



FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (Continuing)

Press Office

General Assembly of Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

The 2011 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) will meet in Liberton Kirk, Kirkgate, Liberton, Edinburgh, commencing on Monday 23rd May at 6pm.

The Assembly will set its own timetable. Appended is an indication of some of the expected highlights of the Assembly and the days on which they are most likely to arise, but any draft timetable will inevitably be considerably amended as business proceeds. For up to date information prior to the Assembly, contact Rev. John MacLeod, Senior Press Officer, on 0845 1297055 or 07879 481502. During the Assembly the Press Office contact number will be 07879 481502.

The Moderator's Reception on Monday evening will take place at the close of business on Monday evening and is open to the public and press. It is anticipated that there will be opportunity for informal mixing with the new Moderator and other commissioners.

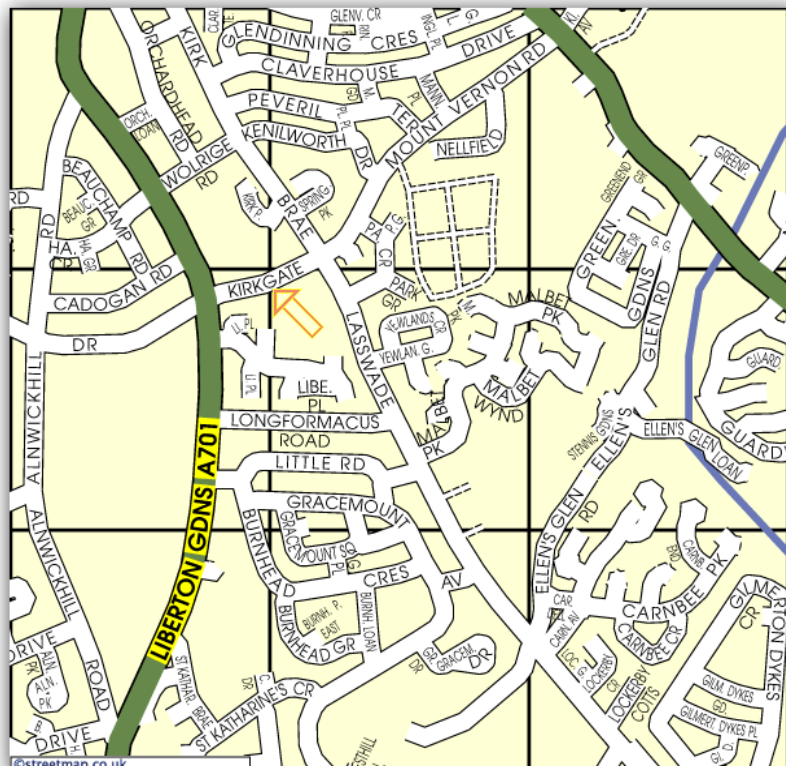
The Assembly Officers, Moderator and Clerks will be wearing blue name badges. Members of the press requiring assistance should make themselves known to the Senior Press Officer if the Assembly is not in session, or, if the Assembly is sitting, to the Assembly Officer.

John MacLeod

Senior Press Officer and Principal Clerk of Assembly

PR20110516

16th May 2011



Some of the highlights expected – **but please note that the timing of these debates is subject to alteration by the Assembly itself when it meets.**

Monday:

- Moderator's Reception at approximately 8pm (Liberton Kirk Halls, Kirkgate, opposite Liberton Kirk)

Tuesday:

- New Moderator's Address
- Ecumenical Relations
- Finance
- Youth
- Psalmody

Wednesday:

- Public Questions, Religion and Morals Report
- Publications
- Training of the Ministry
- Missions – Reports on work in Zambia and congregations in North America and Australia, together with reports on activities in Kenya, Sri Lanka and elsewhere.

Thursday:

- Legal

16th May 2011

A copy of the Reports to the General Assembly is attached.

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FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (Continuing) Press Office

Press Release – 16th May 2011

Bible is the source of all proper and wholesome law **says Free Church Continuing**

At a time when the country is confronted with a determined onslaught by, amongst other pressures, militant secularism, aggressive attempts at isalmification and religious teaching which runs contrary to the Bible, the Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) argue in their annual Report to the General Assembly that the government both in Westminster and in Holyrood should return to the Bible as the source of all proper and wholesome law.

– ends –

PR 20110516

16th May 2011

For further information

Rev. John MacLeod <i>Senior Press Officer and Principal Clerk of Assembly</i> (0845 1297055 or 07879 481502)
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From Saturday 21 st May please use the Assembly telephone number: 07879 481502

A copy of the Report referred to is to be found among the Reports appended.

Moderator-designate: Rev. Graeme Craig



Graeme Craig was born in Paisley in 1964 and was educated at Dundee University and the Free Church College, Edinburgh. Prior to being called in 2009 to the key congregation of Stornoway he was minister on the Ardnamurchan peninsula and later in Lochalsh & Glenshiel where he also took responsibility for Genelg and Arnisdale.

In the struggles which engulfed the Free Church in the years prior to 2000 Mr Craig, although at that time a relatively junior minister, played a pivotal support rôle for those loyal to the constitutional position of the historic Free Church of Scotland, ensuring that those of them who were members of Assembly had ready access to accurate and relevant information. In recognition of the abilities shown during that critical period, when the Free Church divided in January 2000 Mr Craig was appointed Assistant Clerk of the General Assembly of the Free Church (Continuing).

He is married (1989) to Roberta, a languages graduate from Rathfriland, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, and they have eight children aged from four to twenty.

Perhaps unusually for a minister, Mr Craig has an honours degree in Geology and, contrary to some public perceptions of geologists, has a special interest in “young earth creationism” and the creation-evolution debate. Very much opposed to the secular, scientific materialism agenda being promoted through the education system and the media, he occasionally writes exposing the folly of such things. He sees many of society’s problems due to the rejection of biblical truth and the acceptance of pseudo-science, pseudo-psychology and false relativistic morality. He believes that the Church needs to recover confidence and point this out in world.

In his youth a keen badminton player, he now has little opportunity for it in his busy life. He continues, however to pursue his longstanding interest in singing. With a wry sense of humour he admits to enjoying arguing and being pedantic, characteristics allegedly common among Assembly Clerks.

Mr Craig comes to the Moderatorial Chair much younger than most, but with a vast range of experience and very wide respect.

REPORTS

TO

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

2011

Rev. GRAEME CRAIG, B.Sc.*Moderator-Designate*
 Rev. DAVID S. FRASER, B.A.*Retiring Moderator*
 Rev. JOHN MACLEOD, M.A.*Clerk*
 Rev. GRAEME CRAIG, B.Sc.*Assistant Clerk*
 Mr. ANGUS MACMILLIAN*General Treasurer*
 Messrs. DRUMMOND MILLER W. S., Edinburgh.....*Law Agents*

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I.
REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS & NOMINATIONS

(A) ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

1. Introduction

Although at times the work of the General Assembly may appear to be routine or mundane, it has a vital role in the life of the Church. It was not without reason that the Church's Covenanted and Disruption forefathers struggled to ensure that a free meeting of the General Assembly could take place. As well as being the highest Court of the Church on earth, Assembly time is also a time when Presbyterianism and Biblical Ecumenism can be evidenced for all to see and enjoy. There is also the opportunity to present to the world the relevance of the Church to the world today. It is with an awareness of this fact that the Committee seek to fulfil their remit. The Committee trust that this spirit fills the hearts of Commissioners as they meet and that due diligence in attendance and consideration of the matters to hand is displayed, however routine or mundane the matters to hand may be. Surely nothing is too small or insignificant a business when it is the work of the Kingdom of the King Jesus, the Great King and only Head of the Church, the King of kings and Lord over all! What a privilege it is to meet together in General Assembly!

In accordance with Standing Order I.5 the Committee notified Presbyteries of their representation in the Assembly.

In accordance with Act II Class II 2002, the Committee nominated a Moderator–Designate.

2. Assembly Commissioners' Expenses

In accordance with Act I Class II 2001 the Committee notified Presbyteries that they had set the maximum rate for Assembly Commissioners' expenses which are paid from Central Funds through Presbyteries at £170 (£220 for Commissioners resident in the Outer Isles and £460 for Overseas Commissioners). These rates take into account the fact that free meals are provided for Commissioners during the Assembly. This rate remains unchanged from the previous year.

It was suggested to the Committee that it might be useful, especially for first-time Commissioners, for the Committee to give guidance regarding Assembly Commissioners' Expenses paid from Central Funds. The Committee are grateful to the General Treasurer for his input and have agreed to issue the following advice on Assembly Commissioners' Expenses to Presbyteries.

- a. The sum allocated from Central Funds is to help towards costs incurred in attending both the General Assembly and Ordinary and Special meetings of the Commission of Assembly throughout the ensuing year.
- b. The sum is to be used primarily for payment of travelling expenses, accommodation, and meals outwith those provided without charge at the General Assembly, etc.
- c. No other expenses should be claimed from Central Funds for those items of expenditure by Commissioners during the course of the year for attendance at the General Assembly and Ordinary and Special meetings of the Commission of Assembly.
- d. No other items of expense—eg loss of wages—will be accepted as a legitimate expense

- e. Any remaining sum left unused after the General Assembly should not be returned to the Financial Administrator at that time as it may be required for expenses incurred later in the year in connection with attending meetings of the Commission of Assembly.
- f. Any expenses unused by 1st April of the following year should be returned to the Financial Administrator before the end of that month.
- g. The expenses given assume full attendance at the General Assembly. Where a Commissioner has not been present throughout all Sederunts of the General Assembly it is the responsibility of his Presbytery to consider and determine any *pro rata* reduction in expenses for failure to fully attend all Sederunts of the General Assembly.
- h. The above does not preclude Presbyteries making additional payments to Assembly Commissioners for such expenses as are allowable, but any such payments must be made out of a Presbytery's own funds.
- i. Presbyteries may pay Commissioners' Expenses either before or after the meeting of the General Assembly. Where payment is made before the Assembly it is the responsibility of the Presbytery to consider and determine any *pro rata* reduction in expenses in relation to any failure to attend all diets of Assembly.

3. General Assembly

Concern has been raised that a considerable number of those actually appointed Commissioners to the General Assembly have not attended for various reasons. The Committee note that there may be wisdom in Presbyteries appointing as Assembly Commissioners to the General Assembly only those who are likely to be able and willing to fulfil their Commission. Furthermore, the Committee believe that presbyteries have a duty to remind those commissioned by them to the General Assembly that Assembly Commissioners are duty bound to attend all diets of the General Assembly and be present from beginning to end, and that any failure in this regard should be exceptional and only for good reasons.

Meetings of the General Assembly require a degree of concentration by Commissioners in order that during debates they may take part and vote thoughtfully. All distractions, whether to oneself or others, are unhelpful. The Committee have therefore advised the Moderator that during the first and at the beginning of the second Sederunts of the General Assembly he should indicate that Commissioners should not distract others by holding private conversations or making private comments during the Sederunts of the Assembly and that neither should they wander about or in and out at leisure.

Recently, the practice of Commissioners intending to ask questions or speak in debates coming to the front pew before being asked to speak has helped expedite business. Commissioners are again reminded of this procedure in the hope that it will soon become an established feature of practice in the Assembly.

There are times when the Convener of a Committee cannot be present to present his Committee's Report to the General Assembly. On such occasions it is the duty of a Convener to ensure that his Vice-convener, failing whom another member of his Committee, is alerted in sufficient time to enable a meaningful presentation of his Report to be made.

The timetabling of the Assembly follows a similar pattern each year for obvious reasons. However, it is not always easy to predict how long an individual item of business may take. The Committee noted that last year the hearing of an Appeal at the Assembly occurred over two sederunts with other business intervening between the hearing of both parties at the Bar. This was not helpful to either parties or commissioners in considering the case in hand. The Committee therefore recommend that in future the timetable be so structured as to allow, if possible, the hearing of parties consecutively without interruption and, if possible,

the disposal of the Appeal at the same time.

Mr James MacInnes has agreed to fulfil the duties of Assembly Officer in place of Mr Derick Gillies who found himself unable to assist this year. The Committee are grateful to him and his assistants for the time they so freely give up to help the Assembly. They are also grateful to Miss Kaori Simpson for agreeing to provide catering. She assisted last year as part of the team from the Catering Department of Jewel & Esk Valley College, Edinburgh. Regrettably, due to changes at the College, they were unable to guarantee their availability this year. The Committee are grateful that Colin Foster, who led the catering team over the last number of years, helped the Committee in securing the services of Kaori Simpson and has provided advice and assistance to her.

The Committee are once more indebted to the Minister and Congregation of Liberton Kirk, Edinburgh for the kind use of their buildings for the Assembly.

4. 400th Anniversary of the Publication of the Authorised Version of the Bible

As is well known, this year marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of the Authorised Version of the Bible. Although this version of Holy Scripture did not receive formal sanction in Scotland, it is significant that its production resulted from a proposal at the meeting of the General Assembly in Burmtisland on 16th May 1601. During the final day of that General Assembly the Minutes record the following:

It being meanit be fundrie of the brethren, that there was fundrie errors that merited to be correctit in the vulgar tranlatioun of the Byble, and of the Pfalmes in meeter; as also that ther are fundrie prayers in the Pfalme Booke quhilk wald be altered, in respect they are not convenient for the tyme: In the quhilk heids the Affemblic hes concludit as followis:

Firft, Anent the tranlatioun of the Byble: That every ane of the brethren quho hes beft knowledge in the languages, imploy thair travells in fundrie parts of the vulgar tranlatioun in the Byble, that neids to be mendit, and to conferre the fame together at the Affemblic.

Anent the tranlatioun of the Pfalmes in meeter; It is ordainit, that the fame be revifit be Mr Robert Pont, Minifter at Sanct Cuthberts Kirk, and his travells to be revifit at the nixt Affemblic.

It is not thocht good that the prayers alreadie contenit in the Pfalme Booke be altered or delatit; bot if any brother wald have any vther prayers eiked, quhilk are meit for the tyme, ordaines the fame firft to be tryed and allowed be the Affemblic.

Despite some initial reluctance to have the Geneva Bible superseded, and irritation caused by the occasional retention of old “ecclesiastical” words which could be superficially construed by some as favouring certain “Episcopalian practices”, it is an accepted fact that the Authorised Version of the Bible was for many years until recently the English version used generally throughout the Scottish Church. Its faithfulness, both as to the text of the original languages used and as regards principles of translation and readability, render it still of great value and use today. In recognition of this, the Committee have agreed to invite the representative of the Trinitarian Bible Society to address the General Assembly for twenty minutes this year, the additional time allotted to him being given over to matters relating to the Authorised Version.

5. Assembly Clerks’ Department

Once more the Committee are most grateful to the Assembly Office Manager, Mrs Janet MacKenzie, for the assistance she gives to the Assembly Clerks in the production of Quarterly Memos, Committee Papers and Assembly Reports etc, as well as her most efficient assistance during the meetings of the General Assembly. The Committee are also grateful to the Assembly Clerks for their help and assistance to individuals, Courts and Committees of the Church over the past year.

The Assistant Clerk of Assembly has been nominated as Moderator-Designate of this Assembly. In these circumstances the Committee thought it appropriate to seek out the services of an appropriate individual who would be able to assist at the Clerks' table this year and this is referred to in the proposed deliverance.

6. Meetings of Committees and the Commission

The Committee are grateful to the Deacons' Court of Inverness, Free Greyfriars,' for the use of their building at Westhill for meetings of Committees and the Commission. They are also grateful to those who have provided hospitality on such occasions. Although meetings of the Commission of Assembly have been more frequent, as well as more prolonged, than usual, it is hoped that the legal difficulties facing the Church may soon be resolved, leading to a reduction in both the length of meetings and their frequency. There was general satisfaction that there was no need for the Commission of Assembly to meet in March.

7. Synods

Following Presbytery re-organisation in 2008, the number of Synods in Scotland was reduced from three to two. In addition to Assembly Commissioners from these Synods, there are a small number of Commissioners who attend from the Synod of North America or by Certificate from the Home & Foreign Missions Committee. One Presbytery has highlighted to the Committee that in certain circumstances in the hearing of Complaints or Appeals from decisions of a Synod, especially those involving the potential translation of a Minister from one Presbytery to another in a different Synod, the current structure may produce situations where it is difficult for the Superior Judicatory to be seen to be more representative of the wider Church. The Committee have noted this difficulty and consulted with Presbyteries thereanent. Whilst there is probably a general feeling, not universally shared, that Synods have outlived their usefulness and that their demise in one form or another would not significantly affect the running of the Church, the fact remains that at present, due to various considerations, it would be unwise to even consider the suspension of Synod meetings or even the abolition of Synods themselves. The problem therefore of Synods and Appeals etc remains. Whilst it is possible that some Appeals might be more expeditiously handled by the Synod and might not indeed go beyond the Synod, this would not be true of all Appeals. The Committee believe that one interim remedy to the situation might be for Synods to be advised to consider the propriety of referring *simpliciter* to the General Assembly or the Commission of Assembly an Appeal made to them from the inferior Courts. Such advice would not take away any powers or rights from Synods, but would provide a way out of any perceived difficulties, should a Synod be reluctant to consider the substance of an Appeal due to the current weakened state of the Church. It would remove however one whole level of Appeal from the process.

(B) NOMINATIONS

The Committee, having duly considered the returns from Presbyteries in regard to the filling of impending vacancies in Committees, agreed to recommend the lists of Committees and Clerks to the General Assembly as in the Proposed Deliverance. A note of other Special Committees for which Nominations have not been sought is added for convenience.

The Committee received intimation that Rev. David Lachman wished to resign as Clerk to the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee upon his taking up mission work in Zambia. The Committee wish to place on record their gratitude to Mr Lachman for his work as Clerk to the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee and pray that he will know the Lord's blessing in his new field of labour. They hope to be in a position to nominate a suitable replacement by the General Assembly.

The Committee are also actively looking for a new Clerk to the Legal Advice & Property Committee, but as yet are not in a position to recommend an appointment.

JAMES CLARK, *Convener*
DONALD MACKAY, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**(A)**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report (A) Assembly Arrangements of the Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener and the Assembly Clerks' Department;
2. The General Assembly thank Mrs Janet MacKenzie for the work she undertakes for the Church throughout the year as Assembly Office Manager and for her assistance in preparing and printing documents for the Assembly;
3. The General Assembly appoint Rev. Murdo A.N. MacLeod as Assistant Clerk *pro tem*;
4. The General Assembly thank the Minister and Congregation of Liberton Kirk, Edinburgh for the kind use of their buildings for the Assembly;
5. The General Assembly thank Mr James MacInnes, Assembly Officer, and his assistants, for again making their services available to the Assembly;
6. The General Assembly welcome the practical arrangements made both for the Assembly itself and the Moderator's reception;
7. The General Assembly welcome the arrangements made for the marking of the 400th anniversary of the publication of the Authorised Version of the Bible during the meeting of the General Assembly;
8. The General Assembly note the advice given to Presbyteries regarding Assembly Commissioners' Expenses and instruct Presbyteries to communicate the same to those appointed by them as Assembly Commissioners.
9. The General Assembly thank all those who contribute to the efficient functioning of the various Committees of Assembly, especially the respective Committee Conveners and Clerks;
10. The General Assembly thank the Deacons' Court of Inverness, Free Greyfriars for the use of their Westhill building for the meetings of Standing Committees of Assembly and the Commission of Assembly;
11. The General Assembly note the possible difficulties arising in the hearing of certain Appeals or Complaints from Synods to the General Assembly due to the current Synod arrangement and therefore in the present circumstances they advise Synods that before taking up the substance of any Appeals or Complaints made to them from the decisions of inferior Courts, they should consider the appropriateness or otherwise of referring such Appeals or Complaints *simpliciter* to the General Assembly.

(B)

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report (B) Nominations of the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener;
2. The General Assembly appoint Standing and other Committees and Clerks to these Committees in accordance with the following lists:

GROUP 1
FINANCE & SUSTENTATION
LEGAL ADVICE & PROPERTY

Ministers

Mr John W. Keddie, *Vice-convener*, Finance & Sustentation Committee [4]
Mr David S. Fraser, *Convener*, Legal Advice & Property Committee (Supernumerary Legal etc) [3]
Mr Robert Josey, *Vice-convener*, Legal Advice & Property Committee [3]
Mr Andrew Allan [1]

Elders

Mr John Urquhart [4]
Mr John MacKenzie (Assynt), *Convener*, Finance & Sustentation Committee [4]
Mr Iain A.C. MacPherson [2]
Dr Andrew Naylor [1]

The General Treasurer is *ex officio* an Adviser to the Finance & Sustentation Committee
The Principal Clerk is *ex officio* an Adviser to the Legal Advice & Property Committee
Mr John MacLeod (Duthil-Dores, Rtd) is an Adviser to the Legal Advice & Property Committee

GROUP 2
PUBLIC QUESTIONS, RELIGION & MORALS
PUBLICATIONS
TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY & ADMISSIONS

Ministers

Mr William B. Scott, *Convener*, Publications Committee and *Vice-convener*, Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee [4]
Mr Timothy McGlynn, *Convener*, Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee [2]
Mr Allan I.M. Maciver, *Vice-convener*, Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee [2]
Mr David Blunt, *Convener*, Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee [1]

Elders

Mr Lindsay MacCallum, *Vice-convener*, Publications Committee [4]
Mr Murdo MacDonald (Aultbea) [3]
Mr John Maciver (Cross) [2]
Mr Alexander Campbell (Knightswood) [1]

The Editor of the *Free Church Witness* is *ex officio* an Adviser to the Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee
The Magazine Editorial Team are *ex officio* Advisers to the Publications Committee

GROUP 3
WELFARE OF YOUTH & EDUCATION
HOME & FOREIGN MISSIONS
ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS & NOMINATIONS
ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

Ministers

Mr Henry J.T. Woods, *Convener*, Ecumenical Relations Committee [4]
Mr Murdo A.N. MacLeod, *Vice-convener*, Home & Foreign Missions Committee [4]
Mr Gavin Beers, *Convener*, Home & Foreign Missions Committee and *Vice-convener*, Ecumenical Relations Committee [1]
Mr Kenneth Macdonald, *Convener*, Welfare of Youth & Education Committee [1]

Elders

Mr Colin Crichton, *Vice-convener*, Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee [2]
Mr Donald MacKay, *Vice-convener*, Welfare of Youth & Education Committee [2]
Mr Donald John Morrison, *Convener*, Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee [2]
Mr John MacDonald (Portree) [1]

The Editor of *The Explorer* is *ex officio* an Adviser to the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee
The Assistant Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator of the immediately preceding Assembly and the Moderator of the last-but-one Assembly are *ex officio* Advisers to the Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee

STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Ministers

Mr William B. Scott [4]
Mr Henry J.T. Woods [4]
Mr David Fraser, *Convener* [3]
Mr Timothy McGlynn [2]
Mr David M. Blunt [1]
Mr Kenneth Macdonald [1]
Mr Gavin Beers [1]

Elders

Mr John MacKenzie (Assynt), *Vice-convener* [4]
Mr Donald John Morrison [2]

The Principal Clerk of Assembly, the Assistant Clerk of Assembly and the General Treasurer are *ex officio* Advisers to the Strategy Committee

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

Ministers

Mr Robert Josey [4]
Mr John Keddie [1]
Mr Greg MacDonald, *Vice-convener* [1]
Mr William B. Scott (Supernumerary), *Convener* [1]

Elders

Mr Glenn Fraser [2]
Mr Donald MacKay (Partick) [1]

Mr Cameron MacLeay, *Clerk*, Finance & Sustentation Committee
 TBA, *Clerk*, Legal Advice & Property Committee
 Rev. John MacLeod (Rtd.) *Clerk*, Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee
 Rev. David Blunt, *Clerk*, Publications Committee
 Rev. James I. Gracie, *Clerk*, Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee
 TBA, *Clerk*, Welfare of Youth & Education Committee
 Mr Donald John Morrison, *Clerk*, Home & Foreign Missions Committee
 TBA, *Clerk*, Psalmody Committee
 Assistant Clerk, *Clerk*, Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee
 Assistant Clerk, *Clerk*, Strategy Committee
 Principal Clerk, *Clerk*, Ecumenical Relations Committee

Other Committees have been appointed by the General Assembly as follows:

COMMITTEE ON NEGOTIATIONS

<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Elders</i>
Mr John MacLeod (Duthil-Dores, Retired)	Mr Maurice Grant
Mr Hugh M. Ferrier	
Mr John A. Gillies, <i>Convener</i>	
Principal Clerk	

The Moderator is *ex officio* a member of the Committee on Negotiations
 The Members of the Ecumenical Relations Committee are *ex officio* members of the Committee on Negotiations

AD HOC SPECIAL COMMITTEE ANENT REVIEW OF THE ACTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Elders</i>
Mr Henry J.T. Woods	Mr Maurice Grant
Mr James I. Gracie	
Principal Clerk	
Assistant Clerk	

PANEL OF CONSULTANTS ANENT ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL IMPROPRIETY INVOLVING ADULTS

Dr Murdoch Murchison
 Mr Alexander Morrison
 Mr Andrew Murray

II. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

We are living in days when Christianity is under siege in this country. There are concerted and sustained attacks on our Christian faith and values. If there was ever a day when the Church needed to be strong and united it is now. The sad fact is that much of the Reformed cause in Scotland is weak and fragmented. The seeds of compromise which were sown in the past are reaping a harvest of ineffectiveness and confusion. There are internal conflicts going on in Churches with the threat of further secessions and splits. The whole situation is very fluid.

Thankfully there are people in the different Churches who grieve over the declension and long for concerted action. The times call for a coming together of those who are Reformed in doctrine, worship and government. It is worth reminding ourselves that the purpose of the Westminster Standards was to unite the Churches in the United Kingdom. In this time of 'sifting' in the Churches in Scotland could a rallying call to unqualified commitment to Reformed doctrine, worship and government be a platform for like-minded brethren to come together? Surely it is worthwhile examining the barriers that prevent Reformed Churches in our land from re-unification.

We are glad to maintain contact with Reformed Churches in other countries so that we can be of mutual benefit to one another. It is particularly encouraging to note the number of Churches which have given formal status to our relationships with them in the last two years.

ECUMENICAL BODIES

International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC)

We are once again recognised as full members of ICRC, the matter of our membership having been rectified at the meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2009. The next meeting of the ICRC is scheduled for 28 August to 4 September 2013 in Cardiff, hosted by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales.

European Conference of Reformed Churches (EuCRC)

This Conference meets every two years and the next meeting is scheduled for 2012 in the Ukraine.

Affinity

We are glad to report that Affinity appointed Rev. Peter Milsom as its new part-time Director with effect from 1 September 2010. This arrangement will hopefully give a new impetus to the work. Rev. Timothy McGlynn continues as the representative of our Church on the Affinity Council. We are deeply indebted to Rev. David Fraser for representing the Church at the Affinity Theological Studies Conference in High Leigh from 2nd to 4th February 2011. The subject was "The Truth Will Set You Free: The Doctrine and Function of Scripture in the 21st Century." Mr Fraser reported to the Committee on how he was encouraged by the standard of the papers and the discussions in which he took part.

UNITED KINGDOM

Scotland

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Although greetings have been sent to the Free Presbyterian Synod in recent years we have not had a positive response. The Committee agreed to make a more specific request

to their Synod this year and came to the following resolution: 'The Ecumenical Relations Committee approach the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland to see if they are prepared to confer with representatives of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) with a view to ascertaining whether it might be possible to foster contacts between the two churches'. A confirmation that it will be brought to the attention of Synod has been received.

The **Associated Presbyterian Churches** were represented at our General Assembly of 2010 by Rev. John Ross, Edinburgh, and the Moderator of our 2010 General Assembly, Rev. David Fraser, was invited to attend their Presbytery in Inverness on 11th May 2011.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland The Committee have invited a representative from this Church to attend as a delegate to the 2011 General Assembly.

Ireland

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland maintain their decision not to resume formal relations with us or with the Residual Body but an invitation to send a delegate to our Assembly has again been issued.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland was represented at the 2010 General Assembly by their Moderator of Presbytery.

England and Wales

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales This Church continues to grow and in the past year a congregation was established in Sheffield. They were represented at the 2010 General Assembly by Rev. Bill Schweitzer. A representative from our Church attends their Presbytery every other year. Minutes of their Presbytery meetings are regularly received by us.

The **Church of England (Continuing)** was not represented at the last General Assembly because of a clash of dates. Rev. J J Harding represented us at their Conference.

