together'; supporting each other in Christian witness into 21st century Scotland and the climate of our day.

The following is a sketch outline of how a 'nodal' network could work, but the 'glue' being personal/relational rather than institutional.



- Church
- 1. Congregations and Christians in all regions across Scotland
 - 2. Christian Organisations e.g. Barnabas Fund, CARE, Christian Institute, Christian Police Association, Evangelical Alliance, Lawyers Christian Fellowship, Pray for Scotland .
- Nation State
- 3. Parliament/local authorities/government and public agencies