The Free Church of England (Evangelical Connexion) was represented at the last General Assembly by Rev. Arthur Bentley-Taylor.

EUROPE

The Netherlands

The Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN) have granted full sister-church relationship to the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

The Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) (GKNV) known commonly as the Liberated Churches, have granted full sister-church relationship to the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). Rev. Dedde Veldis represented their Church at the 2010 General Assembly. The Committee appointed Rev. Maurice Roberts as our representative at their Synod in the last week of March and he will report on this to the General Assembly.

The Hersteld (Nederlandse) Hervormde Kerk emerged from a significant division that took place within the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk). They have been invited to be represented at the 2011 General Assembly.

NORTH AMERICA

Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC) Rev. Bert Pohl was appointed as the representative of our Church to the meeting of the HRC Classis. The HRC has agreed to send Dr Arthur Miskin as their

representative to our 2011 General Assembly. We are glad to have co-operation with HRC in the work of Covenant College in Zambia.

The Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA) The FRCNA sent a greeting to the 2010 General Assembly and the Moderator represented the FC(C) at their Synod. They hope to be represented at the 2011 General Assembly.

Canadian Reformed Churches (CRC) The Committee are glad to report the resumption of relationships with this Church on a formal basis. Due to car breakdown Rev. R. Sherman Isbell was unable to attend in person but conveyed the greetings of our Church in writing and received cordial greetings in return.

Reformed Presbyterian Churches of North America (RPCNA) Rev. Sherman Isbell was appointed as the representative of our Church to the Synod of the RPCNA in June 2010.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) The Committee received a communication from the OPC placing relationships between the Churches on a formal basis and expressed their grateful appreciation for this. Rev. Dr David Murray represented our Church at their 2010 General Assembly.

United Reformed Churches of North America (URC) The possibility of establishing contact with this Church was raised by Rev. David Fraser and he visited their Synod as our representative in October 2010. Formal contact has now been established and the URC have been invited to attend the 2011 Assembly.

AUSTRALIA

Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia We continue in brotherly contact with this denomination. Rev. Gerald Kastelein represented their Church at the 2010 General Assembly.

Free Church of Australia A letter of greeting was forwarded by this Church to the 2010 General Assembly.

Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia A letter of greeting was forwarded by this Church to the 2010 General Assembly. Rev. Iain Smith was in Scotland earlier in 2011 and preached in several of our congregations.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Sri Lanka

Rev. Harry Woods visited Sri Lanka under the auspices of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee last July and undertook an extensive speaking schedule. We are glad to have links with the Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Church in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Mr Partheepan Shanmugam from Sri Lanka, who has been a student in our Seminary since 2007, hopes to be licensed and ordained by our Church this summer to take up ministry in Sri Lanka. Rev. William Macleod hopes to visit Sri Lanka in December 2011 for Partheepan's wedding and is expected to give some lectures while there.

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Trinitarian Bible Society

The year 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the publishing of the Authorised Version of the Scriptures. Recognition of the influence that this translation has had on our nation will be made at the General Assembly by the representative of the Trinitarian Bible Society. We are thankful for the service rendered to our Church by the TBS in the supply of the Authorised Version and of the Scottish Metrical Psalms.

JOHN J. MURRAY, *Convener*
GAVIN BEERS, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive the Report of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations and thank the Committee, especially the Convener;
2. The General Assembly welcome the decision of the ICRC to regularise the status of the denomination as members of the ICRC;
3. The General Assembly thank Rev. Timothy McGlynn for representing the Church on the Council of Affinity and Rev. David Fraser for attending the Theological Studies Conference in February 2011;
4. The General Assembly welcome the approach made by the Committee to the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland;
5. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Associated Presbyterian Churches;
6. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland;
7. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales;
8. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Church of England (Continuing);
9. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Free Church of England (Evangelical Connexion);
10. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN) ;
11. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) (GKNV);
12. The General Assembly note with approval their contacts with the Hersteld (Nederlandse) Hervormde Kerk (HHK) and look forward to the response;
13. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC);
14. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA);
15. The General Assembly note with gratitude the regularisation of their relationship with the Canadian Reformed Churches (CRC);
16. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA);
17. The General Assembly note with gratitude the decision of the Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) to give formal status to the relationship with our Church;
18. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Fraser for his visit to the Synod of the United Reformed

Churches of North America;

19. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia;
20. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Free Church of Australia;
21. The General Assembly note with gratitude their relationship with the Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia;
22. The General Assembly welcome links with the Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Church in Sri Lanka and commend Mr Partheepan Shanmugam to the prayers of the Church;
23. The General Assembly note with thanksgiving the 400th anniversary of the publication of the Authorised Version of the Bible and look forward to the visit of the representative from the Trinitarian Bible Society;
24. The General Assembly commend the work of the Committee to the prayerful interest of the Church.

III.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

1. Introduction

“O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.” So we read in Psalm 136. When we look back over history and reflect upon the way in which God’s Word has been remarkably preserved and handed down to us we have great cause to give praise unto God for his lovingkindness, which has endured and which will endure forever. Never has it been easier to obtain and possess this Word than it is today and we rejoice in this great kindness to us, especially as this year is the 400th anniversary of the publishing of the Authorised Version of the Bible. We are thankful for the continued work of the Trinitarian Bible Society which endeavours to maintain a high-profile witness to the inestimable value of the Authorised Version.

We should always remind ourselves that the work of the Publications Committee is closely related to, and dependent on, the Bible and give thanks accordingly. It has been, and is, the foundation of our Reformed testimony, having continued through centuries which were often turbulent and bloody with warfare engendered by the principalities and powers of darkness. In spite of all this, God’s Word has survived – and it will. His lovingkindness endureth forever.

The Committee continue to consider what are the most important and relevant topics to be brought before the church. Subjects like Presbyterianism and the eldership are subjects which need to be dealt with urgently. Why? Because we are under severe attack from every side and the need for all within our ranks to be made aware of the dangers has never been greater. We are in a state of decline which is difficult to comprehend but is nevertheless real. We need to face up to this situation which is preventing our spiritual growth, damaging the cause and hindering the furtherance of the gospel. We believe that it is part of the remit of our Committee to highlight these matters and to impress our predicament upon every member and adherent, encouraging an active and focused faith. The state of the churches in Asia is brought to our attention in the first three chapters of Revelation and prompts the question: *Where are these churches now?*

We are grateful to all who have contributed to the portfolio of publications which we now possess and to those who work diligently to produce a written and audio testimony throughout the year. Their work is deeply appreciated.

2. Magazines

2.1. Editors We express our thanks once again to Rev. William Macleod and Rev. Harry Woods, editors of the *Witness* and *Explorer* magazines respectively. We are appreciative of their diligent work and the freshness and variety of the material which appears each month.

2.2. Production The magazines continue to be printed by MMS-Almac of Keith who do a most competent job. Thanks are due once again to Mr Alasdair Macleod for the work he does on the design and layout of the *Witness* and to Miss Anne MacAulay for providing and marking the children’s puzzles in the *Explorer*.

2.3. Subscriptions and Distribution Sandra Judge has continued to perform the duties of the Subscriptions Secretary but has now indicated her wish to be relieved of this task and therefore we express our grateful thanks to her for her excellent work over a period approaching five years. This work has involved not only subscriptions but also correspondence and keeping accounts. The Committee is now

seeking a replacement. We also acknowledge the work of Mr Donald Robertson who continues to oversee the mailing and distribution of the magazines and of Mrs Fionna MacLeod who makes the magazines available in audio form for the blind.

2.4. Circulation Circulation figures for the Witness are available for the end of April 2011 (equivalent figures for April 2010 are given in brackets). The print run is currently 1000 copies (1100). At the end of April 2010 the total number of copies being ordered monthly was 838 (892) of which 674 (742) were for congregations and 164 (150) for individual subscribers. Of the individual subscribers 19 (18) were from overseas and 28 (20) were gift subscriptions of which 7 (5) were for overseas. In addition 16 (16) copies were ordered by bookshops, 17 (18) complimentary copies were sent within the UK and 7 (6) copies overseas, making a total circulation of 878 (932) copies.

Subscription rates for the Witness for 2011 were unchanged compared to 2010.

For several years the June issue of the *Witness* has been designed for use in the purpose of evangelism. Last year 12000 extra copies were printed and a similar number is expected to be printed this year.

3. Publications

3.1. Existing Publications

Cumulative sales of existing titles at the end of 2010 (with figures for 2009 in brackets where appropriate) were as follows (in some cases the figures are approximate):

(a) *Where is God now Gone?* by Rev. John J. Murray: 1146 copies (1140) (out of 1250 copies printed in November 2003);

(b) *Sing the Lord's Song* by Rev. John W. Keddie: 173 copies (169) (out of 500 copies made available to the Committee in May 2004);

(c) *Giving to the Lord* by Rev. John W. Keddie: 515 copies (515) (out of 524 copies printed in January 2005 and made available for free distribution in our congregations);

(d) *Echoes from Scotland's Heritage of Grace* by Rev. Hugh M. Ferrier: 399 copies (395) (first printed in May 2007).

(e) *Year Book 2009*: 386 copies sold and 75 copies distributed on a complimentary basis (out of 525 copies printed in March 2009).

(f) *The Reformation 1560* by Rev. John J. Murray: 547 copies sold and 30 distributed on a complimentary basis (out of 1000 copies printed in May 2010).

(g) *The Five Points of Calvinism* by Rev. John W. Keddie: 219 copies sold and 31 distributed on a complimentary basis (out of 750 copies printed in May 2010).

3.2. New Publications

Booklets The Committee is publishing 500 copies of a new edition of the Year Book which it is hoped will be ready soon.

The second booklet in the 'Finding out about...' series which deals with issues of importance to our people was due to be published in May. The title is *The Lord's Supper* and the author is Rev. John Morrison. 500 copies are being printed.

3.3. Future Publications

Booklets Material on the Eldership is already available to the Committee for the 'Finding out about...' series. Material on Baptism, Funerals, Marriage, Presbyterianism and the Sabbath is either in preparation or being sought. The Committee were disappointed at the limited demand for the first booklet in the series and encourage Kirk Sessions to consider ordering these titles in bulk.

The Committee have received a request from the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee to print and

distribute an edition of the Shorter Catechism with a new layout prepared by Rev. Harry Woods. Further consideration of this project will be necessary before publication can take place.

Books In 2009 the Committee approved the printing of 500 copies of a work on the Shorter Catechism by Rev. Murdo A.N. MacLeod, consisting of articles first published in the *Explorer* which have been revised by the author and proofread. With the agreement of Mr MacLeod and with a view to a greater circulation for the work the Committee offered the material to Christian Focus Publications. After consideration the material was declined and the Committee then made contact with Reformation Heritage Books who are now liaising with Mr MacLeod regarding the manuscript.

The Committee were notified of a work by Mr Maurice Grant on the lives of two Covenanter ministers, John Kid and John King. They suggested that Mr Grant contact Reformation Heritage Books first of all and we are pleased to know that the manuscript has now entered the review process.

The General Assembly of 2008 instructed the Committee “to take the necessary action to have a draft manuscript prepared in popular format recounting the events leading up to and following the division of 2000.” The Committee appointed Rev. James Gracie to begin work on producing a book on the Division in consultation with Mr Lindsay MacCallum and anyone else who may be suitable. They were pleased to have to hand at their March meeting a synopsis of the contents of the projected book prepared by Mr Gracie and they now look forward to further progress on this publication as circumstances allow. Recently a manuscript by Rev. John Keddie entitled ‘A Century of Turmoil’ dealing with aspects of Scottish Presbyterian Church history in the twentieth century was offered to the Committee and they have encouraged Mr Keddie to liaise with Mr Gracie and Mr MacCallum about possible co-operation.

The Committee have been reminded of and are conscious of the need to have in print as soon as possible a publication which treats effectively the matters which led to the Division of 2000 and the main constitutional issues involved, namely: the procedure according to the Form of Process whereby a Libel may be framed against a minister and lawfully determined; the right of continued Protest against breaches of constitutional principles in the courts of the Church; and the denial of the Headship of Christ by the majority in the courts of the Church as in a declaration issued in respect of a protesting minority in October 1999.

At present the bulk of the Committee’s stock of publications is located in North Uist but it appears that there may be storage space in Inverness which could be utilised in the future. This would facilitate distribution.

4. Web Site

Last year we reported that Rev. Greg MacDonald had requested to be relieved of his rôle as Editorial Overseer of the Church’s web site. Since then the Committee have requested Revs John J. Murray, Graeme Craig and David Blunt to supply material for the site on a regular basis and have approached Mr William MacLeod (Ness) to lead the work on designing a new Church website with Mr Scott Melhuish (Inverness) to assist him. In the modern age the internet is an important means for the promotion of our testimony. It is anticipated that a prototype of the new site will be available for the Committee’s consideration at their June meeting and that the Committee will be in a position thereafter to bring formal proposals to the Assembly regarding the editorial and technical oversight of the web site.

5. Spring Conference

The Spring Conference was once again held in the Culduthel Christian Centre, Inverness, on 22nd April and we continue to be grateful for the use of this very suitable facility. The theme this year was ‘The Word of God & The People of God’ and the speakers were Rev. Greg MacDonald and Rev. Jack Seaton. Attendance similar to the previous year, at around 80 adults and 19 children. Consideration will be given as

to how attendance at the Conference may be increased and we urge ministers to set an example by attending themselves where possible and encouraging their congregations to do likewise.

The Committee's thanks are due to all the various individuals who helped in any way with the Conference, in particular to Mr Glenn Fraser for his organisation, Mr Lindsay MacCallum as booking secretary, Rev. Harry Woods who chaired the proceedings and Miss Anne MacAulay and Miss Flora MacLeod who organised the children's programme and those who helped them.

6. Audio Ministry

We are grateful to Mr Donald Morgan of Stornoway who continues this work. The Audio Ministry provides a selection of sermons from our ministers in CD format at a price of £1 per CD, including postage and packing. A new list of 62 sermons was circulated with the January issue of the *Witness* and by the end of April 29 orders for 198 CDs had been received, most from Scotland but some from other parts of the United Kingdom. We urge ministers to supply new sermon recordings when requested so that this ministry can continue.

7. The Annals of the Free Church of Scotland 1900-2000

Mr Maurice Grant continues his work on this project and during the year he was able to expand the database from various sources including material from the Registrar General's Office in Edinburgh. The returns from the 1911 Census are now available and have yielded significant further information on the early post-1900 ministers and their families. It is hoped to build this into the database over the next few months. Once again however we have to note that, given the uncertainty regarding a final settlement of the dispute between the two denominations resulting from the division of the Free Church in January 2000, an approach from the residual body of the Free Church about publication of the project is unlikely in the near future.

8. Disruption 2000 Video

Once again we must report that while the Committee has an outline narrative from Rev. John J. Murray of the events connected with the disruption of the Church in 2000 for possible use in a video it is unlikely that a video can be produced in the near future. The Committee are devoting their efforts to the proposed book on the Division, as referred to earlier in this report.

9. Press Officer

The Committee would also like to record their thanks to Rev. John MacLeod (Tarbat) for his work as Press Officer.

GLENN FRASER, *Convener*
DAVID BLUNT, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Publications Committee and thank the Committee and especially the Convener and Vice-convener;
- 2.1 The General Assembly express their grateful thanks to Rev. William Macleod and Rev. Harry Woods for their work as Editors of the *Witness* and *Explorer* respectively;
- 2.2 The General Assembly thank Mr Alasdair Macleod for his work on the design and layout of the *Witness*;
- 2.3 The General Assembly thank Miss Anne MacAulay for providing the puzzle page for the *Explorer*;
- 2.4 The General Assembly thank Sandra Judge for her efficient work as Subscriptions Secretary over recent years. They pray that the Committee will be successful in finding a suitable replacement;

- 2.5 The General Assembly thank Mr Donald Robertson for his work in distributing the Church's magazines;
- 2.6 The General Assembly thank Mrs Fionna Macleod for her work in recording the magazines for the blind;
- 2.7 The General Assembly thank the proof-readers of the magazines for their work;
- 2.8 The General Assembly thank all who from time to time contribute articles both to the *Witness* and the *Explorer*;
- 2.9 The General Assembly note once again the special June issue of the *Witness*, thank those who contributed to it and pray that it would be used for the extension of Christ's Kingdom;
- 3.1 The General Assembly note the intended publication of a new edition of the Year Book;
- 3.2 The General Assembly note the publication of the booklet *The Lord's Supper* by Rev. John Morrison and pray that it may enjoy a wide circulation;
- 3.3 The General Assembly thank those who are involved in preparing material pertaining to issues of importance to our people in the series 'Finding out about...' and encourage the Committee as they oversee the production of these booklets;
- 3.4 The General Assembly note the project to print and distribute an edition of the Shorter Catechism with a new layout prepared by Rev. Harry Woods. They pray that the Committee will know the Lord's guidance in this matter;
- 3.5 The General Assembly note the information regarding the work on the Shorter Catechism by Rev. Murdo A.N. MacLeod and pray that it will be possible for this work to be published soon;
- 3.6 The General Assembly note the progress regarding the preparation of an account of the events leading up to and following the division of 2000 and pray that the Committee's efforts will eventually bear fruit;
- 4.1 The General Assembly note the developments regarding the Church's web site. They pray that those involved in the redesign and running of the site will know the Lord's help;
- 4.2 The General Assembly thank those who have contributed articles to the Church's web site and encourage the brethren to supply suitable material;
5. The General Assembly thank all those involved in the organising and running of the Spring Conference and also Culduthel Christian Centre for the use of their premises. They once again encourage ministers to promote attendance at the conference of members and adherents within their congregations;
6. The General Assembly thank Mr Donald Morgan for his work in producing and distributing CDs of sermons and pray the Lord's blessing on this ministry;
7. The General Assembly thank Mr Maurice Grant for his ongoing work in updating information for the Annals of the Free Church of Scotland and once again express the hope that this project may eventually be able to proceed to publication;

8. The General Assembly note the situation regarding the project to produce a video on the disruption of the Church in 2000;
9. The General Assembly thank Rev. John MacLeod (Tarbat) for his work as the Church's Press Officer.

IV. REPORT

OF THE WELFARE OF YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Introduction

One of the great dilemmas facing the Church is how to keep our young people in our congregations. Not only is this an issue at a local level, when families are less and less inclined to come to worship together, but maybe more so when some of our young folk leave home to study and then find themselves in the company of other teenagers from different Church backgrounds, or none at all.

Teenagers naturally congregate and that should not surprise us, but there seems to be far too often one-way traffic as far as where they worship is concerned. We should always encourage young folk to fellowship together, and worship in Biblically-based churches like our own where there is no Free Church (Continuing) congregation nearby, but there should be a sense of loyalty to our own denomination. We hear of instances where our young worship with their friends in other denominations from time to time, but very seldom of situations where these “friends” attend any of our churches in return.

How do we face this issue? It has to begin at the local level where there needs to be emphasis laid on responsibility to our own denomination. Then when our children move away from home, (while we should not seek to curtail fellowship with other Christians) it should be the natural move for them to support by their attendance a Continuing congregation locally. Again there is a responsibility on the part of their own minister to inform city congregations of the expected arrival in their locality of these young folk, and not just those who profess faith but all who have any connection with the home church.

There are a number of ‘Weekends Away’ and Youth Camps organised by the Church that are positive, and we should be looking for these to bear fruit.

There is also of course the danger of having too much of a youth culture within a Church, where all the outreach emphasis is on the younger elements in our congregations, and that can cause a rift in the Body of Christ. A body is made up of different parts and to bring about an artificial separation by focusing on the youth to the extent that the older members of the Church are sidelined will eventually cause problems. The Apostle, in writing to the Corinthians (1Corinthians12:21f), brings this before us. There is, we believe, therefore a need to re-evaluate how we operate as a body, and the Committee would wish the Church at large to give serious consideration to these matters. It is, of course, recognised that sadly there are some congregations where, for various reasons, there are few young people in attendance.

The Committee would again encourage Deacons’ Courts to give favourable consideration to giving financial support to any who wish to attend Church-organised camps, whether youth only or family. Courts should be aware of any who may benefit from attendance at the camps and positively offer to help financially, as most people will not ask for it themselves.

1. Sabbath Schools

The Committee are once again thankful for those who give of their time to teach in the Sabbath Schools, and for those who set and mark the exam papers. Sadly there has been a marked decrease in the number who sat the exams this year. The Committee are aware that the reason for this may be that some of our Sabbath Schools do not use the material provided by the Church as some of it is not considered suitable.

While this issue is being addressed, and there have been meetings held within all our Presbyteries to discuss these matters, the envisaged progress has not been made. There have been various useful suggestions made as to how to improve the syllabus, including consideration given to use some of the excellent material already available from reliable sources outwith our own denomination, but the difficulty for the Committee is in finding those who would be willing to give the necessary time to make the necessary changes. The Committee will be making this a priority in the year ahead, and would encourage Kirk Sessions to identify, within their own congregations, suitable persons to help with this vital work.

Sabbath School Exams

While the numbers sitting exams have shown a marked decrease, the Committee are thankful for those who have taken the time and made the effort to sit the set exams. The Committee congratulate Isla Macdonald, Stornoway, as the Bible Class prize winner and Joanna Gillies, Stornoway for being the Junior prize winner.

2. Shorter Catechism

The Shorter Catechism, with its revised layout, which was approved by the last General Assembly, is now in the hands of the Publications Committee and will hopefully be available later this year.

3. Shorter Catechism Examination

A number of children from the Aberdeen congregation have successfully completed the silver award for repeating the whole Catechism (Q 1-107). These are: Abigail Shanks, age 12, Benaiah Shanks, age 10, Jedidiah Shanks, age 9. We are also delighted that Rhoda Shanks, although only 5 years of age, has learned the first 22 catechisms.

The Committee would urge Sabbath School teachers and parents to encourage their children to learn the Catechism, and while much of what they learn may be at this time beyond their ability to fully appreciate, past experience has taught that by doing so they will be giving their young ones a solid doctrinal foundation which can prove to be of great benefit in later years.

4. Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize

The Committee is very pleased to give an award to Emma Craig, Lily Craig and Joanna Gillies from Stornoway for successfully completing the second grade part of the Scripture Memory Scheme where they was able to recite all of Psalm 84 and all the books of the Old Testament. The Committee would encourage others to promote this worthwhile scheme within their congregations.

5. All Age Holiday

The All Age Holiday was once again deemed a great success, in no small measure due to the work done by Mr Derick Gillies. The 36 folk who attended were well looked after and not only enjoyed a time of sport and recreation but more importantly much fellowship and good Biblical teaching.

The main speaker was Rev. Gavino Fioretti. His topic for the week was 'The Work of the Spirit'. Rev. David Fraser gave the Missionary Talk and subjects addressed by others included 'Creation,' 'Ruth', 'Gideon' and 'David'. Day trips were organised to Blair Drummond Safari Park, Stirling Castle and to a Go-kart track for the more adventurous!

The Committee are thankful to the Lord for the willing help of various folk especially Mr Murdo Macdonald, Mrs Maryann Gillies and Mrs Jennifer Little, and would encourage ministers to promote this holiday within their congregations. Such time spent together can only benefit our people and encourage some who may not have opportunity for other family holidays. The Committee would wish the Church to be aware that this holiday is open to all and note that some of those who attend are single people.

The Committee would also ask that, as with the Youth Camp, Deacons' Courts would give consideration to

financial help, especially for families. Rev. James Gracie has agreed to be the main speaker for this year's holiday in Larbert from 9th to 16th July DV.

6. Youth Camp

In 2010 the second FC(C) youth camp returned to Badaguish near Aviemore, with a full quota of girls and an improved, though still low, number of boys. Led by Mr James MacInnes (Divinity Student) and centred on the theme of the Reformation, the camp was a thoroughly invigorating experience for campers and leaders alike. With some special support from Deacons' Courts the camp was able this year to make use of a minibus throughout the week (Stornoway FCC) and offer a reduction in costs for some families. Coupled with the kind grant from the Committee, the Camp Organiser wishes to express a sincere thanks for the wonderful practical and prayerful support from across the denomination. Our great desire is that these meetings will prove to be an encouragement to the souls of our young people.

Open to all from those entering Primary 7 to leaving Secondary 4, the camp makes a third trip to Badaguish from July 30th to August 6th later this year DV, whilst holding the price to last year's levels. The intention this year is to take advantage of the anniversary of the Authorised Version, so the topic of special study will be "The Bible in our hands: how it got there and how to read it." Miss Flora MacLeod runs an excellent project each year reinforcing the topic of study. Once again this year the girls' camp is fully booked. We have a decent number for the boys' camp, but places are still available.

7. Christian Education

The Committee, while recognising the great difficulties that exist in setting up viable Christian Schools, nevertheless wish to state their support for Christian Education. In a day when it seems that the godless philosophy that characterises our successive governments and society at large is finding its way into state education, it shows there is a growing need for Christians to look at alternative means of training up our children. The wider Church must take more responsibility in this matter. If we truly value the souls of our children we can no longer send them off to school and hope that what they will be taught will be at least based on the values of Holy Scripture.

The Committee greatly appreciated the recent series of articles by Rev. Gavin Beers in the *Witness* on Christian Education, and our prayer is that parents would at least now be more aware of the possibilities of an alternative to state schooling. The Committee recognize that this could mean families having to make financial sacrifices, but the question remains, are we content to leave our children to be indoctrinated in an education which, more than ever before, has as its foundation an anti-christian ethos?

The Committee accept that while at this time it may not be practicable to have Christian Schools set up everywhere, serious consideration should be given to the promotion of Home Schooling and, where more than one family in an area are already involved in this, thought be given to setting up "Home School Co-operatives" where "home schoolers" would, on an agreed number of days in the week, come together and pool their resources, and that Deacons' Courts should offer the use of any suitable Church premises for this purpose.

The Committee suggest that Kirk Sessions and Deacons' Courts be more active in promoting Christian Education. The Committee wish to remind parents involved in any way in Christian Education that there are grants available from the Committee to help meet the costs of educating the children.

The Lewis Independent Christian School is still continuing to give the children who attend a balanced education and their philosophy is one that sets out clearly their aims for the children. The school aims to ensure that children are taught through a curriculum that is directed by the Word of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. They are taught to discover and evaluate the world around them from a Christian perspective and, by means of a broad curriculum, they will be encouraged to use and develop their gifts in a God-

centred way. The objective is to provide a high quality Christian education which will bring the best out of all the children and enable them to have confidence in the Christian faith and to apply its principles to their lives. This philosophy is reflected in the curriculum, discipline and ethos of the school. All involved in such Christian education, whether in schools or “home schooling” recognise that the young ones in their care need the Spirit of God to work savingly in their lives to bring about their salvation, but nevertheless feel it is folly not to do all they can to guide their children into the ways of the Lord.

8. Olivet Distance Learning Courses

Rev. David Fraser is still running the Olivet Distance Learning Courses and the Committee would wish to encourage more promotion of the Course within congregations, and would be pleased to forward to any the material presently used. The Committee would encourage any who are interested to produce a suitable course on Theology or Church History to liaise with Mr Fraser. Three students have started courses and continue in what limited time they have. One of these is on a new course introducing The Epistle to the Ephesians; the others are on the Gospel of Matthew course of 20 lessons. When the course on Ephesians & Philippians is completed, a course on Deuteronomy is planned.

9. Clerk

The Committee wish to record their thanks for the past year to the Clerk, Rev David Lachman, and wish him God’s blessing in his new sphere of labour in Zambia.

KENNETH M. MACDONALD, *Convener*
DONALD MACKAY, *Vice Convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener;
2. The General Assembly thank the Rev David Lachman for his work as Clerk;
3. The General Assembly encourage more children to take part in the Scripture Memory Scheme;
4. The General Assembly encourage children, parents and teachers involved in Christian Education, and encourage Deacons’ Courts to make suitable Church property available for any ‘Home School Co-operatives’ needing assistance;
5. The General Assembly encourage the children, parents and teachers involved in the state schools and commend them to the prayers of the Church in what can be trying situations;
6. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Fraser for his work with the Olivet Distance Learning Courses and encourage more people to use them;
7. The General Assembly note the success of the Youth Camp and note the generosity of the Stornoway Deacons’ Court in providing a mini-bus for the transportation of children to the Camp and its use throughout Camp week;
8. The General Assembly thank Mr and Mrs Derick Gillies for the organising of the All Age Holiday, along with Mr Murdo Macdonald and Mrs Jennifer Little, and encourage Deacons’ Courts to give financial help to any families within their own congregations who may wish to attend;
9. The General Assembly note that the Shorter Catechism with its revised layout is now nearing the stage of publication;

10. The General Assembly note the results of the Sabbath School and Bible Class examinations, thank those who were engaged in setting and marking the papers, and congratulate those who sat the exams and the prize winners.

APPENDIX

Sabbath School and Bible Class Examinations 2010

The following is a list of all who took part in the examinations and prizewinners.

Bible Class Grade

8 took part in the examination (the same as in 2010).

Prizewinner: Isla G. Macdonald, *Stornoway*

Aberdeen: Sophie McGlynn, Abigail Shanks

Stornoway: Rachel Craig, Jonathan Gillies, Isla G. Macdonald, John Norman MacLeod

Tarbat: Christina R. MacLeod, Murdo MacLeod

Sabbath School Grade

8 took part in the examination (a decrease of 2 from 2010).

Prizewinner: Joanna Gillies, *Stornoway*

Aberdeen: Verity McGlynn, Benaiah Shanks, Jedidiah Shanks

Leverburgh: Sarah Campbell

Stornoway: Emma Craig, Joanna Gillies, Isla G. Macdonald

Tarbat: Ethan MacLeod

Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme

The following is a list of all who have successfully completed the Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme since the previous General Assembly.

Gold Stage (Questions 1-107)

Aberdeen: Abigail Shanks, Benaiah Shanks, Jedidiah Shanks

Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize

Stornoway: Emma Craig, Lily Craig, Joanna Gillies

V. REPORT

OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE & SUSTENTATION

(A) FINANCE

Introduction

The Committee have endeavoured, in the year under review, to discharge their responsibilities to the best of their powers. We are thankful to the Lord that during another year, one marked in a particular way by financial turbulence and uncertainty on the wider national scene, He has provided for our varied needs.

Remittances and Income

Total income for 2010 amounted to £652,113, a reduction of £21,561, or 3%, on the previous year. However once again our people are to be warmly commended for their generosity reflected in the fact that remittances from Congregations in 2010 were up by £13,051 (2%) on the previous year. This gave a remittances total for 2010 of £585,203 of which £91,090 was recovered through Gift Aid. Gift Aid in the year under review represented 15% of all congregational remittances. Congregational remittances represent 90% of all income.

Towards the end of 2010 a new account called the Restricted Sustentation Fund was opened. This was designed to allow contributors who had concerns and objections to the use of funds for legal purposes to remit their givings into this fund which is used solely for the payment of stipends.

Also towards the end of the year the General Treasurer informed us that a facility known as Charity Choice was now available for receiving donations and payments through the denominational website.

Expenditure

Total expenditure amounted to £744,574 which was down by £12,175 (2%) on the previous year. Once again there was a deficit of £92,461 in the financial accounts for the year 2010. This was due to exceptional legal costs and provisions.

As is always the case most of the remittances were disbursed as payroll costs. Payroll costs amounted to £481,666 which represents 82% of Congregational remittances and 74% of total income. A reduction in ministerial personnel saw total payroll costs fall by £9,466, a reduction of 2% on the previous year. In accordance with a finding of the October 2010 Commission of Assembly financial support for the Congregation of Adelaide ceased as from November 2010.

Funds

At the end of the year the total assets and funds of the denomination amounted to £470,545. This figure includes the designated Building Fund which stood at £137,799 and restricted funds totalling £45,458.

The Legal Case

At a meeting of the Commission of Assembly on Monday 13th September 2010 it was resolved to establish a fund to which money or pledges for specific legal purposes could be given. Donations of £10,400 were received together with a further £19,000 in pledges that can be called upon in the event of losing the Appeal.

The Need For A Consistent Flow of Remittances

At several points during the year the Committee sought to bring before Deacons' Courts the need for regular prompt monthly remittances and they would impress this point once again. They have also sought to bring before the Church the need for Deacons' Courts to do all in their power to remit a minimum of 75% of Ordinary Income. If this could be achieved it would, by itself, be sufficient to avoid any deficit.

Future Budgetary Planning

It falls to the Committee to endeavour to look ahead and calculate future commitments. At present and bearing in mind a reduction in payroll costs, the projection for 2011 is a budget deficit of circa £34,000 excluding any further legal costs. This reflects the reduction in Gift Aid from 28 pence in the pound to 25 pence in the pound which comes into effect this year and is likely to reduce income to Central Funds by over £10,000 per annum.

'Key' Buildings Projects Fund

Following on from a Finding of the 2006 Assembly, the Committee set up a Buildings Projects Fund with a view to assisting 'key' buildings projects throughout the Church. The Buildings Projects Fund stood at £137,799 at 31st December 2010. In addition to this there is an amount of £24,957 which was given to the Church as part of the legacy received in 2009, which was stipulated for the purchase of church buildings. This means that the total available for building projects is £162,756.

Legal Costs

All of our legal costs in relation to the Court of Session Appeal in the Strath legal case have been accounted for and provided for in the financial accounts for 2010. A provision was also previously made in the 2009 accounts of £50,000 for the legal costs of the other side for the initial hearing. The only other potential costs that are unaccounted for are in relation to any judgement that is made against us in relation to the legal costs of the other side for the Appeal in the event of their costs being awarded against us.

Loans

Over the past few years loans have been given to congregations for building and renovation works. No congregational loans were given in 2010 but at the beginning of 2011 a loan of £25,000 was given to the Edinburgh Congregation. Almost all of this figure (£24,957) came from the restricted Legacy Building Fund. This will not appear in the figures for 2010. Loans have also been given to divinity students and for ministers' car loans. The following is a summary for 2010:

<i>Loans</i>	Balance at 31st December 2009	New Loans during the Year	Repaid during the Year	Balance at 31st December 2010
Aberdeen	25,362	0	(3,666)	21,696
Shettleston	564	0	(564)	0
Scalpay	12,800	0	(12,800)	0
Cross	10,000	0	(4,800)	5,200
Church Loans	48,726	0	(21,830)	26,896
Car Loans	18,155	14,245	(13,201)	19,199
Students	25,030	16,800	(13,535*)	28,295
Total Loans	91,911	31,045	(48,566)	74,390

*Student loan written-off by the Church on Ordination & Induction

Internal Church Loans

During the course of the year the Committee undertook some investigation into the possibility of inter-congregational loans. Presbyteries were asked for their views and further thought will be given to this matter in the year ahead.

Zambia Account

During 2010 a new bank account was opened for this restricted fund. Donations for the work at Covenant College can now be channelled through this avenue. At the time of writing the fund stands at £5,640.

Black Watch Appeal

It will be recalled that some time ago there was a very generous response to a special appeal, the Black Watch Appeal. It was not possible to use all the donations at the time and £5,335 still remains in this fund. The Committee have been in contact with Mr Derick Gillies and he expects to be in a position to disburse these funds shortly as the regiment will be undertaking another tour of duty in Afghanistan. Mr. Gillies also indicated that there is a possibility of some of the remaining funds being used in order to assist some of the regiment's families in attending the 'All Age Holiday'.

General Treasurer

The General Assembly of 2010 appointed Mr Angus Macmillan as General Treasurer. Mr Macmillan has fitted well into his new role. As well as attending diligently to those areas for which he has direct responsibility, he has also, at the request of the Committee, investigated a number of different areas of interest and concern not least amongst these is the matter of pensions, which is referred to elsewhere in the Report. We commend Mr Macmillan to the prayers of the Church.

Financial Administrator

The year under review also marked the first full year for Mrs Muriel Smith who is proving to be an excellent Administrator. The Committee are thankful to have someone of her competence and like Mr Macmillan she should be remembered in prayer.

Auditors

The Committee express their gratitude to Messrs Saffrey Champness, Chartered Accountants, Inverness for having acted with efficiency and goodwill as the Church's auditors during the past number of years. The Committee are recommending a change of auditor on the grounds that they have sourced another company who would be able to undertake the audit at a considerably reduced cost. This company, CIB Audit, is based in Stornoway and their details appear in the proposed deliverance.

Contracts of Employment

The Committee are glad to report that during 2010 the work on Contracts of Employment for the Resident Lay Agent, the General Treasurer and the Financial Administrator reached a conclusion. Contracts were signed and became fully operational. During this process it became apparent that it would be very useful to have an explanatory Handbook alongside the contracts. This was also finalised and given to the respective parties.

Committee Budgets

An important part of the Committee's work is the approval, each year, of budgets for Standing and Special Committees. This can only be achieved efficiently if budgets are submitted timeously. It is an ongoing source of vexation that some Committees routinely fail to submit budgets by the appointed date necessitating reminders by the Clerk. The Committee wish, once again, to remind Standing and Special Committees of the need to ensure that budgets are submitted by the appointed date. The Committee and the General Treasurer are also greatly assisted in the preparation of their annual report by an early return of the annual statistical schedules and the congregational accounts and they wish to bring this, once more, to the

attention of Presbyteries.

Congregations Accounts Annual Analysis

The 2010 General Assembly required the Finance & Sustentation Committee to review and document the format of the annual analysis. This has now been completed and is appended to this report.

(B) SUSTENTATION

Stipend

In the light of our current financial situation the Committee are recommending that there be no increase in ministers' stipends during the current year and that the Equal Dividend remain at £18,000.

Ministers' Pensions

The Finance & Sustentation Committee were requested to review the anomalies relating to ministers' pensions particularly in relation to stipend abatement of those ministers who are in receipt of a Free Church pension and remain in service. This review has now been completed and the Committee are recommending that the General Assembly repeal Act VII (Class II) 1994 paragraph 1 and direct that all salary abatement for ministers in receipt of a pension from the Free Church Pension Fund shall cease as from 1st June 2011.

The Committee also recommend that all ministers who have had pension contributions made to the Free Church Pension Scheme and are not yet in receipt of a pension from this scheme should make contact with the Pension Scheme Administrator at the Free Church Offices in Edinburgh to ascertain from them what options are open to them in regard to their pension from the Free Church Pension Scheme.

Death in Service Scheme

During the year the Committee agreed to transfer from their previous provider, AIG, to another company known as Lutine, as the latter company were able to provide a more attractive package. The Committee also resolved to extend Death in Service cover to those in active service over 70 years of age.

Changes in Ministerial Personnel during 2010

Retirals

Rev. John Morrison	from Kilmuir & Stenscholl	31 st March 2010
Rev. Maurice J. Roberts	from Inverness Free Greyfriars	31 st December 2010

Resignations

Rev. Gavino Fioretti	from Duthil-Dores	23 rd August 2010
Rev. Calum I. Macleod	from Kiltearn	8 th November 2010

Translations

Rev. Murdo A.N. Macleod	from Partick, Glasgow, to Snizort	20 th August 2010
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Ordinations & Inductions

Rev. Raymond A. Kemp	to Kilmuir & Stenscholl	12 th November 2010
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Register of Ministers without Charge – eligible for call – as at 1st March 2011

Rev. R. Sherman Isbell, 3155 Lindenwood Lane, Fairfax, Virginia, USA VA22031

Entered in Register consequent upon an Extract Minute of the Free Presbytery of the US.A dated 8th January 2011. (Expiry date 7th January 2014).

Roll of Resigned Ministers

Rev John J. Harding, 5 Middle Street, Deal, Kent, CT14 7AG demitted office on 6th June 2002.

Rev David P. Murray, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. demitted office on 29th August 2007.

Probationers

Nil

Congregations under Special Arrangements:

The following Congregations were under Special Arrangements during 2010: Aberdeen, Assynt & Eddrachillis, Ayr, Harris, Knock & Point, North Uist & Grimsay, Poolewe & Aultbea and Shettleston. In January 2011 the newly linked Congregation of Lochalsh & Strath joined them under Special Arrangements. Irrespective of whether they are rural or urban all of these congregations face particular difficulties and we should take every opportunity to encourage them in their work. The Committee note, however, that in spite of difficulties all of them are making stalwart efforts, in dependence on the Lord's help, to establish a good witness in the midst of their communities. Last year the General Assembly approved a further period of five years for the Shettleston Congregation. The Committee are glad to be able to report that Shettleston have done very well in the year under review and were able to increase their remittances to Central Funds by 30%.

Ayr's period of five years under Special Arrangements comes to an end this year. Taking into account local circumstances and the unanimous support of the Southern Presbytery the Committee are recommending a further period of five years for the Ayr Congregation.

All of the congregations on Special Arrangements should be remembered regularly in the prayers of the Lord's people and also in our midweek prayer meetings.

Guidelines Relating to Special Arrangements

During the year the Committee undertook some investigation of guidelines relating to congregations being placed under Special Arrangements. They were concerned to discover what particular circumstances should be borne in mind when dealing with an application from a congregation to be afforded this status. It became apparent that the most recent legislation on this matter was Act XVIII Class II 1998, Act anent Sustentation Fund. It stipulates that the Committee should have regard to two factors: (a) the geographical position of the Congregation; and (b) the potential for growth perceived to exist. Steps are being taken to ensure that this Act is brought to the attention of Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries when considering making application for Special Arrangements through the revised Sustentation Fund Schedule.

Sustentation Fund Schedule

During the year the Committee embarked on a revision of the Sustentation Fund Schedule. The Committee wrote to Presbyteries asking them to bring forward any suggestions they might have which would be helpful in revising the schedule. Several helpful responses were received and the Committee is continuing with this work.

(C) SUPPLY**Pulpit supply**

Once again the Committee record their deep appreciation of the work done by retired Ministers, Divinity Students and Elders, who have given of their services throughout the Church in the past year, preaching on the Lord's Day and at midweek services. They are also thankful for those who are engaged in Resident Supply arrangements, and for the tireless endeavours of the Home Mission Worker.

Supply Expenses and Preaching Fees

The triennial review of supply expenses and preaching fees falls this year. The Committee gave serious consideration to this matter and, in the light of the rapidly escalating costs of fuel, are recommending that an opportunity be given in 2012 for a further review and any additional adjustments which may be appropriate. The revised figures are found in the proposed Deliverance.

Resident Lay Agent

Mr Donald A. Robertson has continued his sterling work during the past year. His working arrangements continue unchanged from last year. Two weeks out of every month are spent in the Lochalsh & Strath Congregation. The recent consolidation and linkage has led to new service times but whatever arrangements are put in place it will always involve a very considerable mileage. The remaining two weeks continue to be spent in Sutherland in the congregation of Assynt & Eddrachillis and he gives himself tirelessly to the work of the Gospel in these parts. Mr Robertson faces unusual challenges in his work and we commend Mr Robertson to the prayers of the Church.

(D) CONCLUSION

For yet another year the Committee has been well served by their Clerk, Mr Cameron MacLeay. He is a model of diligence and is due the thanks of the Assembly.

As it attends to its tasks the Committee often have to grapple with difficult and complex issues as they seek to fulfil their duties as servants of the Church in the management of its temporal affairs and they greatly value the prayers of all who continue to uphold them in intercessory prayer at the Throne of Grace.

MURDO A N MACLEOD, *Convener*
GREG MACDONALD, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Finance & Sustentation Committee, and thank the Committee for their stewardship of the Church's financial affairs during the past year;
2. The General Assembly acknowledge with thanksgiving the goodness of Almighty God in the provision for the financial needs of the Church in the past year;
3. The General Assembly thank all those in the Church who have given so liberally to support the work of the Church in the past year;
4. The General Assembly thank Mr Angus Macmillan, General Treasurer, for his sterling work during the past year and wish him the Lord's richest blessing and continued assistance as he continues in his important role;
5. The General Assembly thank the Financial Administrator, Mrs Muriel Smith, for her diligence and efficiency. The General Assembly wish her the blessing of the Most High as she attends to her different duties;
6. The General Assembly express their gratitude to all congregational treasurers, for their work in managing the financial affairs of the Church;

7. The General Assembly thank Messrs Saffrey Champness, Chartered Accountants, Kintail House, Beechwood Park, Inverness IV2 3BW, auditors for the audit of the Accounts for the period to 31st December 2010 and for their efficient and friendly service over a number of years;
8. The General Assembly appoint C.I.B. Audit, 63 Kenneth Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2DS, as the Church's auditors for the forthcoming year;
9. The General Assembly note that the designated Building Fund currently stands at £137,799, and the restricted Legacy Building Fund at £24,957;
10. The General Assembly declare an Equal Dividend of £18,000 as from 1st July 2011;
11. The General Assembly note that the Restricted Sustentation Fund is now operational;
12. The General Assembly remind Deacons' Courts that ministerial payroll costs, including pension and death-in service costs, amounted in the past year to £22,080 per minister;
13. The General Assembly note that most of the remittances are disbursed as payroll costs and that the Church is unable to sustain, for any length of time, a situation where the monthly payroll exceeds monthly remittances. They direct Deacons' Courts to do all in their power to ensure regular prompt monthly payments of at least 75% of ordinary income;
14. The General Assembly recommend that Presbyteries conduct regular reviews of monthly income remittances by congregations within their bounds;
15. The General Assembly are gratified to hear of the availability of Charity Choice as a mechanism for receiving payments and donations online through the Denominational Website;
16. The General Assembly note the change of provider for the Death in Service Scheme and approve the extension of cover to those in active service over the age of 70 years;
17. The General Assembly encourage our loyal people to remember the needs of the Church when they are drawing up their wills;
18. The General Assembly note with interest the investigation currently being undertaken into the possibility of inter-congregational loans;
19. The General Assembly note the plans which are in hand for the disbursing of the remaining Black Watch Appeal moneys;
20. The General Assembly commend the new Zambia Account and bring this new facility to the attention of Deacons' Courts and other interested groups;
21. The General Assembly thank Mr Donald Martin of Macleod IFA, 46 Church Street, Stornoway, for his continued assistance as Adviser for the Group Personal Pension Plan with Aviva, and the Death-in-Service scheme with Lutine;
22. The General Assembly are gratified to learn that the Employment Contracts for the Resident Lay Agent, the Financial Administrator and the General Treasurer are now in place. They note with approval the provision of the accompanying Handbook and thank all those who assisted in this matter;
23. The General Assembly direct the attention of all relevant church courts to Act XVIII Class II 1998 and encourage the Committee in their attempts to bring this Act to the attention of church courts;

24. The General Assembly note with gratitude the progress that is being made by congregations which are under Special Arrangements;
25. The General Assembly approve that the Congregation of Ayr be placed on the Equal Dividend Platform under Special Arrangements for a further period of five years;
26. The General Assembly approve that the Congregation of Lochalsh & Strath be placed on the Equal Dividend Platform under Special Arrangements for a period of five years from the time of a settlement;
27. The General Assembly note with interest the revision of the Sustentation Fund Schedule currently being undertaken;
28. The General Assembly thank all who provided pulpit supply in the vacant Congregations during the past year;
29. The General Assembly remind all Standing and Special Committees of the need to ensure that annual budgets are submitted to the Finance & Sustentation Committee by the appointed date;
30. The General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to do all in their power to ensure an early submission of the annual statistical schedules and congregational accounts;
31. The General Assembly note with gratitude the excellent work done in the past year by Mr Donald A. Robertson, Resident Lay Agent, in the Congregations of Assynt & Eddrachillis and Lochalsh & Strath;
32. The General Assembly approve the following Supply Fees and Expenses:
 1. The following scale of preaching fees will be effective from 1st July 2011:

Resident supply by Students and Probationers:

 - Single men at the rate of £120 per week
 - Married men without children at the rate of £140 per week
 - Married men with children at the rate of £140 per week plus £28 for each child, up to an overall total of £250 per family, including amounts for children.

Resident supply by Retired Ministers:

 - Single men at the rate of £60 per week
 - Married men at the rate of £90 per week

Other preaching supply:

 - At the rate of £28 per service, up to a maximum of £55 per Lord's day.

This is not applicable to ministers in charges and in receipt of full stipends.
 2. Additional Expenses may be claimed in the performance of the duties involved as follows:
 - Motor car mileage at 32p per mile without distance restriction
 - Costs of public transport, including ferry costs, trains or buses

- Bridge tolls and any other out-of-pocket expenses (supported by relevant receipts where possible)
 - Resident supply fees and expenses, when arranged by the Sustentation and Supply Committee, will be calculated and paid for by the Committee and charged to the congregation requesting the resident supply arrangement, unless that congregation is not a fully sanctioned charge.
3. Supply preachers should use the most economical mode of transport readily available to and from the congregation supplied.
 4. Supply preachers supplying on the Lord's day should avoid travel by public transport on the Lord's day. In cases where public transport is used to fulfil an engagement in a congregation accommodation should be arranged in the local congregation from the Saturday to the Monday.

The General Assembly repeal Act VI (Class II) 2008 anent Supply Fees and Expenses;

33. The General Assembly note that in the light of the escalating cost of fuel the Committee intend to review Supply Fees & Expenses prior to the 2012 General Assembly;
34. The General Assembly repeal Act VII (Class II) 1994 Paragraph 1 and direct that all salary abatement for ministers in receipt of a pension from the Free Church Pension Fund shall cease as from 1st June 2011;
35. The General Assembly note that all ministers who have had pension contributions made to the Free Church Pension Scheme and are not yet in receipt of a pension from this scheme should make contact with the Pension Scheme Administrator at the Free Church offices in Edinburgh to ascertain from him what options are open to them in regard to their pension from the Free Church Pension Scheme.

APPENDIX 1

	Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Department	Assembly Clerks' Department	Ecumenical Relations	Finance & Sustentation	Home & Foreign Missions	Legal Advice & Property	Witness
Income	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Camp Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conference Receipts	0	0	0		0	0	0
Donations and income - Seminary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Donations received	0	0	0	1,600	350	9,854	65
Donations to Foreign Missions	0	0	0	0	5,048	0	0
Interest received	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Magazine subscriptions received	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,587
Net Income from Congregations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sale of Sabbath School Workbook	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sale of Year Book, Tapes etc	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,570
Sundry Receipts	0	0	0	1,355	0	0	0
Total Income	0	0	0	2,955	5,398	9,854	23,226
Expenditure							
Audit and Accountancy Fee	0	0	0	4,524	0	0	0
Camp Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conference costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Donald A Robertson	0	0	0	1,553	0	0	0
Donations and Grants Made	0	0	0	0	600	0	0
Fees and Subscriptions	0	0	632	0	0	0	0
Foreign Missions Expenditure	0	0	0	0	4,861	0	0
Fundraising	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Assembly (net cost)	12,316	196	0	0	0	0	0
Heat, Light & Power	0	0	0	0	1,457	0	0
Legal costs	0	0	0	0	0	126,311	0
Magazine printing	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,377
Ministers' pensions and DIS	0	0	0	1,995	1,995	0	0
Ministers' stipends and NI	0	0	0	16,525	16,750	0	0
Miscellaneous expenses	0	0	0	1,876	1,000	0	90
Office stationery	0	0	0	0	921	0	367
Overseas Church Support (Aus)	0	0	0	0	8,320	0	0
Overseas Travelling	0	0	658	0	5,215	0	0
Postage	114	127	0	0	301	0	3,271
Printing & publications	0	20	111	0	3,363	0	0
Provision for Student Loans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rent, Rates & Insurance	0	0	0	0	3,423	0	0
Total Student Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Telephone & Communications	0	0	0	37	217	5	0
Travel	546	0	460	1,092	4,075	1,135	0
Treasurer's Dept Salary & Pension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	12,976	323	1,861	24,496	52,497	127,452	23,105
Budgeted Surplus / (Deficit)	(12,250)	(2800)	(4,500)	(17,700)	(43,950)	(51,000)	(2,650)
Actual Surplus / (Deficit)	(12,976)	(323)	(1,861)	(21,541)	(47,099)	(117,598)	121

APPENDIX 1

Public Questions Religion & Morals	Psalmody	Publications	Seminary	Training of the Ministry	Treasurer's Department	Welfare of Youth	Unclassified	Total
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
0	0	0	0	0	0	2,611	0	2,611
0	0	750	0	0	0	0	0	750
0	0	0	4,316	0	0	0	0	4,316
0	0	30		0	0	250	11,859	24,008
0	0	0	0	0	0	0		5,048
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,285	2,289
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,587
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	585,203	585,203
0	0	0	0	0	0	311	0	311
0	1,082	1,954	0	0	0	30	0	6,636
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,355
0	1,082	2,734	4,316	0	0	3,201	599,347	652,113
0	0	0	0	0	276	0	0	4,800
0	0	0	0	0	0	3,312	0	3,312
0	0	1,256	0	0	0	0	0	1,256
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,128	7,128
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,553
1000	0	0	0	1000	0	788	0	3,388
0	0	0	0		400	0	0	1,032
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,861
0	0	0	0	0	1,157	0	0	1,157
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,512
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,457
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,311
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,377
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46,335	50,324
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	375,620	408,896
0	0	0		85	12	0	0	3,063
0	0	76	411	0	541	50	0	2,366
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,320
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,873
0	0	101	81	0	239	43	0	4,277
0	1,053	1,596	187	0	5	0	0	6,309
0	0	0	0	16,810	0	0	0	16,800
0	0	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	8,423
0	0	0	6,059	4,280	0	0	0	10,339
0	0	0	171	0	60	0	0	491
247	274	198	2,818	275	147	344	0	11,611
0	0	0	0	0	22,447	0	0	22,447
1,247	1,327	3,226	14,726	22,440	25,279	4,537	429,083	744,575
(1,860)	(2,018)	(425)	(13,614)	(28,400)	(18,550)	(1,500)	(96,400)	(99,817)
(1,247)	(245)	(4P92)	(10,410)	(22,440)	(25,279)	(1,336)	170,264	(92,461)

APPENDIX 2

NET INCOME FROM CONGREGATIONS

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>2010 Remittance</i>	<i>2009 Remittance</i>	<i>£ variance to last year</i>	<i>% variance to last year</i>
	£	£		
Presbytery of Inverness				
Aberdeen	14,140	11,234	2,906	26
Duthil-Dores	27,374	23,956	3,418	14
Inverness	35,000	37,000	(2,000)	(5)
Kilmorack & Strathglass	20,446	17,722	2,724	15
<i>Total Inverness</i>	<u>96,960</u>	<u>89,912</u>	<u>7,048</u>	<u>8</u>
Northern Presbytery				
Assynt & Scourie	6,283	5,987	296	5
Brora	22,309	20,593	1,716	8
Kiltearn	18,000	23,920	(5,920)	(25)
Tarbat	17,767	18,000	(233)	(1)
<i>Total Northern Presbytery</i>	<u>64,359</u>	<u>68,499</u>	<u>(4,141)</u>	<u>(6)</u>
Southern Presbytery				
Arran	7,794	7,215	579	8
Ayr	4,660	2,200	2,460	112
Dumfries	600	0	600	100
Edinburgh	38,000	39,000	(1,000)	(3)
Glasgow - Partick	36,000	32,500	3,500	11
Glasgow - Shettleston	19,585	15,023	4,562	30
Glasgow - Knightswood	29,228	29,190	37	0
Rothesay	293	220	73	33
<i>Total Edinburgh</i>	<u>136,160</u>	<u>125,348</u>	<u>10,812</u>	<u>9</u>
Outer Hebrides Presbytery				
Cross	23,348	23,630	(282)	(1)
Harris - Leverburgh	15,946	14,399	1,547	11
Harris - Scalpay	24,688	22,159	2,529	11
Knock & Point	16,749	13,475	3,274	24
North Uist	14,650	15,500	(850)	(5)
Stornoway	85,682	75,854	9,828	13
<i>Total Lewis</i>	<u>181,062</u>	<u>165,017</u>	<u>16,045</u>	<u>10</u>
Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron				
Bracadale	13,785	13,800	(15)	(0)
Duirinish (Waternish)	5,000	5,200	(200)	(4)
Glengel & Arnisdale	2,530	2,272	258	11
Kilmuir & Stenscholl	11,246	19,000	(7,754)	(41)
Lochalsh & Glenshiel	8,069	5,764	2,305	40
Poolewe & Aultbea	11,810	10,600	1,210	11
Ullapool	400	0	400	100
Portree	23,664	23,460	203	1
Snizort	23,500	20,000	3,500	17
Strath	3,007	5,529	(2,522)	(46)
<i>Total Skye & Uist</i>	<u>103,011</u>	<u>105,627</u>	<u>(2,616)</u>	<u>(2)</u>
Total From Congregations	<u>581,552</u>	<u>554,403</u>	<u>27,149</u>	<u>5</u>
Unclaimed Tax recoverable previous year-end	-39,749	-22,000		
Unclaimed Tax recoverable current year-end	43,400	39,749		
Remittances per Accounts	<u>585,203</u>	<u>572,152</u>	<u>13,051</u>	<u>2</u>
Included in the above:				
Tax Recovered on Gift Aid Declarations	91,090	76,144	15,992	21

Note 1: Tax reclaims over 12 months, 2009 over 9 months

APPENDIX 3

CONGREGATIONS ANNUAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS ANALYSIS

ACCOUNTS TO BE SUBMITTED BY PRESBYTERIES FOR ANALYSIS BY END OF MARCH EACH YEAR

ORDINARY INCOME

INCLUDES: FREEWILL OFFERINGS BY ENVELOPE

STANDING ORDERS

CHURCH DOOR CASH

GIFT AID TAX RECLAIMS

UNDESIGNATED DONATIONS

EXCLUDES: FABRIC FUND COLLECTIONS

SPECIAL DESIGNATED COLLECTIONS & APPEALS

PROPERTY RENTAL INCOME

BANK & OTHER INVESTMENTS INTEREST

MAGAZINES SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS INCOME / RETIRING COLLECTIONS

TOTAL INCOME INCLUDES ALL INCOME RECEIVED

FABRIC FUND ALL ANNUAL FABRIC FUND INCOME INCLUDING DONATIONS, COLLECTIONS, BANK ACCOUNT TRANSFERS, AND FABRIC FUND BANK INTEREST

REMITTANCES ALL MONIES REMITTED TO CENTRAL FUNDS including RETAINED GIFT AID TAX

REMITTANCES % REMITTANCES CALCULATED AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ORDINARY INCOME

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ALL PROFIT & LOSS EXPENDITURE

EXCLUDES : AMOUNTS REMITTED TO CENTRAL FUNDS

BUILDINGS BALANCE SHEET VALUATIONS and/or COST OF UNDISPUTED PROPERTY ASSETS

LOANS ALL LOANS DUE TO BE REPAYED TO ALL LENDERS BY CONGREGATIONS

BANK BALANCES VALUE OF ALL BANK BALANCES & FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS

VI.
REPORT
OF THE
LEGAL ADVICE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

The Legal Advice & Property Committee continue to bear a very considerable burden of work resulting from the aftermath of 2000 and only a very small proportion of the work done by the Committee in the course of the year has been of a routine nature.

The Committee reiterate what they submitted in their past two reports to the General Assembly, to the effect that were there a desire on the part of both parties involved in the division of 2000 to act in a way which is God-honouring, constitutional, principled, in accordance with the law of the land and displaying a measure of genuine goodwill, most of the problems of contested property and funds could be resolved speedily and equitably. The Committee have not altered their view.

The Legal Advice & Property Committee have continued to attempt to act according to these principles, seeking ways forward which will benefit the church as a whole. They continue to believe that whatever the outcome of their actions, it is vital that we act according to criteria which are God-honouring.

2. An overview of the current situation

It remains a matter of great disappointment that those with whom we once were part of the pre-2000 Free Church of Scotland have taken the position they continue to hold with regard to our status and the rights of our congregations and that they refuse to discuss matters at a national level.

Reference has been made in previous years to the breach of the solemn undertakings given by the Residual Body to the International Conference of Reformed Churches, in Pretoria during October 2005, that if the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) were to fall from the Appeal against the Determination by Lady Paton then there would be no legal action by them against the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

The Committee have sought to make use of the good offices of two other member churches of the ICRC to bring about meaningful negotiations with the Residual Body, but the Residual Body have been unwilling to respond positively to such overtures.

The Legal Action taken by the Residual Body against the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) has been reported on in detail to both stated and special meetings of the Commission of Assembly.

Broadford

The Broadford action is one for *Declarator*; in other words those who have taken the action against us are seeking to have the Court declare that they alone have right and title to the assets held in trust by the General Trustees, notwithstanding the fact that this is a matter relating to local congregational property. This has implications which go far beyond the local situation in the Strath congregation and indeed far beyond the matters addressed in the finding of Lady Paton. The outcome of the appeal was not available at the time of the preparation of this Report.

Partick

The Residual Body have taken action against our Partick Congregation with regard to church, hall, manse and funds. It is significant that in spite of assurances that the Residual Body would not evict ministers from

manse, that would seem the logical outcome of their action. The Committee remain committed to seek negotiation with the Residual Body in a manner concordant with the constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, the Declaration of Reconstitution and findings of Assembly and Commissions.

Duthil-Dores

In spite of a condition attached by Inverness Presbytery to the acceptance of the resignation of Rev. Gavino Fioretti from the charge of Duthil-Dores, to the effect that he should return the keys to representatives of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), the congregation subsequently found that no entry was possible to the manse at Tomatin which had been secured against them by the Residual Body and that no entry was possible to the Church at Tomatin. Mr Fioretti is no longer a minister of the denomination.

Kiltearn

The resignation of the Rev. Calum Iain Macleod was associated with his continued occupation of the manse (although no longer a minister of the denomination) and the breaking into, by force, of the Church building at Kiltearn and securing the property against the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation, using the services of Northern Security Alarms. A number of the members of the Kiltearn congregation have applied to, and apparently been granted membership, as individuals, of a hitherto notional congregation of the Residual Body. The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation have been granted use of temporary accommodation for worship in the premises used by the local Scout Group. The former treasurer of Kiltearn Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation succeeded, following his resignation from the denomination and apparently before his admission to membership of another denomination, in removing from the accounts of the Kiltearn Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) a sum of £7500, which sum he has refused, in spite of a request by the Bank of Scotland, to return; he has also, despite repeated formal requests from the Congregation, refused to hand over to the Kiltearn Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation financial documentation belonging to the congregation. At the time of writing it is not clear whether our congregation have regained access to any of the money in the congregation's accounts. The Committee are pursuing these matters actively.

Issues arising from the Duthil-Dores and Kiltearn Resignations

The Committee noted that the Duthil-Dores and Kiltearn situations involved the resignations of ministers who had only very recently completed their studies for the ministry and who appear to have had a less-than-clear understanding of and commitment to the constitution and fundamental principles of the Free Church of Scotland and in particular the principles involved in the division of 2000. The Committee believe that it is important that all those involved in the training and examination of Candidates for the Ministry should be instructed to take steps to ensure that Candidates have both a clear understanding of and informed commitment to the constitution and fundamental principles of the historic Free Church of Scotland and in particular the principles involved in the division of 2000.

3. Frozen accounts

There have been ongoing attempts by others to gain access to those funds in frozen accounts.

In 2009 the Committee had to report that it was discovered that the Bank of Scotland in Tain had, contrary to clear markings on the account and a statement in writing to the Law Agent from the Head Office of the Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh that the account would be held frozen, removed all funds from one account at the instigation of a residual minister and had paid the moneys into another unspecified account in another branch of the Bank of Scotland. The Committee pursued the matter vigorously and the moneys were eventually restored to the original account.

Last year the Committee have to report that it has become apparent that the Royal Bank of Scotland and the Dunfermline Building Society have both broken written agreements not to pay out moneys without the signature of the designated trustees, two different accounts having been emptied without the knowledge of a

Continuing trustee.

The problems indicated above in relation to the Kiltearn accounts held in the Bank of Scotland in Dingwall have added a further matter for concern.

All these incidents serve as a reminder that no Congregation should make any assumption that any moneys whatsoever are safe because of bank undertakings and a reminder also that Congregations should use very great caution with regard to any moneys held in either the Bank of Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland or the Dunfermline Building Society.

4. Denominational Trustees

The 2005 General Assembly approved the recommendation of the Committee that Presbyteries be requested to nominate men considered suitable to act as General Trustees for the Church.

By Act XIV, Class II, 2007 the General Assembly approved the appointment as Denominational Trustees of Mr John MacKenzie, Mr Alistair Mackintosh, Mr Angus Shaw, Mr John N Gillies and Mr Maurice Grant.

All questions relating to eligibility in terms of civil law have now been resolved and the Committee now recommend that the General Assembly confirm the appointment of those named individuals as General Trustees.

The Committee further recommend that, as the Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides is not represented among those named as General Trustees, the Committee be instructed to seek from the Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides a nomination of an individual suitable for appointment as a General Trustee.

5. Disclosure Scotland

Compliance procedures with regard to Disclosure Scotland have been approved and are now in the final stages of implementation throughout the denomination.

6. Knock Mission House

The situation with regard to the Knock Mission House remains unchanged in that the locally elected Steering Group have decided that it could potentially be prejudicial to their interests to press on with their case with regard to the Knock Meeting House meantime. Progress on a church building in Point renders the matter one of no great urgency.

7. Contracts of Employment

The Committee gave assistance to the Finance & Sustentation Committee Contracts of employment have been completed and it is understood that these have now been implemented.

8. Public Liability and other Insurance

The subject of centralised public liability insurance continues on the agenda of the Committee but no definitive solution has yet been reached. The matter of insurance has been greatly complicated by the surreptitious redrafting of insurance contracts by insurers without informing the insured parties. Congregations invited to renew their insurance have not being informed by the insurers that the renewal does not give the same coverage as they had enjoyed since first taking out the policy. This means, in effect, that congregations may be paying considerable amounts for insurance which is virtually worthless. The Committee continue to keep the matter under review.

9. Pensions

The Committee have, in consultation with the Finance & Sustentation Committee, been examining the manner in which ministers who had service with the Free Church of Scotland prior to 2000 have been

treated by the supposedly independently-managed Free Church Pension Fund in the light of apparent discrepancies in calculations and questions regarding equity of treatment of men adhering to the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). Pensions following almost twenty years service prior to 2000 can amount to as little as £25 per month. Advice has been given that all ministers with service prior to 2000 should attempt to secure from the Free Church Pension Fund a statement of their entitlement and the options open to them.

10. Legal Advice

The Committee again wish to report to the Assembly their gratitude to the Church's Law Agent, Mr Robert Miller, and to Counsel, Mr James McNeill QC and Mr Jamie Dawson, *Advocate*, not only for their professional assistance but also for their commitment to our cause.

11. Clerk

The Clerk to the Committee resigned in 2009. It is a matter of great regret that to date it has not proved possible to secure the services of a suitable replacement Clerk.

JOHN MACLEOD, *Convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report and thank the Legal Advice & Property Committee;
2. The General Assembly note the actions taken by the Legal Advice & Property Committee in relation to the actions against the Strath Congregation and against the Partick Congregation and the ongoing attempts towards securing negotiation which will be in accordance with the Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, the Declaration of Reconstitution and findings of the General Assembly;
3. The General Assembly note with sadness both the fact that, and the manner in which, the congregations of Duthil-Dores and Kiltearn have been deprived of the use of the Church and Manse at Tomatin and the Church and Manse at Kiltearn. They note with gratitude the kindness extended to the Kiltearn congregation in the making available of temporary premises;
4. The General Assembly draw to the attention of Presbyteries, the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee and the Seminary the importance of ensuring that each Candidate for the Ministry has a clear understanding of and commitment to the constitution and fundamental principles of the Free Church of Scotland and that in particular he has demonstrated a clear understanding of the principles involved in the division of 2000; furthermore the General Assembly direct the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee to ensure that no completion certificate be issued before the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee have satisfied themselves regarding the said understandings of the Candidate; and furthermore the General Assembly direct Presbyteries to give due weight, in all trials for licensing and ordination, to the said understandings and commitment;
5. The General Assembly note that significant sums of money remain in bank accounts which have been frozen. The General Assembly note with regret the manner in which the Royal Bank of Scotland, the Dunfermline Building Society and the Bank of Scotland have acted in releasing funds in an unauthorised manner. Accordingly the General Assembly direct congregations and courts of the Church to continue to exercise especial vigilance in monitoring accounts and to consult immediately with the Legal Advice & Property Committee should they detect any irregularities;
6. The General Assembly instruct the Legal Advice & Property Committee to seek from the Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides nomination of an individual suitable for appointment as a General Trustee;

7. The General Assembly direct the Committee on Legal Advice & Property to ensure that implementation of the requirements of Disclosure Scotland be completed as soon as practicable;
8. The General Assembly note that with regard to Knock Mission House the locally elected Steering Group are taking cognisance of the fact that matters between the parties in the Free Church dispute remain unresolved;
9. The General Assembly note the investigations of the Legal Advice & Property Committee into the subject of centralised public liability insurance and other insurance; they direct Deacons' Courts to exercise due care to ensure that they are aware of the extent of the insurance cover they hold;
10. The General Assembly thank the Law Agent and Counsel for the work done on behalf of the Church and for the manner in which it has been carried out;
11. The General Assembly note the ongoing investigations of the Legal Advice & Property Committee into apparent inequities with regard to the matter of pensions accruing prior to the year 2000 and the recommendations of the Committee to ministers with service prior to 2000;
12. The General Assembly direct the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee to make an urgent attempt to secure the services of a suitable Clerk to the Legal Advice & Property Committee.

VII. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS, RELIGION & MORALS

Introduction

Last year's report considered the encroachments being made on our religious and civil liberties as these have traditionally been enjoyed in a country with a Christian constitution. The reduction of our customary freedoms is a symptom of something even more profound which this year's report seeks to address: the *de-Christianisation* of the United Kingdom.

As Presbyterians we have a distinct view on the place of Christianity in the life of our nation and indeed any nation. We are not only concerned with the impact of the gospel upon individual members of society but also with the influence of the Christian faith upon society itself. If the Word of God contains a warning to sinners who reject Christ's salvation then it also has a warning for lands that reject Christ's dominion: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." (Isa. 60:12)

Our country has long enjoyed peace from the threat of enemy invasion. Now however we are under attack from *within*: not territorial attack but *ideological* attack. The danger is all the more deadly because it goes largely unrecognised in a day when ignorance of the Christian faith is so widespread.

If we are correct in our thinking then there are three main ideologies which currently pose a threat to the Christian character of our country: secularism, Islamism and Romanism. All three appear to be making progress. It might be thought that the move to a secular society and the move to religions other than biblical Christianity are bound to be in conflict with each other but this is not so for the same spirit animates them both. Jesus said: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. 12:30) What is not of God is ultimately of the devil, whether it manifests itself as religion or irreligion.

Our intention is to look at these three ideologies in a general way, examining some of their core beliefs, assessing their overall influence and exposing their errors, before providing the answer to them and all other anti-Christian philosophies. As we do so we will highlight some recent issues which cause concern.

1. Secularism

Our first ideology is one that might be regarded as the prevailing ideology in our country today. The term 'secular' may be used to distinguish things which are only indirectly related to God from things which are intimately connected to Him and therefore 'sacred'. 'Secularism' however has a different meaning.

Definition

In its broader definition secularism is that philosophy which maintains that there is no religious basis for the universe. Nowadays the term 'humanism' is employed in much the same way, emphasising the human element to the exclusion of the divine and seeking purely natural or material ways of solving man's problems. When it takes this form secularism is virtually synonymous with atheism, the belief that God does not exist. But right from its opening words the Bible takes it for granted that God *is* and the person who denies Him is declared to be a fool (Psa. 14:1; 53:1).

Secularism may also be linked to agnosticism, the belief that God *may* exist but that we cannot be sure.

Agnosticism is often portrayed as the level-headed or reasonable approach to the questions which religion seeks to answer and it is sometimes referred to by the phrase “honest doubt”. But can it ever be “honest” to doubt the existence of God when, as the Psalmist tells us, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psa. 19:1)? For this reason the agnostic as well as the atheist is “without excuse” for his position (Rom. 1:20).

Application

While secularism may be a personal philosophy upon which some individuals attempt to base their lives its real application is to society as a whole. In its narrower definition secularism is the separation of religion and the State. Known historically as ‘Voluntaryism’ it is the belief that churches and other religious institutions should be independent of the state and supported by private contributions rather than public money. This principle has been followed by a variety of countries, among them largely irreligious countries such as France but also strongly religious countries such as the USA, Turkey and India.

Increasingly secularism is assuming the status of an official policy (or we might even say ‘creed’) in our own country. It would seem to be the hope of the secularists that by reordering the state according to an alternative, non-religious pattern we will eventually arrive at a better society. (There would appear to be little point in going through the process, with all its upheaval, *unless* this were the expected end.) But is the new arrangement likely to lead to such an outcome?

Consequences

Given that it has been having its way for some decades now it is appropriate to ask of secularism (as we should of any ideology), What fruit is it bearing in our land? After this length of time we might reasonably expect it to be producing the better society it promises. But is it?

The twin pillars of the new arrangement, as we are repeatedly told, are ‘equality’ and ‘diversity’. We are meant to celebrate religious, cultural, sexual and all other manner of difference in society and not to discriminate against anyone on account of their lifestyle, however objectionable it might be to our personal beliefs. Our nation has rejected the concepts of absolute truth and unalterable righteousness and is normalising what the Bible forbids. The consequences of this are far-reaching.

Let us take a brief look at one important area of life: the family. The Christian ideal here is for premarital chastity followed by lifelong sexual faithfulness between husband and wife providing companionship and a loving, stable and supportive environment for any children which may result. This ideal has been rubbished since the onset of the so-called ‘permissive society’ fifty years ago – a society which was only possible because of secularism. The result has been a rapid rise in the rates of fornication, cohabitation, adultery and divorce, accompanied by huge increases in the levels of sexually transmitted diseases and abortion. And alongside this there is something which cannot be measured so easily but which is tragic nonetheless: the calamity of those children from dysfunctional or broken homes who in their misery turn to drink and drugs and even contemplate taking their own lives.

While the permissive society has been a disaster our politicians, ‘social experts’ and commentators, with a few noble exceptions, refuse to admit it. If they did then in many cases they would have to repent of their own immorality. They would also incur the wrath of the lobby groups which have a vested interest in seeing things continue as they are. So they tell us instead that what we need is a greater permissiveness! The truth is that when sinful men and women (which includes us all) are given freedom without responsibility or accountability they make selfish choices. Society ignores this at its peril.

Issues

The secularisation of our society is evident from two cases which were prominent during the past year.

1. Guest House

Peter and Hazelmary Bull run the Chymorvah Private Hotel near Penzance in Cornwall. Because of their Christian convictions the hotel's policy since they took it over in 1986 has been to restrict the booking of double rooms to married couples, as indicated on the hotel's booking form. But the Bulls found themselves in trouble because of recent equality legislation.

In September 2008 Mrs Bull took a telephone booking for a double room from what she understood to be a married couple. The next day two men, Stephen Preddy and Martin Hall, arrived at the hotel. A member of staff explained the hotel policy to them. After being turned away the men, both homosexuals, reported the Bulls to the police claiming discrimination under the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 which, among other things, make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services. (It should be noted that these particular Regulations apply to Great Britain only; Northern Ireland has its own Regulations.) The Bulls were charged and the case was heard at Bristol County Court in December 2010. In a written judgment in January of this year Judge Andrew Rutherford found the Bulls guilty of discrimination and ordered them to pay each of the 'victims' compensation of £1,800 for the "hurt and embarrassment" they had suffered.

It is possible that the visit by Mr Preddy and Mr Hall was a 'set-up' on the part of the 'gay rights' organisation Stonewall. Since the judgment the Bulls have received abusive phone calls and e-mails and demands from more homosexuals to be given double rooms. The Bulls were not motivated by a hatred of homosexuals however. Their barrister told the court: "It is not part of the defendants' case to undermine the rights of same-sex partners. The defendants respectfully submit that their policy is directed at sex and not to sexual orientation and is lawful." But this did not persuade the judge.

It appears that the Bulls were not found guilty of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation (they would have turned away an unmarried heterosexual couple too and they have said that they have no objection to homosexuals staying in single rooms) but because they refused to provide a couple in a civil partnership with the same service as a married couple. Judge Rutherford was of the view that in this regard, "There is no material difference between marriage and a civil partnership."

In his written judgment Judge Rutherford stated: "It is inevitable that such laws will from time to time cut across deeply held beliefs of individuals and sections of society for they reflect the social attitudes and morals prevailing at the time that they are made." Citing the abolition of capital and corporal punishment and the decriminalisation of homosexuality and suicide the judge continued: "These laws have come into being because of changes in social attitudes. The standards and principles governing our behaviour which were unquestioningly accepted in one generation may not be so accepted in the next."

Judge Rutherford also stated: "I am quite satisfied as to the genuineness of the defendants' beliefs and it is, no doubt, one which others also hold. It is a very clear example of how social attitudes have changed over the years for it is not so very long ago that these beliefs of the defendants would have been those accepted as normal by society at large. Now it is the other way around."

Mrs Bull had told the court: "We accept that the Bible is the holy living word of God and we endeavour to follow that." Sadly this is no defence nowadays. To those who may say that we cannot have people above the law just because of their faith we remind them that the Bulls' religion, the Protestant reformed religion, is *the established religion of our land*. It enjoys this special place and our various laws ought to be framed in accordance with it.

No amount of legislation can bring about a situation of absolute equality in which everyone's rights are protected. One set of rights is bound at some point to come into conflict with another set of rights and one set must win out. The key of course is to admit that some 'rights' are actually *wrong*, not being rights at all

because not granted to us by God. God is the Judge of these things and He has revealed His mind in the Holy Scriptures. All that an earthly judge could do in this case was to follow the lead set by the prevailing liberal, secular consensus. Interestingly there are some hotels which publicise themselves as 'gay only': we wonder whether they will now face legal action if they turn away heterosexual couples?

The Bulls' case has received extensive publicity because of the obvious and serious implications for freedom of religion. Judge Rutherford granted the Bulls leave to appeal, acknowledging that his judgment "does affect the human rights of the defendants to manifest their religion and forces them to act in a manner contrary to their deeply and genuinely held beliefs." The Bulls have decided to appeal, being funded by the Christian Institute and its Legal Defence Fund. The case against them was backed by the Government-funded Equality and Human Rights Commission, making it an important battle. At stake for the Bulls are their business, livelihood and home: at stake for us all are our beleaguered religious and civil liberties. We pray that the Lord will grant the appeal success.

2. Foster Carers

Owen and Eunice Johns are a Christian couple from Derby who have four children of their own and have fostered fifteen children over the last twenty years. In 2007 they applied to Derby City Council to act as respite foster carers but were told by social workers that they would have difficulty in getting their application approved because of their views on sexual ethics in general and homosexuality in particular, which did not meet diversity standards. This was despite the fact that the social workers accepted that the Johns are caring people who "would always do their best to make a child welcome and comfortable".

The Council's Fostering Panel was to have considered the Johns' application in March 2009 but deferred its decision. As a result the Johns commenced judicial review proceedings in the High Court. The hearing took place in November 2010 with the Johns' case being supported by the Christian Legal Centre. In February of this year the Johns were refused permission to seek a review. Because the Council had not actually turned down the Johns as foster carers at the time the case was brought the Court was asked to consider the issue abstractly, as a question of public policy rather than as a point of law.

The two judges examining the case concluded that "the attitudes of potential foster carers to sexuality are relevant when considering an application for approval". Effectively they said that while there was a right not to face discrimination on the basis of either religion or sexual orientation yet where the two rights are in competition the latter takes precedence. Much of their reasoning was based on decisions of a superior court, the Court of Appeal, which have permitted public authorities to use equality policies relating to sexual orientation to discriminate against Christians.

The disturbing message sent out by this ruling is that when they are called upon to pass judgment in cases of this sort the courts will always interpret the law according to secular values and not Christian ones. Another area of concern is that the judges in the High Court discriminated between different kinds of Christianity, saying that Christians 'in general' might make good foster parents but Christians with 'traditionalist' views might not: their views might conflict with a child's welfare.

The ruling in the Johns' case does not *require* local authorities to turn down potential foster carers because they hold biblical beliefs: it does not amount to a ban on people with orthodox Christian beliefs about homosexuality fostering children. Therefore if there were to be other similar cases the High Court could still rule in favour of such Christians. While other local authorities are in theory free to take a different view from Derby City Council experience tells us that most of them will sooner or later fall into (politically correct) line. The situation for Bible-believing Christians is not helped by the fact that the Prime Minister, himself a churchgoer, chose to comment on the ruling saying: "This matter was decided by a court in the appropriate way and I think we should rest with the judgement that was made. I think Christians should be tolerant and welcoming and broadminded."

Significantly the Equality and Human Rights Commission intervened in the Johns' case. The Commission argued that views opposed to, and disapproving of, same-sex relationships and lifestyles have a harmful impact on the wellbeing of children and young people. Legal paperwork prepared for the Commission's intervention suggested that Christian foster parents may harm children by "infecting" them with their moral values – a remark for which the Commission was later forced to apologise.

The situation is only likely to get worse. On 5 April 2011 the 'Public Sector Equality Duty' came into force across Great Britain. The new equality law obliges 27,000 public bodies such as schools, the police and local councils throughout England, Wales and Scotland to actively push equality. This impact of this duty will be increased later this year when all public bodies will also be required to adopt equality targets.

In the light of these and other similar cases it is no surprise to learn that in 2011 there are more lawyers than police officers in the UK! Secularism is eroding our Christian heritage and it must be fought by the church before it destroys what took such costly effort to build up to the glory of God and for the good of all.

2. Islamism

Our second ideology is an old one but relatively new to our country and for this reason we shall look at it in greater detail. We refer to Islamism.

Origin

Islam is often thought to mean "peace" but it actually means "submission". A Muslim is "one who submits to God". Most Muslims accept as a Muslim anyone who has publicly pronounced the Muslim declaration of faith or *Shahada* which states, "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the messenger of Allah". Muslims say that Islam was the religion of all the prophets from Adam to the final prophet Mohammed, who built upon and perfected the example and teaching of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.

Mohammed was born in A.D. 570 in Mecca, a trading centre and location of the *Kaaba*, the most sacred site in Islam towards which Muslims face when they pray. Before Mohammed the Arabs were largely idolatrous and polytheistic with his own tribe worshipping the moon god and other pagan deities. Mohammed had contact with both Jews and Christians with whom he discussed the religion of the Old and New Testaments.

When about forty Mohammed became concerned how irreligious his countrymen were and spent periods meditating in a cave, claiming to receive messages from God through the angel Gabriel which he must preach to mankind. As he could neither read nor write he passed them on orally to his companions. Meeting with hostility in Mecca in 622 he fled to Medina which was the turning point. There his teaching was popular, especially his emphasis on the oneness of God and his condemnation of idolatry.

At first Mohammed recognised the validity of Judaism and Christianity. Later however he began to assert the absolute character of the revelation he had received, claiming that it was a renewal of the religion of Abraham, and his doctrine developed. Over time and often through warfare, Mohammed and his followers conquered Arabia and he became the first person to unify the Arabs as a people. Mohammed died in 632.

After Mohammed's death Islam expanded rapidly. The church in North Africa was overthrown. Islam reached Spain and into France and was only halted at the battle of Tours in 732. Today Islam has about 1.5 billion followers or 20% of the world's population, making it the second largest religion after Christianity (taken in its widest sense). Between thirty and forty countries have a Muslim majority and the countries with the greatest numbers of Muslims today are not Arab ones but Indonesia, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

There are two main divisions in Islam, Sunni (85%) and Shia (15%). The countries where Shia are in the

majority are Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan and Bahrain. The division resulted from a dispute over the leadership succession some twenty years after Mohammed's death but the beliefs are largely the same. One distinctive feature of Shia Islam is the use of *taqiyya* or dissimulation for the sake of the faith. Rather like the Roman Catholic doctrine of mental reservation or equivocation *taqiyya* permits Muslims to deceive by denying what they really believe, so long as they continue to adhere to the belief in their hearts. This concealment is meant for situations where one is under threat but may be used when Muslims form friendships with 'unbelievers', including Christians. In Sunni Islam the practice is allowed to protect one's life but is not meant to be used as a means to promote the faith (which is not to say that it is not so used).

After Mohammed's death his revelations were assembled into the Koran. The Koran acknowledges the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as authentic but Muslims say that Jews and Christians have corrupted the existing copies. God himself is the speaker in the Koran which is about the same length as the New Testament; it is divided into 114 surahs (chapters) which are in turn divided into verses. The Koran is interpreted differently from the Bible. As the inspired Word of God the Bible is self-consistent and therefore when one passage appears to conflict with another we look for a way to resolve them. The Koran however is subject to the principle of *naskh* or 'abrogation', meaning that earlier revelation may be cancelled out by later. This has relevance when assessing the true nature of Islam for we find that the 'nonviolent' verses come before the 'belligerent' ones: in the last analysis Islam is not a path of peace but a way of war.

Beliefs

Islam is a monotheistic faith but the doctrine of the Trinity is rejected (Sura 5:73). Divine omnipotence is stressed as is an absolute predestination amounting to fatalism: humans cannot really be held responsible for their actions. God has ninety-nine distinct names in the Koran in addition to his essential name, "Allah". (It is worth noting that Allah is the word employed for God in Arabic and is used by Arabic-speaking Christians.) The name Jehovah is nowhere found in the Koran and historical evidence coupled with the use of a lunar calendar and the presence of the crescent moon symbol on the top of every mosque supports the idea that the god of Islam is the moon god of the pagan Arabs. Mosques however are devoid of statues, icons and other images for worship purposes.

Jesus is mentioned over twenty times in the Koran. He is regarded as a messenger sent from Allah who received a holy book, the *Injil* or Gospel. His virgin birth and sinlessness are affirmed but his deity and atonement are denied. He performed miracles by the permission of Allah and prepared the way for the coming of Mohammed. Jesus did not die on the cross (4:157); rather Allah frustrated the designs of the Jews by allowing another man to be crucified in his place and Jesus was taken up into heaven.

The Koran affirms the existence of the devil and teaches that the first paradise was in heaven: from there Adam and Eve fell literally to earth by their sin. Original sin is denied and actual sins are divided into great sins (such as murder, neglecting Friday prayers and gambling) and little sins (such as lying, anger and lust). There is very little in the Koran about forgiveness although Allah is described as "The Merciful One". It is regarded as an arbitrary act with little if any moral basis: there is no divine act of redemption or reconciliation.

The final judgment is described vividly in the Koran. There will be various signs and catastrophes and Antichrist will appear before Christ returns to this world as a Muslim. After the resurrection the books containing the records of the deeds of every individual will be given up by the recording angels. The Koran says: "Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy, they will attain salvation. But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls, in Hell will they abide." (23:102,103) So salvation is not by faith but by works. Heaven is pictured as a place of sensual delights and hell is a place of fiery torment.

Practice

There are certain basic religious acts, known as the 'Five Pillars of Islam', which are obligatory for all Muslims:

1. *Shahada* or Confessing the faith.
2. *Salat* or Prayer. There are five times for the daily prayers: at dawn, midday, mid-afternoon, sunset and after nightfall. Muslims will also engage in personal, voluntary prayer for divine help in specific situations. It is common too, especially among women, who do not attend the mosque, for a 'folk Islam' to be practised, involving prayer to Muslim 'saints' and charms to ward off evil spirits and achieve aims in life.
3. *Sawm* or Fasting. This is practised during the ninth month called Ramadan. Abstinence from food, drink, tobacco, etc. is required during the hours between sunrise and sunset.
4. *Zakat* or Giving of Alms. This is done in proportion to one's property, at a rate of 2.5% in Sunni Islam. The money goes to the poor, those in debt and converts to Islam.
5. *Hajj* or Pilgrimage to Mecca. This is to be performed once in a lifetime and among other things includes walking seven times anti-clockwise around the Kaaba shrine dressed in white garments. Pilgrims kiss the Black Stone if possible, which is probably an ancient meteorite. They throw stones at three walls representing the devil and sacrifice animals.

To these five pillars some add a sixth: *Jihad* or Holy War. Although many want to interpret jihad in much the same way as Christians speak of striving against sin in their souls there is little doubt that originally it meant taking up literal weapons to defend Islam when it was under threat. The Koran states: "fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them" (9:5). In the 20th century more than a million Armenian Christians were massacred by Muslim Turks; in the 21st century thousands of Indonesian Christians who refused to convert to Islam have been killed. Closer to home we are only too aware of recent atrocities such as the Twin Towers massacre in New York (11 September 2001) and the bombings in London (7 July 2005).

In summary Islam as a religion denies important biblical truths, opposes the gospel of God's saving grace in our Lord Jesus Christ and seeks to impose itself by force on those who withstand it.

History

The history of Islam in the UK in fact goes back several hundred years. Small numbers of Muslims were living in England before the seventeenth century but the first significant group arrived in the eighteenth century and consisted of Bengalis recruited to work for the British East India Company, many of whom settled in port towns and intermarried with locals. It was similar with Yemenis who arrived in South Shields as merchant seamen in the 1890s. By 1950 there were over 25,000 Muslims in the UK.

The practice of Islam was effectively legalised in the UK by the Doctrine of the Trinity Act of 1813. This act amended the Blasphemy Act of 1698 (applicable only to England and Wales) which declared it to be an offence for any person, having been educated in or having made profession of the Christian religion, to publicly deny the Trinity, to claim that there is more than one God, to deny the truth of Christianity or to deny the Bible as divine authority. The Act of Toleration of 1689 had granted toleration to Protestant dissenters who accepted the Trinity but the Act of 1813 (which was also known as the Unitarian Toleration Bill) granted toleration for Unitarian worship. The Act of 1813 technically only applied to converts to Islam and even then did not allow them to deny the truth of Christianity. The Blasphemy Act was repealed in 1967, implicitly taking the Doctrine of the Trinity Act with it.

In the providence of God Islam has spread rapidly to the West in recent decades. In the UK there are now at least 2.5 million Muslims representing 4% of the total population with the numbers increasing. The Muslim population is rising ten times faster than the rest, a combination of large-scale immigration (mainly from the Indian sub-continent and to a lesser extent the Middle East) and a high birth rate. There are also British converts: a study by the inter-faith think-tank Faith Matters suggested there were as many as 5,000 during 2010. Muslims are concentrated in major cities, especially in England, but most sizeable towns now

have mosques and Islam is the second largest religion in all four constituent parts of the UK and the fastest-growing. From a total of seven mosques in 1960 and 400 in 1990 there are now over 1,600 in addition to several thousand *madrassas* or educational institutions. There are about 50,000 Muslims in Scotland, half of them in Glasgow, with ten mosques.

In the light of the above we do not think it is being alarmist to say that the UK (or parts of it) is faced with the danger of 'islamisation'. By this we mean not simply the presence of large numbers of Muslims in certain areas but the transformation of civic institutions, social policy and other aspects of public life to accommodate Islamic ideals.

Issues

The growing influence of Islam in the UK is illustrated by two topical items.

1. Sharia Law

Islam is more than a religious ritual: it is a complete way of life. In addition to the Koran Islam acknowledges the *sunna* or practice of Muhammad as recorded by his companions and the *hadith* or narrations concerning the words and deeds of the prophet. Together these writings constitute a body of regulations or *sharia* ("path") which governs every aspect of a Muslim's devotional and personal life and also the life of an Islamic state.

According to sharia law non-Muslims living in an Islamic state are to be regarded as subjugated. Referred to as *dhimmi* ("one whose responsibility has been taken") they enjoy a protected status but are required to pay a special tax for the privilege and are denied the full rights of citizenship. Thus Christian minorities in Muslim lands often face discrimination and persecution. In the sharia system, women are considered of less value than men as seen in rules covering compensation (a woman gets 50% of what a man receives) and legal testimony (the witness of a man is worth twice that of a woman). Perhaps the best-known feature of sharia law is the severe punishments it demands for certain crimes, such as amputation for theft and stoning for adultery. Apostasy from Islam to another religion is punishable by death although in most Muslim countries this is not enforced. Sometimes family members take it into their own hands to kill an apostate. Examples of Muslim states with legal systems based on sharia law are Saudi Arabia and Iran.

No country today is fully governed according to sharia law. However the aim of Muslim radicals is to impose it as widely as possible as part of their goal to bring about the *Khilafah* (Caliphate) or worldwide Islamic state and unity of the *Umma* or Muslim community. In Islamic thought the countries of the world are divided into the *Dar-al-Islam* ("house of Islam") where Islamic rule operates and the *Dar-al-Kufr* ("house of unbelief") where it does not. Synonymous with the latter is the *Dar-al-Harb* ("house of war"). A distinction is made between *actual* lands of war (like the state of Israel, which is regarded as occupying 'Islamic' land) and *potential* lands of war (states which are not presently engaged in a direct war against Islamic land). In the eyes of many Muslims the UK comes into the first category because of our presence in Afghanistan and until recently Iraq. Our involvement in Libya may be viewed negatively by some Muslims too.

There is evidence to suggest that the project to create the Caliphate has support in our country. An ICM opinion poll conducted in 2006 suggested that 40% of Muslims in the UK supported the introduction of sharia law "in predominantly Muslim" areas as state law. A survey in 2008 by the civic affairs think-tank the Centre for Social Cohesion found that 40% of Muslim students wanted the introduction of sharia law as state law and 33% wanted the Caliphate. These figures show the lack of social integration on the part of many in the Muslim population.

For many years 'unofficial' sharia courts have met regularly to apply Islamic law to domestic, marital and business disputes. In fact every *imam* (leader of congregational prayer), if properly qualified, is able to hold hearings on such matters and make decisions according to sharia law. However until recently these rulings

could not be enforced: the parties accepted them voluntarily.

In February 2008 the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams suggested that the establishment of sharia law was “unavoidable” in Britain. In July 2008 Lord Phillips, the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, supported the idea that sharia law could be employed as a basis for “mediation or other forms of alternative dispute resolution”.

Soon after it was revealed that sharia law had in fact been operating with effective government sanction since August 2007. From that date the Muslim Arbitration Tribunal has been running sharia courts in five English cities and towns, with hopes for others in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The rulings of these courts are enforceable with the full power of the judicial system, through the county courts or High Court, as they have been able to take advantage of a clause in the Arbitration Act 1996 whereby they are classified as arbitration tribunals. The rulings of such tribunals are binding in law, provided that both parties in a dispute agree to give the tribunal the power to rule in their case. Supporters of the new courts are keen to emphasise that recourse to them is entirely voluntary and it remains open to any Muslim to go to the civil courts or the police instead. The courts have been endorsed by the Muslim Council of Britain, an umbrella body representing various Islamic organisations in the UK.

It would appear that these new sharia courts are already taking up matters which properly belong in family or criminal courts. Inheritance disputes have resulted in rulings giving sons twice as much as daughters, in accordance with sharia law. Normally in a British court the siblings would receive equal amounts. In various cases of domestic violence men have been ordered to take anger management classes and accept mentoring from community elders, with no further punishment. The women involved subsequently withdrew the complaints they had lodged with the police, who halted their investigations. The lawyer who chairs the courts’ governing council sees their work as “regulating community affairs”.

The concerns which arise from this development are obvious. There is the real fear that Islamic radicals will now try to make sharia law the dominant legal system in Muslim neighbourhoods. A non-Muslim living in a Muslim area may come under pressure to agree that any dispute over a contract with a Muslim will be resolved by a sharia court.

A fundamental principle of our justice system, in agreement with Scripture, is equal treatment for all. We cannot have a parallel legal system for Muslims if we are to remain a unitary state. Except in matters of personal conscience sharia law must always be subservient to the laws of the land. Any attempts by sharia courts to impose civil penalties for failure to comply with sharia law must be resisted.

Muslim groups have pointed out that *beth din* rabbinical courts (which also now operate under the Arbitration Act) have operated in Britain for over a hundred years, reinforcing orthodox Jewish belief and practice. However although these courts handle civil cases, ranging from divorce to business disputes, for the most part they act purely as religious courts, like church courts. They are not known for straying into criminal matters.

The attempt to replace Christianity with Islam as the established religion in the UK is helped as more Muslims get into positions of influence. The London borough of Tower Hamlets is an indication of what the future may hold. Out of a population of nearly 220,000 the proportion of Muslims is now close to 40%, the highest of any local authority in the UK. There are as many mosques as churches. Councillors adhering to Islam are in the majority and have used their collective power to advance their religion. Funding has been allocated to Islamic community organisations, cultural groups and social programmes. Ward names with Christian associations have been changed, one area now being called ‘Banglatown’ where the lamp posts have been painted green and red, the colours of the national flag of Bangladesh. Schools have been told that they should close for the Muslim festival of Eid, even where most of their pupils are not Muslim.

The borough is home to the headquarters of the Islamic Forum of Europe which strives to implement an Islamic religious, social and political order across the continent: doubtless the Forum believes it has good prospects here.

2. Halal Meat

An issue which illustrates the progress of Islam in the UK is halal food. The term *halal* designates that which is permissible according to sharia law. While it applies to many areas of life including finance, mortgages and pharmaceuticals halal has come to be associated with food and especially with meat. According to sharia law pork is *haram* or forbidden and 'clean' animals must be slaughtered in a prescribed manner.

In September last year a newspaper investigation (*Mail on Sunday*) found that leading supermarket and fast-food chains were selling halal meat and meat products without marking the packaging or providing information on their menus to this effect. Some of the outlets initially denied the allegations but later admitted to selling halal items secretly. Hospitals, schools, airlines and leading sporting venues were also involved.

Because of the demand for halal meat in the UK, particularly lamb, mutton and chicken, and in order to supply export markets overseas meat producers have introduced halal slaughtering on a large scale. It is obviously more cost-effective to have one production line instead of two and the result is that halal meat enters markets where there is no requirement for it and where there may be objection to it. Halal meat is also imported from abroad, including lamb from New Zealand.

What is halal meat and why might it be objectionable? Halal slaughter follows a specific ritual. The animal must be without blemish, alive and healthy at the time of slaughter and if possible facing towards Mecca. It must be offered to Allah by a competent Muslim who utters a form of the Shahada over each animal as he kills it, saying, "In the name of Allah, Allah is the greatest". The animal's throat is cut manually with one stroke of a razor-sharp knife which severs the windpipe, jugular vein and carotid artery and the animal is allowed to bleed to death; all blood should drain out of the carcass as the consumption of blood is forbidden in Islam.

The stunning before slaughter of animals intended for general consumption has been required in Great Britain since the Humane Slaughter Act of 1933. The traditional method was a captive-bolt pistol which penetrates the skull and renders the animal brain-dead. This does not satisfy Islamic requirements because it means that the animal is not without blemish, alive and healthy at the point when its throat is cut. A form of electric stunning has been developed which renders the animal unconscious before slaughter and this is regarded as satisfactory by some Muslims: others however insist on slaughter without stunning, a practice which when done for religious reasons is exempt from the 1933 Act and the more recent Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995.

Many are offended by halal slaughter because of their concerns for animal welfare. For Christians though the more troubling aspect of the practice is the religious one. Halal meat is effectively a sacrifice offered to a false god and we believe that for this reason Christians ought to shun halal meat.

The biblical passage which is most relevant is 1 Corinthians 10:14-33. It teaches that the heathen gods and the sacrifices offered to them in their temples are not what the worshippers consider them to be: these worshippers are actually engaging in idolatry and fellowshiping with evil spirits. Plainly Christians cannot go to these temples and join in the sacrificial feasts without being guilty of the same sin. However meat sold in the market, though it may have had such an origin, has lost its sacrificial character and the purchase of it is not a religious act: a believer need not therefore be anxious about his purchase. Likewise any meat which may be served to him by an unbeliever in his own house is to be regarded as ordinary food. However if the believer is *told* that the meat in question has been sacrificed to idols then it is his duty to abstain from it – as a

testimony to the one who has provided the information. In summary we are to “flee from idolatry”, to “do all to the glory of God” and to seek “the profit of many, that they may be saved.”

Significantly Islam does not have a temple and never has done. Unlike the meat offered to idols in Paul’s day which was then given over to a common use halal meat only ever has a ‘sacred’ character – one which it cannot lose: in the Muslim mind it is always associated with Allah. This is perhaps understood more readily by the followers of the Hindu and Sikh religions than by Christians. In those religions while the traditional method of slaughter is by severing the head of the animal without stunning no ritual is involved and for Sikhs in particular it is a grievous sin to eat meat which has been ritually slaughtered, especially that which has been sacrificed in the Islamic way.

Objections to halal meat on animal welfare grounds would also apply to *kashrut* or kosher meat prepared according to Jewish regulations since the animals are killed in a similar way with no stunning. It must be said that in the UK kosher meat is on a much smaller scale than halal. The Government no longer keeps statistics on animals slaughtered under religious methods but figures in a Meat Hygiene Service report in 2004 suggest 114 million halal animals and 2.1 million kosher animals were being killed annually then.

There is another contrast between kosher and halal meat which is more important for us. In Judaism today the method of slaughter for clean animals is meant to be the same as was employed under the Old Testament for the temple sacrifices (Deut. 12:21). Yet there is this difference: since the temple was destroyed sacrifices are prohibited. Therefore kosher slaughtering or *shechita* performed now cannot include anything belonging to the ceremony of sacrifice. Kosher animals must indeed be slaughtered by a Jew of consistent religious practice but while kosher slaughter may be construed as religious slaughter and even ritual slaughter it is not *sacrificial* slaughter: the animal is not dedicated to any deity.

If we unwittingly purchase halal meat then we are unwittingly helping to spread sharia law. If we knowingly purchase halal meat then we are knowingly helping to spread sharia law. We should be careful to avoid doing either. We should also seek to persuade government to pass legislation requiring that halal meat and meat products be always clearly identified as such when sold or served.

The obvious moral decay in our country and the lack of clear leadership on the part of the established churches are causing some to seek refuge in Islam with its strict religious code. We must do everything we can to warn our countrymen in general and government in particular of the real nature of Islam. Although historically Muslims have been among the least responsive to evangelistic effort we should pray earnestly for them and witness to them with the hope that their hearts will be opened to know the love of God in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Romanism

Our third ideology is also an old one – one which seemed to have largely disappeared from our shores but which has since reasserted itself. Many would question the inclusion of Roman Catholicism in a report dealing with the de-Christianisation of the United Kingdom. Rather than being a threat to our society is it not a great ally in the fight against secularism and Islamism? It can only be so if it is truly Christian, which we believe it is not.

Resurgence

At the Reformation the Roman Catholic Church was dealt a great blow but not a fatal one. Thereafter she embarked on a strategy to recover those nations which had become Protestant in their sympathies, including our own. It began with the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which firmly rejected Protestant doctrine but agreed on some organisational changes. This was followed by some well-known events in which Rome had a less-well-known hand: the Spanish Armada (1588), the Gunpowder Plot (1605) and the Jacobite Rebellions (1715 & 1745).

The nineteenth century was characterised by Rome's ecclesiastical resurgence. The papal hierarchy and diocesan structure was restored in England and Wales in 1850 and in Scotland in 1878. The twentieth century witnessed various political manoeuvrings by Rome, in particular the conflict in Northern Ireland and the development of the European Union.

A notable event in Rome's campaign to recover Britain was the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1982. He was the first reigning Pope to come to the UK and drew large crowds, holding Masses in five major cities in England, Scotland and Wales. Although it was not a 'state' visit he met both the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Influence

The Roman Catholic Church, and the Jesuit order in particular, has always been zealous for a system of education which matches its values and endeavours to instil them into the hearts and minds of its young people. The result is a network of day schools throughout our country quite separate from the regular state provision and yet funded by general taxation. In England two-thirds of all 'faith' schools in the secondary sector are of a Roman Catholic ethos. In Scotland almost all Roman Catholic schools are fully funded by the Scottish Government and applicants for positions in the areas of Religion, Guidance or Senior Management must be approved by the local diocese. Nearly half of all children in Northern Ireland are educated in the Catholic Maintained Schools sector.

As Britain's largest minority, amounting to at least 10% of the population, Roman Catholics are well catered for by the state when it comes to their education. The tragedy is that evangelical Protestants are not. In state schools biblical Christianity has been squeezed out of the classroom and biblical teaching is unwelcome even in the assembly. Government refuses to provide funding for separate Protestant Christian schools.

The media exercise a powerful influence in Britain. The Roman Catholic Church is awake to this and keen to have her own people in roles where they can convey her message. Nowadays the press, radio and television are the main means of communication and among the Roman Catholics working here are Mark Thompson, Director General of the BBC and the journalists Paul Johnson and Damian Thompson. Moreover since January 2009 the Pope has had his own slot on the video-sharing website YouTube!

Doctrine

In the end the most important thing about any church is what it teaches, especially concerning the way of salvation. What does Roman Catholicism teach?

Central to the whole scheme of salvation is the doctrine of justification. An official Roman Catholic document, the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* published in 2006, states:

"Justification is the most excellent work of God's love. It is the merciful and freely-given act of God which takes away our sins and makes us just and holy in our whole being. It is brought about by means of the grace of the Holy Spirit which has been merited for us by the passion of Christ and is given to us in Baptism. Justification is the beginning of the free response of man, that is, faith in Christ and of cooperation with the grace of the Holy Spirit."

Scripture teaches differently. Justification is God's reckoning of a sinner righteous (Rom. 8:33). It is not the making of a man righteous but the accounting of him so in terms of the unchanging standard of God's holy law. It is the opposite of condemnation, an act not a work and complete at once.

Sinners are reckoned righteous by God by the crediting of righteousness to them. "David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Rom. 4:6,7). God pardons sinners and

accepts them as righteous in his sight such that those who were once cast out as law-breakers are now admitted to the privileges of salvation.

Sinners are reckoned righteous by God solely through the merit of Christ. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). Justification is by the righteousness of Christ which he wrought in our nature.

Sinners are reckoned righteous by God wholly apart from personal works or worth. Justification is granted to all who put their trust in Christ alone for salvation. “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:5). It should be noted that this faith is “the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

By this vital measure the Roman Catholic Church is a falling and indeed an apostate church.

Issues

The rehabilitation of Romanism in the United Kingdom is indicated by two matters.

1. Papal Visit

Pope Benedict XVI has now come and gone. The attendances at the various events were considerably less than during the previous papal visit. For this we may be thankful, although it remains a shameful thing that a Protestant country should entertain the head of the Roman Catholic Church when it is the declared aim of that institution to undermine our Protestantism and return us to her fold.

In general the Pope enjoyed a good press during his visit. The scandal of clerical child abuse was largely left alone by the media. The papal statements were carefully crafted and somewhat guarded. Benedict is an intellectual figure whereas the previous Pope appealed more to the emotions. Interestingly the most objectionable Roman dogmas and practices – such as mariolatry and papal supremacy – were given little emphasis. The Pope presented himself (and was presented) as a champion of moral and spiritual values, giving a lead to all who seek to make a stand against the secularism of our age.

The truth is that papal pretensions have not changed in any way. They *cannot* change. The extraordinary and indeed blasphemous claims of the Papacy remain, whatever persona is currently adopted. Therein lies the deception and indeed the danger for our nation. It is worth reviewing these claims briefly.

The Pope claims to be the successor of the apostle Peter. However the apostles of Christ have no successors for their role was unique. They personally witnessed Christ’s life, death and resurrection and have left us a trustworthy record of these things (1 John 1:3). The Roman Catholic Church loves to refer to our Lord’s words: “thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18). But the church is not built upon a man. It is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Eph. 2:20). Christ is the Rock of our salvation.

The Pope claims to be the head of the church on earth. Yet when the Bible says “he is the head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:18) it is speaking of Christ, the sole Head of the church in heaven and earth. The Westminster Confession makes the following unambiguous statement: “There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God.” (Chapter XXV:vi)

The Pope claims to be the vicar of Christ in the world. A ‘vicar’ is a substitute, one who acts for another. Christ promised to the disciples “another Comforter” – someone of the same kind as Himself who would abide with them for ever (John 14:16). Jesus identified this Comforter as “the Holy Ghost” (John 14:26), not the Pope.

In a day when many are deluded by these and other papal pretensions let us thank God for an open Bible.

2. Ecumenical Moves

Over recent decades Rome has courted Protestant churches and this has led to a new attitude to the papacy, particularly on the part of the established Churches.

Historically Rome has worked both to 'romanise' the Church of England and to encourage Anglican clergy and people to go over to her. The romanising process foundered somewhat when the Church of England voted to ordain women to the ministry. Now the Church of England is riven by the question of whether to ordain men (and one supposes women) living in homosexual relationships.

In October 2009 it was announced that Pope Benedict intended to create a new type of ecclesiastical structure, called a personal ordinariate, for groups of disaffected Anglicans who join the Roman Catholic Church, allowing them to preserve elements of Anglican liturgy, spirituality and religious practice. The new body, officially named the "Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham", was established by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 15 January 2011 and covers England and Wales. Three active suffragan (assistant) bishops have joined Rome and been ordained to the Roman Catholic diaconate and priesthood. Rome intends that they will assist in the reception of other Anglican clergy and people and expects that the new body will eventually accommodate "thousands" of converts.

In 1986 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland passed an Act which declared that the Church no longer affirmed certain contents of the Westminster Confession of Faith. The passages specified were the references to Roman Catholicism, including the identification of the Pope of Rome as the Antichrist. The Act concluded: "This Church therefore dissociates itself from the above statements and does not require its office-bearers to believe them."

Sadly this new attitude is found in Presbyterian denominations which still officially subscribe to the Westminster Confession in its entirety. During the recent papal visit the Rev. David Robertson, minister of the Free Church of Scotland in Dundee, said regarding the Pope: "I would like to welcome him as a religious leader. I would like to welcome him as a fellow Christian. Personally I would love to meet him and to hear him. I feel perfectly free to disagree with many things that he stands for and says but overall I think it is a good thing that he is here." Sadly there has been no hint of any disciplinary action against Mr. Robertson for the succour he has given to the Man of Sin.

Having adopted many of the values of secularism the established Churches in our land are in a feeble state. The result is a lack of moral and spiritual authority and a power vacuum which Islam and Rome are trying to fill. What should our response be to this situation?

4. The Answer

There can only be one remedy for the de-Christianisation of the United Kingdom and that is its *re-Christianisation*. Secularism, Islamism and Romanism are ideologies with a blueprint for our nation but so much of evangelicalism has nothing coherent to say beyond personal salvation. While only the gospel can change men's hearts, if there is to be a recovery of the ground that has been lost then the church in general needs to return to some important beliefs she has largely lost.

The Church must return to her belief in the authority of Scripture. The truth is not to be found in the Humanist Manifestos, the Koran or the papal encyclicals. God has revealed Himself instead in the Holy Scriptures, inspired, infallible and sufficient, the only rule for faith and life (2 Tim. 3:15-17). The Scriptures will see off all competing authorities and are the only standard by which our lives will be judged at the end of time.

Christians today are reluctant to speak out against what is happening in case they are denounced as 'extreme'. The only reason why secularists judge Christians to be extreme is because of the measure they use to make their judgment. It is the wrong one. It is either personal opinion or majority opinion, both of which are subject to change. The fact that many pour scorn on the Bible does not alter the fact that it is eternal truth. Rather it demonstrates that what the Bible says about the human condition is only too true. Because of sin we are alienated from God and spiritually blind: "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

The church is engaged in a battle of ideas and she must have complete confidence in the weapons she uses. The Scriptures, believed in wholeheartedly, proclaimed boldly and blessed by the Spirit, are able to overcome every ideology which is opposed to Christ. "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4,5).

The Church must return to her belief in the importance of the State. By the state we mean civil government. It is not a human contrivance but a divine institution, equally with the church: "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). So the Scriptures have something to say to magistrates concerning their duties. Nations are moral entities before God, accountable to Him during the course of this world for how they honour Him: therefore the state must be righteous and its guide must be the moral law (Prov. 14:34).

In the light of this the complete separation of church and state or Voluntaryism can only be regarded as national atheism or at best national agnosticism. As George Smeaton pointed out, it leads to the absurdity that the *best* ruler of any nation must be the *worst* of its people – the man who has no fear of God and to whom all religions are equal with none worthy of special endorsement and encouragement!

In Romanism (and Islam) the church dominates the state, claiming temporal power as well as spiritual. In Anglicanism the state may dominate the church, claiming spiritual power as well as temporal, as with the Church of England. The reaction to these abuses may be Voluntaryism but we submit that it is a wrong reaction.

The Church must return to her belief in the Establishment of Religion. It is the teaching of many of the Reformed Confessions that church and state, as divine institutions, should work in harmonious co-operation. They have separate governments, officers and jurisdictions but owe duties and allegiance to the same Lord. This relation is known as Establishment. It is one for which the Free Church has always contended, believing it to be Scriptural and a bulwark against both irreligion and false religion.

It is true that the state is not to interfere in matters strictly spiritual but, as William Cunningham says, "though the promotion of religion is not an end of civil government (i.e. a direct end as it is with the church), it is yet an end which civil governors, in the execution of their official functions, may be called to aim at." The church needs to remind the state of her calling. If obeyed it would inhibit the spread of secularism.

The magistrate is described in Scripture as "the minister of God" and that "for good": to evil works he is a "terror" (Rom. 13:3,4). The greatest good in this world is the cause of Christ and the greatest evil is anything that opposes it. Paul's exhortation regarding prayer shows us that rulers are not to be indifferent to godliness any more than they are to honesty (1 Timothy 2:1-2). While he is not to enter into men's consciences the magistrate is bound to disapprove the public manifestation of false religion. Here too the church needs to remind the state of her calling. If obeyed it would inhibit the spread of Islamism and Romanism.

5. Conclusion

It is an interesting exercise to plot current trends. They suggest that at some time in the future Britain will be a secular, Islamic, Roman Catholic country! Clearly this will not happen for these ideologies are mutually-exclusive. The sheer impossibility of such a scenario is a reminder that the affairs of nations do not ultimately belong to man. It encourages us to believe that the God who is on the throne of the universe is able to change the course of things, even in a brief space of time, and that He will do so.

We have reason to believe from Scripture that the nations of the world will one day see the glory of Christ and esteem the moral values of Christianity above those of any other creed in a way that they do not do yet. Our hope and prayer and aim must be that our own nation will be among them.

6. Matters Addressed

Over the past year the Committee have addressed certain matters as they have been made aware of them and as they deemed appropriate.

In last year's report we indicated that we had sent a letter to the Prime Minister (with copies to the Secretary of State for Scotland and the First Minister of Scotland) protesting against the proposed papal visit in September 2010 and that the letter had been acknowledged by Downing Street and the views expressed "carefully noted." Following the General Election in May 2010 we wrote in a similar vein to the new Prime Minister, the new Secretary of State for Scotland and Her Majesty the Queen. Our letter to the Prime Minister was acknowledged but our letter to the Secretary of State was not. Our letter to the Queen was acknowledged by her Senior Correspondence Officer and a reply was also received from the 'Papal Visit Team' at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, indicating that "The status accorded to the Papal Visit does not represent a judgement in relation to any positions which may be held by the Catholic Church, nor a change in the constitutional position." The Committee also wrote to the Scottish Office regarding the policing costs during the Pope's visit. A reply was received from the Home Affairs and Social Policy Team stating that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office had been consulted on this matter and that policing costs would be met by the State from existing policing budgets and non-policing costs (estimated at £10-12 million) would be split between the Catholic Church and the Government.

The Committee also wrote to the Scottish Justice Secretary on the issue of liberty to engage in open air preaching in the light of the case of Shaun Holes who was arrested when preaching in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow in March 2010, charged with a breach of the peace and, having pled guilty, fined £1000. A lengthy reply was received from the Justice Directorate (Criminal Law and Licensing Division) which indicated that the decision to charge Mr Holes was entirely a matter for the Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service; the reply also sought to explain the aims of the new offence of threatening or abusive behaviour contained in Section 38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2009.

The Committee wrote to the Christian Institute expressing appreciation of all the good work they do but also gently expressing disquiet at their recent readiness to use a speaker associated with the Manhattan Declaration. A reply was received from the Director stressing that the Institute has not embraced ecumenism.

The Committee made submissions to Scottish Government Consultation Papers on the End of Life (Scotland) Assistance Bill and on Death Certification, Burial and Cremation. We are pleased to say that the End of Life Bill was heavily defeated in a free vote in the Scottish Parliament last December although the Member who sponsored it, Margo MacDonald, has indicated that she will try again if she is re-elected on 5th May.

The Committee are conscious of their need of God's help as they endeavour to represent the views of our Church to the civil magistrate. Believing that these views are sanctioned by Scripture they trust that the

Lord will make them effective for the good of our land in an evil day. “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” (Psa. 119:142)

DAVID BLUNT, *Convener*
WILLIAM MACLEOD, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Public Questions, Religion & Morals Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener, Vice-convener and Clerk;
2. The General Assembly commend the work of the Committee to our people. They encourage congregations and individuals to inform the Committee of local matters of particular spiritual and moral concern that might be helped by being more widely known and by being addressed by the Committee;
3. The General Assembly express their alarm at the increasing secularism of the United Kingdom with the many evils that attend it, including the injustices now being meted out to faithful Christians. They remind the various civil powers of our Christian constitution and heritage with its inestimable benefits and of their duty to respect and maintain the same;
4. The General Assembly express their concern at the growing influence of Islam in our country. They urge government in Westminster and Holyrood to resist any further demands for the introduction of sharia law and to return to the Bible as the source of all proper and wholesome law;
5. The General Assembly express their dismay at the rehabilitation of Roman Catholicism in our country and the weakening of Protestant convictions on the part of the established and other Churches. They recommend our governments to take note of the lessons of our national history and pray that we will be kept faithful as a Church to the principles of Scripture and the Scottish Reformation;
6. The General Assembly commend to the prayers of the Church our nation’s present religious and moral state. In particular they call upon the congregations of our Church to observe a day of humiliation and prayer on Saturday 3rd December or the closest convenient date and encourage other Christians throughout our country to do likewise.

VIII.
REPORT
OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

My goodness, fortress, my high tower,
Deliverer, and shield,
In whom I trust

These opening words of Psalm 144:2 give us the text for this year's double CD. The Psalmist in these few words gives us a full and wonderful picture of our Great God in His awesome power and tenderness. He is indeed our Creator, Saviour and Sustainer. We are so very thankful to our God that He has in gracious goodness not left us to fashion songs to sing to His praise based on our own self-centredness. But rather "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." What a blessing that is. We have God's written Word to teach us and instruct us to seek and to find His dearly beloved and given Son, and what we are to use to lift our voices in the true and spiritual worship of God alone. These "Psalms of David", these "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" are God's very own compositions. What a great blessing that is.

We are called upon – all men everywhere – to attend, to heed, and to take part in the public worship of God, to make melody in our hearts as we hymn the very words of God in singable form. This God delights to hear from "the broken and the contrite heart". What blessings we have in these words.

In better days our fathers gladly set to work in order to give to the Church in Scotland the Psalms that would be sung. A version duly appeared with the heading; "The Psalms of David in Metre" with the sub-heading; "According to the Version approved by the Church of Scotland and appointed to be used in worship." What a blessing this has been to the people of God and a blessing that continues to our people to this day.

The better days may have passed by, but no better words can we use to lisp the praises of our God and Saviour than these words we treasure. We may sing them now in increasingly hard days, but the heavier the days the more we discover that they are words of comfort to our souls and a bastion to our lives as we seek to witness in this humanistic and secular society that more and more openly would destroy true worship and tear God from us, leaving desolation behind.

At the foot of Mars Hill where Paul preached his sermon using as a springboard the words of the Athenians, "to the unknown god", there is a huge brass plaque with his sermon in Greek. At this present time how many copies exist in any language of the writings of the Greek philosophers? That sermon, however, as a small part of God's Word exists and is read and preached from in over 2500 languages, and Bible translators, even as you read this, are working on many more. What blessings might flow if they also gave the Psalms for singing in all these languages.

Your committee have met and have sought to carry out their work with diligence and, may it be said, with no little joy. The words-only version of the Psalms in Gaelic metre is not yet printed as we had hoped, but progress is being made.

We were asked to consider a spoken version of the English Metrical Psalms. This task was given to one of the committee and a version should be ready at this General Assembly. It comes to you as a one man effort and while it may not please all we trust that it will serve the purpose behind the request made last year and

with God's kindness be blessed to many who may be having difficulties with their sight, shut-ins, those in care homes, or even by yourselves while driving.

It doesn't cease to surprise us that requests continue to come for the CDs from, for example, Cairns in Australia to Brooklyn in New York. It is always a joy to send CDs and Manuals, and answer questions and give what advice we may. Your committee are served by a dedicated band from the one who leads and guides us in singing, to the group of singers we draw from, and to our recording engineer. We are thankful to them. There is also a growing band of those who, acquiring new skills, are willing and proving able to teach in their own areas and lead others, young and old, to take part in the Psalmody tests. The increasing number of ministers, not afraid to begin at the Elementary level, are making progress; some to Grade 1, their wives aiding and abetting them.

WILLIAM B. SCOTT, *Convener*
GREG MACDONALD, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Special Committee on Psalmody and thank the Committee and especially the Convener;
2. The General Assembly reaffirm their commitment to the exclusive use of inspired materials of praise in the public worship of God as being consistent with Scripture and the Standards of the Church, as well as being authentically ecumenical and providing historical continuity with the Church in all ages; they pray that in a day of increasing will-worship, many will return to the simplicity of God-ordained worship and praise;
3. The General Assembly welcome the work done by the Committee towards the publication of a much needed new edition of the Gaelic Psalm Book and look forward to it being available to the Christian public in the near future;
4. The General Assembly welcome the production of a spoken version of the Metrical Psalms and commend its use to the Church;
5. The General Assembly commend to the Church the latest CD of the "Worthy to be Praised" series for widespread use by psalmody classes and for daily edification of all;
6. The General Assembly thank Mrs Scott and her CD team, including Mr Alcorn, the sound engineer, and congratulate them on a production the Church can be proud of;
7. The General Assembly note the Supplementary Report and congratulate all those who took part successfully in the Psalmody Test and thank those who trained and tested them;
8. The General Assembly give thanks to God for the devoted precentors around our churches who give prayerful, careful and inspirational leadership to our worshipping people.

APPENDIX

59 took part in the 2011 Psalmody Test (7 less than in 2010) and gained awards as shown:

Aberdeen

Grade 1: Roy Bartle (adult)

Grade 2: Matthew McGlynn, Tim McGlynn, Alex. Watt (adult), Elsie Watt (adult), Sandy Weir (adult)

Grade 3: Agnes McGlynn (adult), Sophie McGlynn, Verity McGlynn, Kathelle MacSween (adult)

Edinburgh

Elementary Grade: 1st Group: Mina MacInnes,

Elementary Grade: 2nd Group: Sandy Iain MacInnes

Grade 1: James MacInnes (adult)

Grade 2: Rebecca Cameron, Lydia Gracie,

Grade 3: Alison Gracie, Rachel Gracie (continuation), Allan MacLeod, Heather MacLeod, Shona MacLeod (continuation)

Knock & Point

Grade 2: Alexander MacLeod, Ruaraidh MacLeod

Inverness, Free Greyfriars

Grade 1: Anita Ratti, Deborah Ratti (Adult)

North Uist & Grimsay

Grade 1: David M. Blunt (Adult), Sybil Blunt (Adult), John MacLean (Adult)

Poolewe & Altbea

Grade 1: Andrew Allan

Portree

Grade 1: Claire MacLeod

Grade 3: Emma MacLeod

Shettleston

Grade 1: Elizabeth Keddie, Matthew Keddie

Grade 6 (continuation): Bruce MacKenzie (adult)

Snizort

Elementary Grade: 1st Group: Angus Nicolson;

Elementary Grade: 2nd group: Andrew Macleod, Jonathan Macleod; Kenneth Nicolson

Grade 2: Alasdair Nicolson (Adult), Sarah Macleod (continuation)

Grade 3: Rebekah Macleod (Continuation)

Stornoway

Grade 1: Sarah Craig, Duncan MacDonald

Grade 2: Thomas Craig, Andrew M. Smith, Eilidh Smith

Grade 3: Isla MacDonald

Grade 4: Joanna Gillies, Jonathan Gillies

Grade 5: Lily Craig

Grade 6 (Continuation): Annabel Craig, David Craig, Emma Craig, Rachel Craig, Roberta Craig (Adult)

Tarbat

Grade 5: Malcolm McLeod (adult)

Grade 6: Veda Joy MacLeod (adult),

Grade 6 (Continuation): Andrew MacLeod (adult), Murdo MacLeod, Betty Murray (adult)

IX. REPORT

OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOME & FOREIGN MISSIONS

1. Introduction

Reflecting on the work of our church during another year of Home and Foreign Missions brings both a sense of discouragement and encouragement. We could get discouraged when we look at the small size of our denomination in Scotland, and wonder what impact we are having to advance the kingdom of Christ at home. Struggling at home, one could then ask what possible influence can we have in the field of world missions? In the scheme of things this too is very small, yet one recent visitor to our denomination remarked 'it seems God is enabling the Free Church (Continuing) to punch well above its weight.' If this be the case, then it is of the Lord and we give Him all the glory, but it ought to be a cause of great encouragement to us and a source of motivation to continue maximising our resources to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom in every place the Lord places us, while we look for his blessing.

God promised Israel on a number of occasions that a people faithful to Him, though they were small, would punch above their weight. In Leviticus 26:8. *'And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.'* A similar thing was repeated a generation later by Joshua (Josh 23:10) and famously confirmed in the experience of Israel in the days of Gideon when the Midianites were defeated by only 300 men. Indeed the history of Israel when she was faithful to the Lord, and the history of the Church since the days of the Apostles is a history in doing just this. After all, it was but a handful of disciples who received the first commission of Christ to accomplish the ambitious task of discipling the nations. The success of the task however did not ultimately depend on them but on the fact that *'All power in heaven and in earth'* is given unto Him.

It is because of this that our potential to advance the kingdom of God as a small denomination is far beyond what we are prone to think deep down. Certainly the day is hard, but there is nothing unique about that. The labourers are few, yet they have been few before. But with God, a handful of corn sown in the tops of the mountains, the most unlikely place for it to grow, can bring forth a harvest of souls as numerous as the blades of grass in a luscious meadow (Ps 72:16). So with this in mind, in the spirit of the Apostle Paul we give thanks for all the encouragements and discouragements of the last year but we do not dwell on them. Rather we *'forget the things that are behind and reach forth to the things that are before'* in the realm of Home and Foreign Missions.

2. Home Missions

We are deeply grateful for the faithful labours of our Home Mission Worker, Mr Donald John Morrison and offer our warm congratulations to Mr and Mrs Morrison on the birth of their second child, Anna Marie. During the course of the year Mr Morrison assisted with planned mission outreach in Aberdeen, Shettleston and Knightswood in Glasgow, Evanton and Stornoway. This included helping with the evangelistic module for the Seminary students. When not on scheduled missions Mr Morrison has conducted tract distribution and door-to-door visitation in the area around the Westhill Church in Inverness.

In 2010 Mr Morrison undertook intensive labours in connection with the Pope's visit to Scotland in September. In association with the Southern Presbytery he ordered large quantities of suitable literature and arranged for teams of helpers to distribute tracts in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Some 17,000 Gospel tracts, along with 27 Bibles, were given out and the Gospel was shared with countless multitudes in both cities, most of whom were Roman Catholics. Contacts resulted in follow-up work by email and correspondence. Deacons' Courts were encouraged to make contributions for the literature and expenses were covered.

During the course of the year around 29,000 gospel tracts and 48 Bibles were given out throughout Scotland. The number of booklets and magazines for 2010 was 8,425 including 6,806 copies of the evangelistic issue of the *Witness* magazine. Also given out at the end of the year were 5,150 TBS Calendars and 1,000 copies of the *Evangelical Times* special December issue. The Committee are grateful to Mr Morrison for the regular issue of his *Newsletter and Report* which he has printed and distributed throughout the Church. We are also mindful of his missionary interests in Moldova and rejoice with him in raising around £70,000 towards the Moldova Project Appeal for the new House of Prayer and associated projects.

3. Jewish Missions

The Committee continued to support the work of Christian Witness to Israel in 2010 with a gift of £600. The Secretary of the CWI, Mr Mike Moore, is expected to give an update on the work of CWI at the Missions evening at the General Assembly.

4. Overseas Missions

1 Zambia

The work in Zambia comes under the Covenant College Zambia Trust. The three ministries of the Trust are Covenant College, the Farm and the Christian Education Fund. The Free Church (Continuing) representative on the Trust is Rev. Greg Macdonald and we are grateful for his diligence in attending meetings of the Trust. He will report to the General Assembly.

Covenant College

When Rev. Greg Macdonald reported to the 2010 General Assembly on his recent visit to Zambia he made a plea for recruiting a third lecturer for Covenant College from the Free Church (Continuing). The need for a third lecturer had been identified by the Covenant College Zambia Trust. Our Committee took up the challenge and, in June 2010, approached Rev. David Lachman with a view to filling the post. He had completed his course of study at Free Church Seminary and had been licensed by the Southern Presbytery. He agreed to make a visit to the Covenant College in September and undertake some lecturing. On his return to Scotland a letter was received from the management at Covenant College expressing their confidence in Mr Lachman's ability to fill the post. The Committee then interviewed Mr Lachman and unanimously recommended him for the post. An approach was made to the Southern Presbytery to take Mr Lachman on trials for ordination and for induction to missionary service in Zambia. This took place on 28th January 2011 at Partick Free Church, Glasgow.

The Committee drew up the terms for Mr Lachman's missionary service. He was given a minister's stipend and it was agreed that in the period from October to February, when the College is not in session, he return to the UK and be involved in deputation work and assistance in any vacant congregation. It was also made clear to him that after a period of settling down in the work in Zambia, he should focus on planting a Church that would correspond to the spiritual ethos and practice of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). It is encouraging that for the first time since Rev. David Fraser left in 2004 the Free Church (Continuing) have a full-time missionary in Zambia. The Lachmans have settled in well to their new situation and they keep us up to date with Newsletters.

It was providential that Mr Lachman's appointment came after it was announced that the Principal, Rev. Cees Molenaar, was leaving the College to take up a new work. He has been there since 2006 and much progress has taken place in the five years since his appointment. His wife was active in the work among the women and the children. We wish the Molenaars well as they leave the College in June. Rev. Heinrich Zwemstra takes over as Principal and we pray for the Lord's blessing on him in his new appointment. His wife Jacomien had taken malaria badly last year and more recently their daughter Nelrie was very ill with it. We are glad for the recent improvement in her condition.

During the last session there were 18 students in the College. The graduation ceremony for four of the

students took place in October 2010. The tribal Chief attended the ceremony once again and spoke well, declaring his Christian faith. He told the audience that when dealing with disputes, etc in his chiefdom he only used the Bible as his guide. He didn't allow witchdoctors or witchcraft in his palace. The College has obtained accreditation with Mukhanyo Theological College and already one of the Covenant College students has gone there to study.

Covenant College Farm

The Farm forms part of CCZT ministries. It was good that the leader Mr Phil Bailey was able once again to visit Scotland early in 2011 and bring us up to date with the work. He was accompanied by Mr and Mrs Cammy Macleay as he addressed meetings in Stornoway, Snizort, Brora and Glasgow. Mr Bailey, with his team, manages the farm to provide for the various needs of the College and other ministries. The work extends to providing teaching to subsistence farmers in the Petauke region and a work-for-food programme during the months from November to April when many of the local people are short of food. The farm also provides an environment for training the College students in agricultural principles, as part of their course. During the last week of term Mr Bailey had eight hours of teaching, and continued the new Agricultural curriculum which was started this year teaching Farming God's Way and Integrated Small Scale Farming for rural farmers. Mr Bailey has been looking for a Zambian to assist in the farm work and eventually take over as administrator. The choice has fallen on Mr Jackson Kasalo who has been appointed as Agricultural Missionary from June 2011.

The Christian Education Ministries (CEM)

The Christian Education Fund also forms part of CCZT ministries. Their work is to give basic material support to Christian Community schools with dedicated teachers and training their teachers, with emphasis on Religious Education and the general Christian character of education. The work continues in the capable hands of Miss Marjanne Hendriksen. The Committee were also delighted that Mr. Andrew MacLeod, Portmahomack was willing and able to spend some four months in Zambia at his own expense, assisting Miss Hendriksen in her education work.

Women and Children ministry

Mirjam Molenaar, Jacomien Zwemstra and Marjanne Hendriksen work together to reach the women and children in the community. There are regular meetings for the wives of the students. Every Saturday afternoon children from the villages around the mission come together at the College. They have singing, colouring and memorising of Bible verses and then are split into groups by age for Scripture lessons.

2 Presbytery of the United States

The Presbytery of the United States endured a difficult year in 2010. The Atlanta congregation suffered a number of discouragements and has had to move from premises that were closer to the city centre, into the community of Conyers, Georgia, a suburb east of the city. The Presbytery was sad to receive the resignation of Rev. Sherman Isbell in December 2010 due to ill health. This has been a setback to the work as a whole in the U.S. and to the Washington congregation in particular, but a small number of families continue to meet for worship and receive regular pulpit supply. Services in the Detroit Preaching Station came to an end in January 2010. The preaching station in St. Louis, Missouri suffered the loss of some members due to relocation with employment but services continue with Mr Jonathan Mattull providing pulpit supply.

However, in the last year another group of Reformed Christians in Columbia, Missouri, were recognised as a preaching station by the Presbytery and placed under the oversight of the Atlanta Kirk Session. They are known locally as Grace Reformed Church and have around 30 people in attendance. Their regular pulpit supply is provided by Rev. Jeffery Yelton, a minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (website <http://www.westminsterconfession.org/congregations/columbia>). The Greenville congregation secured a newly-renovated rented facility in downtown Greenville which has proved more

than suitable for their needs. Since last year, the congregation elected another elder and deacon and also added a number of members to the communion roll. There are currently around 130 souls attached to the congregation including children.

The Presbytery's Family Conference last August was again well attended. The speakers were Rev. Maurice Roberts, Rev. Warren Gardner, Rev. Sean Humby and Rev. Rob McCurley. About half of those who attended were from outside the denomination, giving a welcome opportunity to spread the principles for which we stand. The guest speaker from Scotland for the 2011 conference is to be Rev. Harry Woods. The Presbytery website <http://www.westminsterconfession.org/> continues to give the witness of the Presbytery greater visibility and influence in the U.S and beyond. A Spanish language website is also maintained at <http://www.presbyterianoreformado.org/> with some of the Westminster Standards translated into Spanish for the first time. This is having an encouraging impact on the spread of Reformed doctrine and worship in the South American continent to where shipments of literature have begun. The Colloquium is the Presbytery's school of theology for office-bearers and students, meeting each year in April and November, and providing rich times of fellowship for men labouring in scattered situations.

As the Presbytery looks to the future, they hope soon to have two students for the ministry licensed and ordained. Mr. Travis Fentiman was in Scotland in February 2011 and is seeking to complete his supplementary studies at the Free Church Seminary. Mr. Jonathan Mattull has finished his studies and sustained the exams conducted by Presbytery. Both men are firmly attached to the testimony of the Church and are pursuing licensure and ordination with the Presbytery of the USA.

3 Canada - Smiths Falls

The work in Smiths Falls continues on an even course. Rev. Bert Pohl exercises a tent-making ministry there and expects to be present at the General Assembly.

4 Australia - Adelaide

The Committee reported to the 2010 General Assembly regarding various matters relating to the Congregation of Adelaide. Two Petitions were also brought before that Assembly from individuals connected with Adelaide. The result of the Report and Petitions was that the Committee were instructed to continue their deliberations, expeditiously address as appropriate all the concerns specified in the Petitions and conduct a Visitation, with a view to bringing matters to a conclusion without delay, reporting on progress to the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly.

The Committee duly sought to fulfil this remit, and met on five occasions between June and October 2010. Regrettably reference was made in the Scottish public press to the difficulties in Adelaide alleging certain complaints had been made against the Minister. This was unhelpful partly because of inaccuracies in the reporting, but also because the Committee were aware of a lack of corroborative evidence warranting further action on behalf of the Committee regarding matters mentioned in these reports.

One matter mentioned in the press report was the fact that legal action had been threatened against certain complainants. The Committee sought to deal with this matter in a sensitive and pastoral way, whilst at the same time emphasising the jealousy of the Church for her spiritual independence under Christ. This included giving advice and warning that any action taken thereanent would have serious and immediate consequences.

The Committee examined various complaints highlighted in the Petitions together with other issues which had developed in ongoing correspondence between Mr Frew and others, including the Committee. At their meeting in September 2010 various issues were highlighted which it was felt merited further consideration and it was agreed that a draft of a libel be prepared for consideration at their October meeting.

Regrettably, at the beginning of October 2010, the Committee were sent a purported Declaration of Disassociation from various individuals at Adelaide indicating their secession from the Church. On 4th October there was also sent a purported letter of Resignation from Rev. James Frew. In the view of the Committee neither item of correspondence could be received, as the parties concerned were, in the view of the Committee, following a divisive course from the discipline and government of the Church.

When the Committee reported to the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly, the Commission of Assembly noted that the resignation of Rev. James Frew from the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) could not be accepted at that time due to outstanding allegations against him and directed the Committee to follow the procedures set out in the law and practice of the Church. Further details will be found in the Report of the Special Commission.

The Committee regret that they were unable to resolve the difficulties at Adelaide. At present there are a few people, scattered in various parts of Australia, who remain connected to the Congregation at Adelaide. However, it is difficult to see, at present, how there can be a meaningful future for the FC(C) in Australia. The Committee intend to meet with one of the Congregation who will be in Edinburgh around the time of the General Assembly. It is their fervent prayer that the outcome of events will lead to repentance and restoration of offenders, and that a measure of peace may yet prevail amongst those who were involved in this unedifying dispute. The Committee are conscious of the need to preserve the good name of the Church. Although the process now concluded has helped in this regard, the Committee remain vigilant.

5 Overseas Students and Sri Lanka.

Rev. Harry Woods visited Sri Lanka under the auspices of the Committee last July and undertook an extensive speaking schedule. Mr. Partheepan Nixon Shanmugam, who has been a student in our Seminary since 2007, hopes to be licensed and ordained by our Church later this summer to take up ministry in Sri Lanka. We are thankful for his contribution to the work of our Church during the last four years and look forward to continued co-operation in the future.

GAVIN BEERS *Convener*
JOHN J. MURRAY *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED RELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report and thank the Committee, especially the Convener;
2. The General Assembly thank the Home Mission Worker, Mr Donald John Morrison, for all his diligent labours in outreach and evangelism during the year and especially his activities during the Papal visit;
3. The General Assembly commend Mr Morrison, his wife, Heidi, Calum Arie, and their newborn daughter, Anna Marie, to the prayers of our people;
4. The General Assembly approve the support given to Christian Witness to Israel and commend the cause of Jewish evangelism to the Church;
5. The General Assembly note with thankfulness the appointment of Rev. David Lachman as a missionary lecturer in Covenant College, Zambia and commend him and Mrs Lachman and Elijah to the prayers of the Church;
6. The General Assembly give thanks for the dedicated service in Covenant College of Rev. Cees Molenaar over the last five years and send prayerful good wishes to the Molenaar family in their new setting;

7. The General Assembly give thanks for the visit of Mr Phil Bailey to our congregations in Scotland and rejoice in the developments of the Farm work and the appointment of Mr Jackson Kasalo as Agricultural Missionary;
8. The General Assembly give thanks for the continued work of Miss Marjanne Hendriksen and commend the Christian Education Ministry to our Church;
9. The General Assembly thank Rev. Greg MacDonald for his diligence as the Church's representative trustee on Covenant College Zambia Trust;
10. The General Assembly regret to hear of the resignation of Rev. Sherman Isbell due to ill health and convey prayerful good wishes to him and his wife;
11. The General Assembly note the recent changes in the congregations of the Free Presbytery of the USA and pray for the future strengthening of the work there;
12. The General Assembly are thankful for the continuance of the ministry of Rev. Bert Pohl in Smiths Falls and commend him and the congregation to the prayers of the Church;
13. The General Assembly note with much sadness and regret the secession of a number of the Congregation at Adelaide and the Deposition of Rev. James Frew from the Office of the Holy Ministry. They instruct the Committee to continue their deliberations as to the Free Church (Continuing)'s continued future in Australia;
14. The General Assembly thank Rev. Harry Woods for his visit to Sri Lanka in July 2010 and commend Mr Partheepan Nixon Shanmugam to the prayers of the Church;
15. The General Assembly encourage Kirk Sessions to be active in the work of outreach and to be supportive of mission at home and overseas.

X. REPORT

OF THE TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY & ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

The Committee have been occupied in largely regular business over the past year. This has afforded an opportunity to consider the general running of things and changes which might improve the day-to-day running of the work of the Committee. Such periods of relative calm, in which we can reflect upon the way forward, are a blessing from the Lord. It is essential, therefore, that we utilise the time wisely to move forward as efficiently as the Lord may enable us.

Students

Commencing Studies

Mr. Murdo Maciver (Edinburgh) will, upon passing the necessary entrance exam, enter upon a four-year course in the Seminary in the autumn of this year.

Continuing Studies

Mr Alasdair Macleod is approaching the end of his second year of studies.

Mr Calum Smith is nearing the end of his first year of a four-year course.

Concluding Studies

Mr James MacInnes is nearing the end of his three-year course of studies.

With one student commencing and with one student completing his studies this year, the Seminary will begin the new Session in September with three Free Church students. We are thankful as a Committee to the Lord for His continued favour to us in bringing men forward with the desire to serve Him within our denomination, and we are grateful to the lecturers for their continued faithfulness in teaching these young men.

2. Students from the United States of America

In accordance with the decision of the 2010 General Assembly, the Committee met with and interviewed Mr Travis Fentiman. Although Mr Fentiman was only in the country for a short period, opportunities for preaching were arranged in several congregations. The Committee are grateful for the help they received from congregations and individuals in order to make this possible. The Committee agreed that Mr Fentiman should complete his present course of studies in the Seminary. His name has already been circulated to Synods and Presbyteries, and it is hoped that he will be issued with a Completion Certificate from the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee in June of this year.

The measures adopted at the last General Assembly are now in operation so that all students for the ministry from the United States of America will now be required to complete the Seminary Course by distance learning.

3. Revision of Application Forms

As was reported to a previous General Assembly, work on revising the various application forms was undertaken and continued during the year. A new application form for 'Recognition as a Candidate' was prepared and is now in use. The streamlined version is a marked improvement on the previous edition. The Committee would be grateful if all such new applicants and their Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries would

ensure that the correct application form is used, as all old forms received by the Committee will be returned. Work on a new application form for 'Admission to the Ministry' is progressing well, and it is hoped that the revised version will be available within the next few months and will be presented to the next General Assembly for its approval. The clerk to the Committee, Rev. James I. Gracie, was responsible for the vast majority of the work done to bring this about. While such changes are undoubtedly small, and destined to be seen by only a few people, they are part of the overall work of the Committee.

4. Resident Lay Preachers Training Programme

The Resident Lay Preachers Training Programme, introduced by the 2010 General Assembly, is up and running and appears to be working well. While any new initiative is likely to have teething problems, so far it appears that there have been relatively few with this Programme. There is one individual at present on the Programme and it was reported to the Committee that he is progressing well in his studies.

5. Loan Repayment

With the present financial climate, and the considerable cost to the denomination involved in training our own students, the Committee were obliged to consider the situation at present where our students receive non-repayable loans from the Church. Such loans can involve the Church writing-off somewhere in total in the region of £20,000 - £22,000 for a student on a three-year course, and even more where there is a four-year course. The Committee came to the conclusion that the present arrangement is unsatisfactory, and that future loans (i.e. all future loans approved by the Committee) from the date of this General Assembly should be on a repayment basis. The reasons for this conclusion are as follows:-

1. The denomination cannot afford the cost of the present policy;
2. The new scheme envisaged would place our students on the same footing as every other student in the country;
3. The new scheme will bring our students into line with the previous practice in the Church;
4. The repayments involved will be restricted in such a way as to make any monthly repayment minimal;
5. It will encourage students who can afford to live without the loan so to do, thus saving the denomination considerable outlay.

The Committee therefore seek the approval of the Assembly to introduce the following scheme:-

- a. All Candidates for the Ministry of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) will be eligible to apply for a church loan;
- b. Church loans will be awarded by the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee upon application by a qualifying student, and will be confirmed in writing by the Clerk of the Committee;
- c. Church loans will continue to be in line with the amounts set out annually by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
- d. The Candidate will be required to pay back 9% of any stipend in excess of £15,000 each year, or whatever % and income limit as may be set from time to time by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
- e. Repayments will take account of any previous loans to be repaid to the Students Awards Agency for Scotland so as not to exceed the 9% upper limit;

- f. Oversight of the repayment of any loan will be the responsibility of the Finance & Sustentation Committee who will arrange for the sum to be deducted from the monthly Stipend;
- g. Repayments will begin in the April immediately following issue of a Completion Certificate by the Training of the Ministry Committee;
- h. Loans still outstanding will be written-off at age 65;
- i. Notwithstanding all the above, all loans will be given according to the criteria set out from time to time by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
- j. All qualifying Candidates will still be able to apply for a non-repayable "Dependants Grant".

The above recommendation is given with the understanding that such a student loan scheme, if adopted by the General Assembly, will not place undue financial hardship upon our newly qualified ministers.

6. Student Oversight

The Committee view with concern certain recent events, where men not long through our seminary have quickly moved from the position they professed to hold. While we are aware that no amount of legislation or oversight can ensure the honesty or integrity of any individual, we are nevertheless seeking to consider ways whereby such occasions are made less likely. This will require diligence on the part of all those with input in the selection, oversight and training of candidates for the ministry.

In particular we would encourage Sessions, Presbyteries, the Seminary and ourselves as a Committee, to scrutinise most carefully all aspects of this process, and each individual engaged in training for the ministry. It is no kindness either to the students or the Church to allow men through the extended period of ministerial training who may be intellectually capable of the study but are not fully aware of the solemn commitments they are required to make in entering the ministry.

7. Quinquennial Visitation of the Seminary

It was agreed that a Quinquennial Visitation of the Seminary should take place in the latter half of 2011.

8. Annual Budget

The projected expenditure for the seminary for 2012 is ten thousand one hundred and ninety six pounds (£10,196). Projected expenditure for the Training of the Ministry Committee (including student loans) is twenty one thousand one hundred and fifty pounds (£21,150). Somewhere in the region of three thousand pounds (£3,000) is expected in donations.

TIMOTHY MCGLYNN, *Convener*
ALLAN MACIVER, *Vice-convener*

SEMINARY REPORT

'For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity' (1Timothy 2:5-7).

The great Apostle Paul spoke of himself as first a preacher and then an apostle. He laid stress upon his solemn duty to teach the Gentiles in faith and truth. There is no higher job that any man could have than to be a minister of the Word. Such individuals must have a call from God and be gifted by Him for the work. Yet, even possessing a call and gifts, the individual normally will still require a good seminary training. Knowledge has to be imparted, study habits developed, preaching gifts trained and pastoral skills improved.

We are delighted to report that the Seminary continues this work to the benefit of the students. Because our lecturers receive only expenses, the work is carried out at the barest minimum of cost. Since we are training our own students we have control over what they are taught. Instead of them wasting hours of their time studying different philosophies and the various theories of liberalism the students spend their time studying the Scriptures and sound biblical theology which will be the substance of their preaching. Our lecturers are able to communicate to them the best of our own distinctive Scottish experimental Reformed theology and also that ethos which will prepare the student for ministering effectively in our own congregations. Those coming out of Seminary are not simply trained in theology and biblical languages but also in preaching and pastoring and we thank God for the young men whom he has given us.

Two of our lecturers are retired men and continue to give to the students the wealth of their lives' studies in the ministry. Their experience enriches their teaching. The other lecturers, drawing on their ongoing work in pastoral charges keep the students in touch with the daily challenges which ministers will face. All do an excellent job labouring sacrificially for the benefit of the students. It is good to see the delight which the lecturers have in the work which they do, their unity and respect for one another and the love which they have for their students. The students also show a great love and respect for their lecturers. They get on wonderfully well together. Mrs Mary Taggart helps in looking after the library and Rev and Mrs Bill Scott take an annual class in Psalmody.

This year is due to see the largest number of students yet graduating from the Seminary in one year, with four completing their course. However, thankfully, at present it looks as if we may have four new students next year – two for our own ministry and two private students. One of the students completing their courses is James MacInnes who is a Free Church (Continuing) student and a member of the Edinburgh Congregation. Two other graduating students, Davide Ratti who is a member in Inverness and Partheepan Shanmugam who is a member in Knightswood are both in process of applying to the Free Church (Continuing) to be accepted as candidates for the ministry. The fourth student who is graduating is Matthew Fraser who is a member in Shettleston Free Church (Continuing). The students have a great love and concern for each other and this bodes well for the future of the Church. The students also believe they are privileged to be studying at what they regard as one of the best seminaries in the world.

Over the past year intense training in evangelism and pastoral visiting were given during a week which the students and Rev. Harry Woods spent in the Isles of Lewis and Harris and another in Knightswood (Glasgow).

We commend the Seminary to the prayers of the Church.

WILLIAM MACLEOD, *Principal*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive the Report of the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Clerk for his diligent efforts throughout the year;
2. The General Assembly express their appreciation of the dedicated labours of the Principal and Lecturers of the Seminary throughout the academic year;
3. The General Assembly note the introduction of a new application form for Recognition as a Candidate for Training for the Ministry of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). The Assembly encourage the Committee in producing a new form for Application for Admission;
4. The General Assembly encourage the Committee in their continued oversight of the Seminary and instruct them to bring a report of their Quinquennial Visitation of the Seminary to the General

Assembly of 2012;

5. The General Assembly approve the recommendations of the Committee regarding all future student loans approved by the Committee in the following terms:-
 - 5.1 All Candidates for the Ministry of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) will be eligible to apply for a church loan;
 - 5.2 Church loans will be awarded by the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee upon application by a qualifying student, and will be confirmed in writing by the Clerk of the Committee;
 - 5.3 Church loans will continue to be in line with the amounts set out annually by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
 - 5.4 The Candidate will be required to pay back 9% of any stipend in excess of £15,000 each year, or whatever % and income limit as may be set from time to time by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
 - 5.5 Repayments will take account of any previous loans to be repaid to the the Students Awards Agency for Scotland so as not to exceed the 9% upper limit;
 - 5.6 Oversight of the repayment of any loan will be the responsibility of the Finance & Sustentation Committee who will arrange for the sum to be deducted from the monthly Stipend;
 - 5.7 Repayments will begin in the April immediately following issue of a Completion Certificate by the Training of the Ministry Committee;
 - 5.8 Loans still outstanding will be written-off at age 65;
 - 5.9 Notwithstanding all the above, all loans will be given according to the criteria set out from time to time by the Students Awards Agency for Scotland;
 - 5.10 All qualifying Candidates will still be able to apply for a non-repayable "Dependants Grant";
6. The General Assembly commend all the students to the prayers of the Church.

XI.
REPORT
OF THE
***AD HOC* SPECIAL COMMITTEE**
ANENT REVIEW OF THE ACTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

1. The Committee was appointed by the General Assembly of 2001 to take forward the work of an *ad hoc* committee set up by the 2000 Assembly which had considered Assembly legislation from 1990 onwards. Its remit is “to continue, in consultation with Standing and Special Committees in so far as legislation bears on those Committees, consideration of Assembly legislation requiring repeal or amendment”. The thinking behind this remit was that the new situation in the Church created an opportunity to review all extant Assembly Acts in order to determine which of them needed more closely to reflect current administrative structures or were no longer of practical utility. Such work had in any event been long overdue.
2. Subsequent to the 2001 Assembly some initial work was done and the Committee reviewed some 100 pieces of legislation and reached preliminary conclusions on their continued usefulness or need for amendment. However, following the raising of the Church’s legal action in October 2001 the view was taken, in consultation with the Church’s legal advisers, that the Committee’s work should not be seen as a priority pending the determination of the legal action. Against this background, and taking account of other priorities facing the Church at this time, the work has not been taken further forward over the past year.
3. In the prospect, however, that the way will eventually become clearer for the work to proceed the Assembly are invited, as before, to renew the remit of the Committee for a further year.

MAURICE GRANT, *Acting Convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Special Committee anent Review of the Acts of Assembly;
2. The General Assembly renew the remit of the *Ad Hoc* Special Committee anent Review of the Acts of Assembly for a further year.

XII. REPORT

OF THE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

The function of the Committee is to provide a mechanism for a strategic oversight of the work of the Church previously carried out by the Finance, Law & Advisory Committee. To that end they consider Reports from Conveners of Committees regarding the ongoing business of their Committees and how that work may impinge on the work of other Committees. The Committee attempts to facilitate communication between Standing Committees and to encourage them in their strategic planning. The Strategy Committee also provides a forum for the consideration of issues which are of general interest to the Church and with regard to which there may be benefit in the exchange of information between Committee Conveners.

2. Review of Matters of Strategic Interest to the Church

2.1 Acquisition and Purchase of Buildings on a Planned Basis

The Committee have kept on their agenda the need to take a strategic view and develop appropriate policy proposals, in terms of prioritisation of the Church's expenditure, with regard to the acquisition and purchase of buildings on a planned basis. Some work has been done, particularly in terms of examining the types of building which may be suitable for conversion to ecclesiastical use and it is hoped that progress can be made once the building and legal situation facing the Church becomes clearer.

2.2 Pension Complications

The Committee, aware that there are matters relating to pensions of ministers over critical ages of 60, 65 and 70 which require urgent consideration, have continued to pursue these matters in consultation with the Legal Advice & Property Committee and the Finance & Sustentation Committee. All ministers with service prior to the year 2000 are now advised to seek a written statement from the Administrator of the Free Church Pension Fund regarding the options open to them. The Committee note that the Finance & Sustentation Committee are proposing to the General Assembly that Act VII (Class II) 1994 para 1 (anent Salary Abatement for those in receipt of a Pension from the Free Church Pension Fund whilst drawing a Stipend) be repealed, the effect of such legislation not to be applied retrospectively, but only to apply to Stipend paid from 1st June 2011 onwards.

2.3 Financial Assistance for Equipment

New arrangements for financial assistance for equipment are now in place and the Committee regard their involvement in this matter as completed.

3. Advice

3.1 Meetings Conducted Wholly or Partly by Telephone Conference Call

The Committee reported to the General Assembly of 2010 to the effect that the Committee intended to consult with the relevant Church Courts with a view to bringing definitive proposals to the 2011 General Assembly. Presbyteries, Church Courts and those Kirk Sessions outwith the bounds of a Presbytery were duly circulated and their responses indicated broad agreement with the discussion paper. In the light of their consultations the Committee now recommend that

1. It shall be permissible for Courts and Committees to meet by Conference Call where distance or circumstances preclude the physical presence of all members in the same geographical location.

2. Presbytery is an open court and cannot competently hold regular meetings in private or be inaccessible to the public.
3. Conference Call should not be the normal method of meeting for regular meetings of Presbytery, other than in the U.S.A.
4. Conference Call shall not be used as a substitute for the quarterly meetings of Standing Committees of Assembly and shall not be used in circumstances in which it is practicable for the Court or Committee to assemble in the one physical location.
5. In circumstances in which a Presbytery is permitted to meet by Conference Call, in order to preserve the open nature of the court prior public intimation from the pulpits of the congregations of the bounds is to be made two Sabbaths before each Ordinary and *in hunc effectum* meeting or shall be published on the internet in the draft minutes of the previous meeting of Presbytery which shall be made available not less than two weeks prior to the forthcoming meeting of Presbytery. Whilst it is desirable that intimation be given also for *pro re nata* meetings, it is recognised that this may not always be practicable.

No member of the public shall be prevented from being enabled to listen in real time to the meeting of Presbytery and should the nature of the business require that the Presbytery go into closed court, it shall be the duty of the Clerk to ascertain the telephone contact number of all members of the public present and telephone them immediately the Presbytery come out of closed session and before any further business be transacted.

6. Ordinarily no case should be dealt with at any level by Conference Call, nor should it be permissible for conference calls to be used in any instance when parties are to be heard at the bar or when Calls are being dealt with. However when dealing with Calls furth of Scotland, is should be permissible for Calls to be dealt with by Conference Call subject to the proviso that any meeting to sign or close with a Call is constituted in the physical location of the congregation concerned and at least one member of the relevant judicatory is present.
7. In dealing with cases of discipline, it shall be competent for the relevant Church Court or judicatory, when citing a party to appear, to demand from those cited prior intimation of intention to appear at the meeting to which the party has been cited. Should a party so cited fail to provide the requisite notice of their intention to attend, then it shall be competent for the said judicatory to meet by Conference Call so long as at least one member of the judicatory (together with a competent witness) is present at the place of compearance specified in the citation in order that any party appearing in response to the citation may be personally cited *apud acta* in the name of the judicatory presently meeting by Conference Call to a further meeting of the said judicatory at which meeting all members of the said judicatory participating in the meeting shall be present in person and not by Conference Call.
8. No conference call facility will be deemed appropriate if there is not a continuous monitor provided with regard to who is present at any given time. The Clerk shall be responsible for monitoring those who join and those who leave the call and for recording in the minutes when those arrivals and departures take place.
9. It is especially important in conference call meetings that the practice of the Church regarding the conduct of meetings be followed at all points, including *inter alia*, the lodging of dissents and complaints, the provision of extracts, notice of motion, etc.

3.4 Presbyterian Arrangements for Congregations outwith the Bounds of any Presbytery

The Committee have continued their consideration of Presbyterian Arrangements for congregations outwith the Bounds of any Presbytery and are at present collating existing information as a starting point for more detailed consideration. The Committee are also available to give advice to the Home & Foreign Missions Committee as required.

4. Revision of Schedules of Statistics

The Committee, having given due consideration to inaccuracies and infelicities in the form for recording Schedules of Statistics, have revised the form to resolve the known problems and to improve the usefulness of the information recorded.

5. Responsibilities of Trustees

The Committee noted that work is being done by the Legal Advice & Property Committee on the responsibilities of Trustees.

6. Candidates for the Ministry on Church Courts and Committees

The Committee have taken up consideration of the potential difficulties which may arise if a Candidate for the Ministry were to be a member of a Church Court or of Standing Committees of Assembly.

7. Dissents and Protests

The Committee have commenced consideration of questions raised about the definition and use of the terms "dissent" and "protest."

8. Timing and Frequency of Meetings

The Committee continue to be greatly handicapped by the lack of availability of a suitable time-slot for their meetings during the stated days on which Committee meetings normally take place. They are hopeful that the matter will resolve itself if meetings of the Commission of Assembly become less frequent or shorter.

JOHN MACLEOD, *Convener*
MURDO A.N. MACLEOD, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Strategy Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener and Clerk;
2. The General Assembly direct the Committee to continue to take a strategic overview of the needs of the Church, especially in the light of the current situation;
3. The General Assembly note the work begun by the Committee anent the Acquisition and Purchase of Buildings on a Planned Basis and encourage them to continue to develop proposals thereanent;
4. The General Assembly note that all ministers with service prior to the year 2000 are advised to seek a written statement from the Administrator of the Free Church Pension Fund regarding the options open to them and that, following liaison with the Strategy Committee, the Finance & Sustentation Committee are proposing to the General Assembly that Act VII (Class II) 1994 para 1 (anent Salary Abatement for those in receipt of a Pension from the Free Church Pension Fund whilst drawing a Stipend) be repealed, the effect of such legislation not to be applied retrospectively, but only to apply to Stipend paid from 1st June 2011 onwards;

5. The General Assembly enact that henceforth

1. It shall be permissible for Courts and Committees to meet by Conference Call where distance or circumstances preclude the physical presence of all members in the same geographical location;
2. Presbytery being an open court cannot competently hold regular meetings in private or be inaccessible to the public;
3. Conference Call should not be the normal method of meeting for regular meetings of Presbytery, other than in the U.S.A.;
4. Conference Call shall not be used as a substitute for the quarterly meetings of Standing Committees of Assembly and shall not be used in circumstances in which it is practicable for the Court or Committee to assemble in the one physical location;
5. In circumstances in which a Presbytery is permitted to meet by Conference Call, in order to preserve the open nature of the court prior public intimation from the pulpits of the congregations of the bounds is to be made two Sabbaths before each Ordinary and *in hunc effectum* meeting or shall be published on the internet in the draft minutes of the previous meeting of Presbytery which shall be made available not less than two weeks prior to the forthcoming meeting of Presbytery. Whilst it is desirable that intimation be given also for *pro re nata* meetings, it is recognised that this may not always be practicable;

No member of the public shall be prevented from being enabled to listen in real time to the meeting of Presbytery and, should the nature of the business require that the Presbytery go into closed court, it shall be the duty of the Clerk to ascertain the telephone contact number of all members of the public present and telephone them immediately the Presbytery come out of closed session and before any further business be transacted;

6. Ordinarily no case should be dealt with at any level by Conference Call, nor should it be permissible for conference calls to be used in any instance when parties are to be heard at the bar or when Calls are being dealt with. However when dealing with Calls furth of Scotland, is should be permissible for Calls to be dealt with by Conference Call subject to the proviso that any meeting to sign or close with a Call is constituted in the physical location of the congregation concerned and at least one member of the relevant judicatory is present;
7. In dealing with cases of discipline, it shall be competent for the relevant Church Court or judicatory, when citing a party to appear, to demand from those cited prior intimation of intention to appear at the meeting to which the party has been cited. Should a party so cited fail to provide the requisite notice of their intention to attend, then it shall be competent for the said judicatory to meet by Conference Call so long as at least one member of the judicatory (together with a competent witness) is present at the place of compearance specified in the citation in order that any party appearing in response to the citation may be personally cited *apud acta* in the name of the judicatory presently meeting by Conference Call to a further meeting of the said judicatory at which meeting all members of the said judicatory participating in the meeting shall be present in person and not by Conference Call;
8. No conference call facility will be deemed appropriate if there be not a continuous monitor provided with regard to who is present at any given time. The Clerk shall be responsible for monitoring those who join and those who leave the call and for recording in the minutes when those arrivals and departures take place;

9. It is especially important in conference call meetings that the practice of the Church regarding the conduct of meetings be followed at all points, including *inter alia*, the lodging of dissents and complaints, the provision of extracts, notice of motion, etc.
10. The General Assembly repeal Act VI, Class II, 1986.
6. The General Assembly direct the Strategy Committee to continue to monitor the current ecclesiastical arrangements for the Presbyterial Arrangements for Congregations outwith the bounds of any Presbytery;
7. The General Assembly note the work carried out on revision of Schedules of Statistics;
8. The General Assembly note that investigation is being made into the definition and use of the terms “dissent” and “protest;”
9. The General Assembly note the need for the Strategy Committee to be allocated adequate time to carry out their remit.

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE COMMISSION
 OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
(CONTINUING)

Being

the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Commission on 13th September 2010
 and the Ordinary Meeting of the Commission on 5th October 2010.

*At Inverness and within the Free Greyfriars Church,
 Westhill, there on Monday 13th September 2010*

13TH SEPTEMBER
Monday

Which day a quorum of members of the Commission appointed by last General Assembly being met in response to a Requisition from the Moderator of the last General Assembly, Rev. David S. Fraser was called to the Chair, and the meeting was constituted with devotional exercises.

1. Commission
Constituted

The Commission took up consideration of the Requisition from the Moderator of the last General Assembly calling this meeting, which was in the following terms:

2. Consideration of
Moderator's
Actions in Calling
meeting

In response to a petition from the Legal Advice & Property Committee, I, as Moderator of the 2010 General Assembly, hereby call a Special Meeting of the Commission of Assembly to be held in Free Greyfriars' Church, Westhill, Inverness on Monday 13th September 2010 at 6pm in order to receive a Report from the Legal Advice & Property Committee regarding the notification of the method and timing of court procedures relating to the Broadford Case and the progress of negotiations on a national basis, in order to give direction anent the Broadford Case, Negotiations and any other matters following thereanent.

David S. Fraser

The Moderator of the last General Assembly having explained his actions in calling this special meeting, it was moved, seconded and agreed that

The Commission approve of the action of the Moderator of the last General Assembly in *Finding* calling this meeting.

13TH SEPTEMBER
Monday

3. Report of the
Legal Advice &
Property Committee

The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of a Report from the Legal Advice & Property Committee which being printed and in the hands of Members was referred to by the Convener who addressed the Commission thereanent. The Clerk was instructed to keep a copy of the Report *in retentis*.

It was moved and seconded that

First Motion

The Commission of Assembly receive the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee.

It was also moved and seconded that

Second Motion

The following be added as an Addendum to the proposed deliverance:

1. The Commission of Assembly approve of the actions of the Committee hitherto;
2. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to intimate to Counsel to continue the Appeal process against the finding of Lord Uist on 22nd September 2010;
3. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to vigorously engage in negotiations begun with the other side in the dispute;
4. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to report on progress to the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly in order that a final decision can be taken in the best interests of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

It was also moved and seconded that

Third Motion

The following be added as an addendum to the proposed deliverance.

1. The Commission note the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee and express thanks to them for the painstaking and diligent work undertaken in connection with the legal cases in which the Church has been sadly involved;
2. The Commission convey sincere thanks to the Law Agents and Counsel for all their work done on behalf of the Church in legal matters;
3. The Commission determine not to pursue an Appeal against the decision of Lord Uist in the case involving the properties of the Strath congregation;
4. The Commission reaffirm the position of the Church as stated in the historical document entitled *Declaration of Reconstitution* as approved by the Commission of Assembly on 20th January 2000;
5. The Commission encourage local congregations with the help of Presbyteries and in consultation with the Legal Advice & Property Committee and the Church's Law Agents to seek to come to agreement on property and other financial matters with the corresponding local congregations of the separated brethren of the Free Church of Scotland (majority) on as equitable a basis as is achievable;
6. The Commission request Presbyteries to report on progress in any settlements within their bounds to the Legal Advice & Property Committee for report to be made to forthcoming meetings of the Commission of Assembly in October 2010 and March 2011;

7. The Commission instruct the Legal Advice & Property Committee, in consultation with the Law Agents, to facilitate Presbyteries and congregations in reaching agreements on erstwhile disputed property and other financial matters with the separated brethren of the Free Church of Scotland (majority).

13TH SEPTEMBER
Monday

3. Report of the
Legal Advice &
Property Committee
(Cont.)

On a vote being taken between the third motion and second motion, the second motion was declared carried by a majority.

Vote

With the permission of the house and his seconder, the mover of the first motion accepted the second motion.

Wherefore

1. The Commission of Assembly receive the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee; *Finding*
2. The Commission of Assembly approve of the actions of the Committee hitherto;
3. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to intimate to Counsel to continue the Appeal process against the finding of Lord Uist on 22nd September 2010;
4. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to vigorously engage in negotiations begun with the other side in the dispute;
5. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to report on progress to the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly in order that a final decision can be taken in the best interests of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

The following dissented against this finding:

W. Macleod, J.W. Keddie, K. MacDonald, M.J. Roberts, Calum I. MacLeod, G. MacDonald, Glenn Fraser, T. McGlynn, Gavin Beers, Donald J. Morrison.

Maurice Roberts also tabled Reasons for dissent which were held *in retentis*.

The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of the conducting of negotiations.

4. Conducting of
Negotiations

It was moved and seconded that

The Commission of Assembly note with pleasure the communication from Rev. James Maciver regarding negotiations with their Board of Trustees of 13th September 2010. The Committee direct the Legal Advice & Property Committee to conduct such negotiations, with Mr Maurice Grant as adviser. *First Motion*

It was also moved and seconded that

The Commission of Assembly note with pleasure the communication from Rev. James Maciver regarding negotiations with their Board of Trustees of 13th September 2010. The Committee appoint a Committee of Negotiations consisting Rev. John MacLeod (Tarbat), Rev. John MacLeod, Duthil-Dores Rtd.), Rev. John W. Keddie, Rev. Allan Murray, Mr John MacKenzie (Assynt) and Mr Iain A.C. MacPherson, with Mr Maurice Grant as adviser. *Second Motion*

On a vote being taken between the second motion and first motion the first motion was *Vote*

13TH SEPTEMBER declared carried by a majority.
Monday

- Wherefore
4. Conducting of Negotiations
Finding
- The Commission of Assembly note with pleasure the communication from Rev. James Maciver regarding negotiations with their Board of Trustees of 13th September 2010. The Committee direct the Legal Advice & Property Committee to conduct such negotiations, with Mr Maurice Grant as adviser.
- It was further moved, seconded and agreed that
- Finding*
- The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to progress towards reconciliation, or such measures of reconciliation as are possible, laying emphasis on property settlements as one part of the reconciliation, the Committee to report to the October and March Meetings of the Commission of Assembly.
5. Establishment of Legal Fund
First Motion
- The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of a fund for specific legal purposes.
- It was moved and seconded that
- The Commission of Assembly resolve to establish a fund to which money may be given or pledges received for specific legal purposes, the fund to be administered by the Finance & Sustentation Committee.
- It was also moved and seconded that
- Second Motion*
1. The Commission of Assembly resolve to establish a fund to which money may be given or pledges received for specific legal purposes, the fund to be administered by the Finance & Sustentation Committee.
 2. The Commission of Assembly bring to the attention of Congregations the already existing option of individuals specifically designating givings to specified objects.
- Vote*
- On a vote being taken between the second motion and the first motion, the first motion was declared carried by a majority.
- Wherefore
- Finding*
- The Commission of Assembly resolve to establish a fund to which money may be given or pledges received for specific legal purposes, the fund to be administered by the Finance & Sustentation Committee.
6. Statement to Congregations
- The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of the issuing of a Statement to Congregations.
- It was moved, seconded and agreed that
- Finding*
- The Commission of Assembly direct the Legal Advice & Property Committee in conjunction with the Assembly Clerks' Dept. To issue a Statement to Congregations regarding the decisions of the Commission.

The thanks of the Commission were accorded to the Deacons' Court and Congregation of 13TH SEPTEMBER
Inverness Free Greyfriars Church for use of the building. *Monday*

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission appoint a Committee to revise the Minute consisting of Messrs David M. Blunt, Greg MacDonald and Maurice Grant.

This being all the business the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

7. Thanks
8. Committee to Revise Minute
9. Adjournment

*At Inverness and within the Free Greyfriars Church,
Westhill, there on Tuesday 5th October 2010*

5TH OCTOBER
Tuesday

Which day a quorum of members of the Commission appointed by last General Assembly being met, Rev. David Fraser was called to the Chair, and the meeting was constituted with devotional exercises.

The Commission continued to engage in devotional exercises when the following took part at the request of the Moderator:

Timothy McGlynn, Hector Campbell, John MacLeod (Tarbat), William B. Scott;
Angus MacMillan.

The Principal Clerk of Assembly submitted a note of the business to come before the Commission.

A printed copy of the Acts and Proceedings of the last General Assembly was laid on the table.

The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of the Records of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee and the Mainland Synod which had been provided as directed by the General Assembly.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that

The Commission of Assembly authorise the attestation of the Records of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee and the Mainland Synod. *Finding*

The Commission of Assembly called for the Report of the Finance & Sustentation Committee which was given in by the Convener in the following terms:

Commissioners will have received a recent communication from the Committee highlighting our present financial difficulties. Individuals were asked to review

1. Commission Constituted
2. Devotional Exercises
3. Note of Business
4. Tabling of Acts of Assembly
5. Records for Examination
6. Report of Finance & Sustentation Committee
- Report*

5TH OCTOBER
Tuesday

6. Report of
Finance &
Sustentation
Committee (Cont.)

their givings and Deacons' Courts were asked to consider increasing remittances to Central Funds. Were Deacons' Courts to remit 75% of Ordinary Income that would go a long way towards eradicating our deficit. At this stage it is difficult to assess the response to these letters. In the meantime the Committee have continued at a number of recent meetings to consider our current financial difficulties. A number of options are actively being considered and the Committee wish to bring two recommendations before the Commission this evening.

For the information of Commissioners, the deficit currently stands at the end of September at £75,000 with a budgeted deficit for 2010 of £100,000.

The first suggestion, contained in proposed deliverance number one, is an attempt to address in the short term our deficit for this year. The second proposal, found in deliverance number two, is intended to address the longer term financial stability of the Church.

MURDO A.N. MACLEOD, *Convener*

Mr Angus MacMillan, *General Treasurer*, was invited by the Moderator to address the Commission.

It was moved and seconded that

First Motion

1. In light of a projected deficit of £100,000 for the year ending 2010 the Commission of Assembly ask all Deacons' Courts to make a one-off sacrificial contribution to Central Funds by the end of the year. Such a donation could be designated if necessary;
2. The Commission of Assembly further urge Deacons' Courts to remit a minimum of 75% of Ordinary Income to Central funds.

It was also moved and seconded that

Second Motion

The second sentence of the first paragraph be deleted from the proposed deliverance.

Vote

On a vote being taken between the second motion and the first motion, the first motion was declared carried by a majority.

Wherefore

Finding

1. In light of a projected deficit of £100,000 for the year ending 2010 the Commission of Assembly ask all Deacons' Courts to make a one-off sacrificial contribution to Central Funds by the end of the year. Such a donation could be designated if necessary;
2. The Commission of Assembly further urge Deacons' Courts to remit a minimum of 75% of Ordinary Income to Central funds.

7. Report of Legal
Advice & Property
Committee

The Commission took up consideration of a Report from the Legal Advice & Property Committee which being printed and in the hands of Members was referred to by the Convener who addressed the Commission thereanent. The Clerk was instructed to keep a copy of the Report *in retentis*.

It was moved and seconded that

The Commission of Assembly receive the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee.

5TH OCTOBER
Tuesday

It was also moved and seconded that

7. Report of the
Legal Advice &
Property Committee
(Cont.)

The following be added as an addendum to the proposed deliverance:

“The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee on Negotiations to offer to have sisted all present litigation, contingent upon assurances from our legal team that such action would not be prejudicial to the interests of the denomination, such assurances to be sought with all speed.”

First Motion

Second Motion

It was also moved and seconded that

Third Motion

The following be added as an addendum to the proposed deliverance:

“The Commission of Assembly resolve to fall from the Appeal against the determination of Lord Uist.”

It was also moved and seconded that

The following be added as an addendum to the proposed deliverance:

Fourth Motion

1. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Legal Advice & Property Committee to request Counsel to continue with the appeal process against the determination of Lord Uist in the Broadford Action;
2. The Commission of Assembly commend the Legal Advice & Property Committee for their diligence in seeking to reopen negotiations with the residual Free Church. They regret the lack of any meaningful response hitherto to that approach.

On the call of the Moderator, Rev. Murdo A.N. MacLeod engaged in prayer.

With the permission of the house and his seconder the mover of the second motion *Vote* withdrew his motion.

On a vote being taken between the fourth motion and the third motion, the fourth motion was declared carried by a majority.

With the permission of the house and his seconder the mover of the first motion accepted the fourth motion.

Wherefore

1. The Commission of Assembly receive the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee; *Finding*
2. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Legal Advice & Property Committee to request Counsel to continue with the appeal process against the determination of Lord Uist in the Broadford Action;
3. The Commission of Assembly commend the Legal Advice & Property Committee for their diligence in seeking to reopen negotiations with the residual Free Church. They regret the lack of any meaningful response hitherto to that approach.

5TH OCTOBER
Tuesday

The following dissented from this finding:
Kenneth Macdonald, William Macleod, Maurice J. Roberts, Calum I. MacLeod, Glenn Fraser, Greg MacDonald, Gavin Beers.

Private Session The Commission of Assembly met in Private.

8. Report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee
The Commission took up consideration of a Report from the Home & Foreign Missions Committee which being printed and in the hands of Members was referred to by the Convener who addressed the Commission thereanent. The Clerk was instructed to keep a copy of the Report *in retentis*.

It was moved and seconded that

- First Motion*
1. The Commission of Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee;
 2. The Commission of Assembly note with great regret recent developments in Adelaide with the apparent purported secession of the majority of the members of the Congregation and the submission of a purported letter of resignation from Rev. James Frew;
 3. The Commission of Assembly note the reasons given for the failure of the Committee to conduct a Visitation to Adelaide;
 4. The Commission of Assembly direct that all financial support for Adelaide stop forthwith;
 5. The Commission of Assembly note that the resignation of Rev. James Frew from the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) cannot be accepted at this time due to outstanding allegations against him and direct the Committee to follow the procedures set out in the law and practice of the Church;
 6. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to take all steps necessary to vindicate the good name of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

9. Moderator's Ruling Challenged
The Moderator made a ruling to the effect that a proposed amendment was incompetent.

It was moved and seconded that

First Motion The Commission of Assembly overturn the Moderator's ruling.

It was also moved and seconded that

Second Motion The Commission of Assembly accept the Moderator's ruling.

Vote On a vote being taken between the second motion and the first motion, the second motion was declared carried by a majority.

Wherefore

Finding The Commission of Assembly accept the Moderator's ruling.

Wherefore

5TH OCTOBER
Tuesday

1. The Commission of Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee;
2. The Commission of Assembly note with great regret recent developments in Adelaide with the apparent purported secession of the majority of the members of the Congregation and the submission of a purported letter of resignation from Rev. James Frew;
3. The Commission of Assembly note the reasons given for the failure of the Committee to conduct a Visitation to Adelaide;
4. The Commission of Assembly direct that all financial support for Adelaide stop forthwith;
5. The Commission of Assembly note that the resignation of Rev. James Frew from the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) cannot be accepted at this time due to outstanding allegations against him and direct the Committee to follow the procedures set out in the law and practice of the Church;
6. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Committee to take all steps necessary to vindicate the good name of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing).

8. Report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee (Cont.)
Finding

The following dissented from paragraph 5 of the finding:

Kenneth Macdonald, Richard Ross, William Macleod, Calum I. MacLeod, Hector Campbell.

On the call of the Moderator Rev. Henry J.T. Woods engaged in prayer.

The Commission of Assembly met in open Court.

Open Court

The thanks of the Commission were accorded to the Deacons' Court and Congregation of Inverness Free Greyfriars Church for their kind use of the building and to Mr Glenn Fraser for hospitality shown to Commissioners.

10. Thanks

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission appoint a Committee to revise the Minute consisting of Messrs David Blunt, Greg MacDonald and Maurice Grant.

11. Committee to Revise Minute

This being all the business the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

12. Adjournment

On Tuesday 1st March 2011 there was no business to bring to the Commission and it did not meet.

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FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (CONTINUING)**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010**

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL TREASURER
TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (CONTINUING)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

This Report and the Accounts set out in the following pages are part of the Reports to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). The Report and the attached Accounts provide information about the governance, management structure, organisation and activities of the Church. The Accounts have been prepared according to the Statement of Recommended Practice adopted in 2005. The Charity is subject to the provisions of the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*. These have been subject to a full audit and relate to the year ended 31st December 2010.

I. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

(1) Name. The Charity is called “The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)” and is registered as such by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The registration number of the Church is *SC 030976*.

(2) Principal Office. The principal address of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) is Free Church Manse, Portmahomack, Tain, Ross-shire, IV20 1YL.

(3) Trustees. General Trustees have not yet been appointed in the Church. In the meantime the members of the Finance & Sustentation Committee of the Church are to be considered as acting as Trustees for administrative and legal purposes. The members of the Finance & Sustentation Committee during the year are as follows

Rev. Murdo A.N. MacLeod (Snizort, Isle of Skye), *Convener*

Rev. Greg MacDonald (Cross, Isle of Lewis), *Vice Convener*

Rev. David Fraser (Shettleston, Glasgow) (*appointed 20 May 2010*)

Rev. Andrew Allan (Poolewe & Aultbea)

Rev. Robert Josey (*appointed 20 May 2010*)

Mr Lindsay MacCallum

Mr John Urquhart (*appointed 20 May 2010*)

Mr John Maclean

Mr Iain A.C. MacPherson

Mr Angus Macmillan, (*Ex officio Advisor*) (*appointed as General Treasurer 20 May 2010*)

Rev William B Scott (Blackburn) (*completed term of office on 20 May 2010*)

Mr Desmond Biggerstaff Edinburgh (*resigned from office on 20 May 2010*)

Rev John W Keddie (*resigned from office as Acting General Treasurer on 20 May 2010*)

(4) Day to day Management. The General Treasurer, Angus Macmillan, is responsible to the Finance & Sustentation Committee for the management of the financial affairs of the Church. Mr Angus Macmillan was appointed as General Treasurer at the General Assembly in May 2010. Mrs Muriel Smith is Financial Administrator and responsible for the maintenance of all the financial records and book-keeping functions. Mrs Smith reports to the General Treasurer.

II. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

(1) History. The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) claims continuity with the Free Church of Scotland which came into being historically in 1843 by the “Disruption” from the Church of Scotland as then

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL TREASURER (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

constituted. In maintaining this continuity, the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) identifies itself with the Free Church of Scotland that continued in existence after the union of the majority of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church in 1900.

After actions and judgements within the Free Church of Scotland, as then constituted, between June 1999 and January 2000, a Declaration of Reconstitution was adopted on 20 January 2000 by ministers and elders claiming legitimately and constitutionally to continue as the Free Church of Scotland, to be known for administrative reasons only as the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), and claiming to be more faithful to the constitutional principles of the Free Church of Scotland than the remainder of the former Free Church of Scotland.

(2) Constitution. The documents and procedures of the Free Church of Scotland as at 1 January 2000 remain the founding documents of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). An explanatory document is available detailing the documents in which is embodied the constitution of the Church.

(3) Structure. The Church is Presbyterian in Church government and is therefore ruled and organised by ministers and elders acting through Kirk Sessions of local congregations, Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly. It is Reformed and Evangelical in doctrine and practice.

(4) Governance and Management. The General Assembly appoints Committees annually for the management of the central work of the Church. Consequently, a Finance & Sustentation Committee together with the General Treasurer are presently responsible for the financial management of the Church's resources, for which they are answerable to the General Assembly.

Membership of the General Assembly is elected annually by each Presbytery in accordance with Assembly legislation and comprises all Ministers who have a seat in Presbytery with an approximately equal number of ruling elders, together with such Ministers as may be appointed by the Missions Committee and a corresponding number of ruling Elders. At present there are five Presbyteries covering the entire geographical area of Scotland. A Nominations Committee of the General Assembly annually puts forward for acceptance by the annual Assembly the names of ministers and elders for various standing Committees representing a range of work and interests consistent with the constitution, objectives and activities of the Church. These are selected with reference to representation of the various Synods throughout the Church as detailed in the Standing Orders of Assembly. Membership of Committees is constantly changing because the replacement of men is on a staggered basis.

(5) Major Risks. A division occurred in the Free Church of Scotland in January 2000. As a result of the division in January 2000, there has been a continuing dispute over the legal title to the various properties and Funds held by the congregations. An action was raised in the Court of Session in 2004 which did not find in favour of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). The matter was not, however, conclusive in relation to local church properties and manses. Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregations continue to retain possession of various buildings of the undivided pre-2000 Free Church of Scotland. It is recognised that these may be the subjects of actions in the civil courts for repossession. An action was raised in the Court of Session by the other part of the divided Free Church during 2007 concerning the properties in Broadford. That action was heard in the Court of Session in the course of 2009. The judgement was not in favour of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). An appeal against this judgement was heard before three judges in the Court of Session in October 2010 with a judgement expected before the end of April 2011. It is recognised that there is a risk of significant legal costs being incurred in defending our right to possession of the various buildings in this action and other possible actions in the courts, if in the meantime matters cannot be resolved by mutual agreement between the

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL TREASURER (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

separated parts of the pre-2000 Free Church of Scotland. The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) has a “Legal Advice & Property Committee” charged with maintaining the legitimate interests of the Church in such matters. This Committee, together with the Finance & Sustentation Committee are responsible for ensuring that any costs in such legal actions, should they occur, will be duly met.

III. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

(1) Objectives. The overall object of the Church, as a Christian Church seeking to maintain conformity to the Bible as the Word of God, is to glorify God through maintaining and promoting His worship in accordance with the Bible, through the preaching and teaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. In carrying out its objectives in spreading the gospel of Christ the Church has a full-time ministry.

(2) Activities. The principal activity of the Church is the conduct of public worship and associated matters through local congregations and Presbyteries. Work is also organised, promoted and carried out by centrally appointed Committees responsible to the General Assembly.

The full-time ministers/pastors are paid from a central fund supported by all the local congregations. Each minister is paid from the central fund exactly the same amount of stipend [salary], which is currently £18,000 per annum, although reimbursement to each minister, of locally-incurred expenses is handled by his congregation and varies from congregation to congregation.

There is a Seminary for the theological education of students for the ministry. This is staffed part-time by ministers already in charges and by retired ministers, and involves a mixture of distance learning and tutorial work in a building located in Inverness.

Besides the work of a full-time ministry the Church is involved in producing publications germane to its principles, publishes a monthly magazine entitled *Free Church Witness*, operates a web-site, and produces a young people’s magazine entitled *The Explorer*. The Church from time to time takes special collections in connection with disaster relief.

IV. FINANCIAL REVIEW AND ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

(1) Overall position. During the year in review there was a deficit of income over expenditure for the year of £92,461. This deficit is largely due to exceptional legal costs of £126,311. Remittances from Congregations were up by £13,051 (2%) on the previous year, including unclaimed Gift Aid Tax at year-end of net £3,651, bringing the total for congregational remittances for 2010 to £585,203. There were no legacies received during 2010. Expenditure overall was down by £12,175 (2%) in the year.

(2) Sources of funds and their disbursement. The principal resource in the Church is represented by the remittances of sums monthly from congregations. These remittances represented 90% of total incoming resources in 2010. The incoming resources are largely used for the payment of stipends (Ministers’ salaries). Including amounts for pension provision these accounted for £459,219 (70%) of total incoming resources (75% in 2009 excluding legacy income).

(3) Exceptional legal costs. A Court of Session action over the properties of the Strath Congregation at Broadford on the Isle of Skye took place in 2009. The judgement went against our Church. Provision was made in the 2009 accounts for the costs of this initial action, including £50,000 of legal costs of the other party should there be failure of the Appeal against this initial judgement. The costs of the Appeal which was heard in the Court of Session in 2010 with regard to these properties have been included in the accounts for 2010, including a provision of £52,000 for estimated legal costs incurred which were not yet invoiced at year-end, and a further amount of £90,000 has been noted as a Contingent Liability in the accounts for 2010 to pay for the legal costs of the other party in the event of failure of the Appeal.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL TREASURER (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

(4) Funds. Besides a General Fund of £287,288, which includes Fixed Assets of £163,284, there are several designated and restricted funds. The designated Buildings Projects Fund stood at £137,799 at 31 December 2010. Restricted funds of £45,458 relate to Legacy Church Building Projects (£24,957), Legacy Students In Need (£8,985), the Black Watch Special Appeal Fund (£5,335), Zambia Missions Fund (£5,640), and Restricted Sustentation Fund (£541). In total the Funds of the Church amounted to £470,545 at the end of 2010.

V. PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

It is the intention of the Finance & Sustentation Committee and the General Treasurer to continue to run the Church's financial affairs in such a manner that ensures its financial stability and assist in the carrying out of the work it has undertaken to achieve. The General Treasurer and the Finance & Sustentation Committee can confirm that the Church's assets are available and adequate to fulfil its present obligations.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCOUNTS

Law applicable to charities in Scotland requires the trustees (in this case, the General Treasurer and the Finance & Sustentation Committee) to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures as explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

VII. STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE TO AUDITOR

As members of the Finance & Sustentation Committee, we certify that:

- 1) So far as we are aware there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors of The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) are not aware.
- 2) As the members of the Finance & Sustentation Committee we have taken all steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

VIII. SIGNATORIES

It is believed that the Accounts and the Report thereon conform to the law regulating Charities in Scotland. The law requires that the Report and Accounts be approved by the "persons in management and control." It is assumed that this refers to the Finance & Sustentation Committee. By appointment of the Finance & Sustentation Committee the Accounts are signed by the Convener of the Finance & Sustentation Committee and the General Treasurer.

ANGUS MACMILLAN
General Treasurer
1 March 2011

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE
GENERAL TREASURER
AND THE FINANCE & SUSTENTATION COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

We have audited the financial statements on pages 100 to 105. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the General Treasurer and the Finance and Sustentation Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the General Treasurer and the Finance Sustentation Committee as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the General Treasurer and the Finance and Sustentation Committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

We have been appointed as auditors under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with regulations made under that Act. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2010 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE
GENERAL TREASURER
AND THE FINANCE & SUSTENTATION COMMITTEE (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charity has not kept proper accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Saffery Champness
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
Inverness
Iv2 3BW

Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010

Income & Expenditure

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Total Funds		Total Funds	
		2010	£	2010	£	2010	£	2009	£
INCOMING RESOURCES									
Voluntary Income									
Net income from congregations		585,203		-		585,203		572,152	
Donations received		13,613		10,395		24,008		13,894	
Donations — Foreign Missions		-		5,048		5,048		6,372	
Donations & Income — Seminary		4,316		-		4,316		3,040	
Donations — Black Watch		-		-		-		7,947	
Legacy Received		-		-		-		37,430	
		603,132		15,443		618,575		640,835	
Activities for Generating Funds									
Magazine subscriptions received		19,587		-		19,587		21,356	
Conference receipts		3,361		-		3,361		3,848	
Sabbath School workbook		310		-		310		365	
Sale of books and tapes		6,636		-		6,636		2,478	
Sundry Receipts		1,355		-		1,355		-	
		31,249		-		31,249		28,047	
Investment Income									
Interest received		2,289		-		2,289		4,792	
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		636,670		15,443		652,113		673,674	
RESOURCES EXPENDED									
Direct Charitable Expenditure									
Expenditure for charitable purposes	2	595,007		4,860		599,867		618,198	
Other Expenditure									
Governance activity	4	144,708		-		144,707		138,551	
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		739,715		4,860		744,574		756,749	
NET INCOMING/OUTGOING RESOURCES FOR YEAR		(103,045)		10,583		(92,461)		(83,075)	
Investment gains & losses									
Revaluation gain on Freehold Property		-		-		-		-	
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR YEAR		(103,045)		10,583		(92,461)		(83,075)	
TOTAL FUNDS AT 1ST JANUARY 2010		531,341		42,765		563,006		646,081	
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2010		428,296		53,348		£470,545		£563,006	

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2010

	Notes	2010	2009
FIXED ASSETS		£	£
Properties	5	151,800	155,100
Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment	5	11,484	14,828
		163,284	169,928
CURRENT ASSETS			
Loans - falling due over longer period than one year	6	55,426	65,725
Loans - falling due in less than one year	6	18,963	26,187
Debtors	7	43,662	40,193
Bank Current Accounts		24,870	43,349
Bank Deposit Accounts		300,798	321,753
		443,719	497,207
CREDITORS - Amounts payable within one year			
Creditors	8	134,825	100,384
Deferred income - Magazine subscriptions	8	1,633	3,745
		136,458	104,129
NET CURRENT ASSETS		307,261	393,078
NET ASSETS		£470,545	£563,006
Represented by:			
FUNDS Unrestricted Income Funds:			
General Fund	10&11	287,288	387,616
Legal Fund		-	(19,394)
SS Fund		-	285
Seminary Fund		-	9,587
Designated Fund: Building		137,799	136,540
Designated Fund: Missions		-	5,607
Unrestricted Funds Total:		425,087	520,241
FUNDS Restricted Income Funds:	10&11		
Buildings Legacy Fund		24,957	24,957
Students Legacy Fund		8,985	12,473
Zambia Missions Fund		5,640	-
Sustentation Fund		541	-
Black Watch Fund		5,335	5,335
Restricted Funds Total:		45,458	42,765
TOTAL FUNDS		£470,545	£563,006

These financial statements were approved by the Finance & Sustentation Committee and signed on their behalf by,

Murdo A.N. MacLeod
Convener, Finance & Sustentation Committee

1st March 2010

Angus MacMillan
General Treasurer

1st March 2010

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and are in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005*, the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006* and *Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), (revised 2005)*.

Incoming resources

All income is recognised in the statement of financial activities at the time of entitlement.

Expenditure

All expenditure is included on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay for expenditure. All costs have been allocated between other expenditure for charitable purposes, fundraising and publicity and management and administration according to their nature. The Church is not registered for VAT and, accordingly, expenditure is shown gross of irrecoverable VAT.

Depreciation

Provision for depreciation of fixed assets held for use by the Church centrally is made at annual rates calculated to spread the cost (less anticipated residual disposal value) of each asset evenly over its expected useful life. The depreciation rate currently in use for all fixed assets (except for freehold property which is depreciated at 2% per annum on a straight line basis) held for use by the Church centrally is 25% on the reducing balance basis. Freehold property is shown at open market value and the surplus or deficit realised in the SOFA on an annual basis as an investment gain or loss.

Pensions

The Church operates a group personal pension scheme with Aviva Norwich Union for all ministers. It is basically a non-contributory scheme which has sufficient flexibility to allow members to contribute voluntarily. A Death-in-service scheme is also in place with Lutine, Friends Provident and Norwich Union. These schemes are presently managed by Macleod IFA, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.

2. EXPENDITURE FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES

	Unrestricted 2010 £	Restricted 2010 £	Total 2010 £	Total 2009 £
Ministers' stipends and national insurance	408,895	-	408,895	428,480
Ministers' pensions and DIS contributions	50,324	-	50,324	49,074
Foreign Mission	-	4,860	4,860	2,765
Overseas Church Support	8,320	-	8,320	9,984
Legal costs	126,311	-	126,311	126,750
Fundraising	1,157	-	1,157	1,145
	£595,007	£4,860	£599,867	£618,198

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT.)**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010****3. EMPLOYEES / TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

All the ministers and other employees are paid through the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). There were 19 ministers on the payroll as at 31st December 2010 (2009—21 Ministers). In addition to this, as in prior year, the Church employs a full-time Home Mission Worker and has two part-time employee and one full-time Resident Lay Agent. No employee received emoluments above £60,000 in the year. Ministers' pensions and DIS contributions (above) and Salary (Note 4) include contribution costs of £44,988 (2009—£42,255) to the Aviva Norwich Union defined contribution group personal pension scheme. At 31 December 2010, the net creditor in respect of contributions for this scheme was nil. (2009 - nil net creditor). Loans owed by Trustees amounted to £10,600 (2009—6,363).

Remuneration paid to Trustees during the year amounted to £88,473 (2009 - £80,410).

Expenses paid to Trustees during the year amounted to £2,708 (2009 - £1,498).

4. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

	2010	2009
	£	£
Salary	20,894	14,969
Rent, Rates and Insurances	8,423	6,773
Heat & Light	1,457	-
Travel & entertaining	11,611	12,135
Overseas travel	5,873	3,775
Conference costs	4,568	4,421
Magazine printing	19,376	18,539
Printing and publications	6,309	4,660
Sabbath School Prizes	-	188
Postage	4,277	4,792
Telephone	491	2,865
Office stationery	2,366	4,779
General Assembly (net cost)	12,512	13,202
Audit fee	4,800	4,150
Depreciation	7,128	8,244
Loss on disposal of Motor Vehicle	-	618
Grants - students	10,339	10,714
Provision for Student Loans	16,800	15,140
Donations and other grants made	3,388	5,712
Fees and subscriptions	1,032	1,389
Miscellaneous expenses	3,063	1,486
	£144,707	£138,551

5. FIXED ASSETS

	Property	Fixtures & Fittings	Office Equipment	Motor Vehicle	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
COST					
At 1 January 2010	165,000	3,075	31,866	10,768	210,709
Additions	-	-	484	-	484
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2010	165,000	3,075	32,350	10,768	211,193
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 January 2010	9,900	2,318	25,871	2,692	40,781
Charge for the year	3,300	189	1,620	2,019	7,128
Depreciation on disposal	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2010	13,200	2,507	27,491	4,711	47,909
NET BOOK VALUE 31.12.10	£151,800	£568	£4,859	£6,057	£163,284
NET BOOK VALUE 01.01.10	£155,100	£757	£5,995	£8,076	£169,928

No value has been given in the accounts of properties held centrally by the General Trustees of the Free Church of Scotland at 1 January 2000. This includes Office Buildings and College at 15 North Bank Street, and other properties held in Edinburgh and elsewhere in the United Kingdom as at that date.

The property was valued in March 2008 by CKD Galbraith, an independent firm of Chartered Surveyors. Depreciation has been provided at a rate of 2% per annum on a straight line basis. The Trustees are not aware of any material change in value.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010

6. LOANS	2010	2009
	£	£
Long term (falling due over a period longer than one year)	55,426	65,725
Short term (falling due within one year)	18,963	26,187
	<hr/> £74,389	<hr/> £91,912

All loans to congregations are interest-free and unsecured.

Note: Of the above total £19,199 was outstanding on the Church's Car Loan Scheme at 31st December 2010 (2009— £18,1555). Interest is charged on such loans at a flat rate over the period of the loan of half the Bank of England base rate.

7. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS	2010	2009
	£	£
Income tax recoverable	43,400	39,749
Sundry debtors	262	444
	<hr/> £43,662	<hr/> £40,193

8. CREDITORS	2010	2009
	£	£
Legal fees	52,000	21,100
Magazine Subscriptions in advance	1,633	3,745
Other creditors	4,800	4,524
Provision for Legal costs	50,000	50,000
Provision for Student Loans	28,025	24,760
	<hr/> £136,458	<hr/> £104,129

9. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregations continue to retain possession of various buildings of the undivided pre-2000 Free Church of Scotland. It is recognised that these may be the subject to further legal action for repossession and significant legal costs may arise as a result of any such legal action arising. The amount of any legal fees that may arise is not readily identifiable and cannot be quantified.

The case in the Court of Session involving the Broadford (Strath) properties was lost during 2009. A provision has been made in the Accounts of £50,000 for the costs payable for that initial hearing in the event of failure of the Appeal which was heard in the Inner House of the Court of Session in late October. A further provision of £52,000 has also been made in the accounts for the outstanding costs of our legal team in relation to the Appeal.

A further sum of £90,000 should be deemed adequate to cover the contingent liability of the costs of losing the Appeal.

10. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	General Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	163,284	-	163,284
Current assets	398,261	45,458	443,719
Current liabilities	(136,458)	-	(136,458)
Net assets at 31 December 2010	<hr/> 425,087	<hr/> 45,458	<hr/> 470,545

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT.)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2010

11. FUNDS

	General Fund	Legal Fund	SS Prizes Fund	Seminary Fund	Designated Building Fund	Designated Mission Fund	Restricted Mission Fund	Restricted Fund Sustentation	Restricted Legacy Fund Buildings	Restricted Legacy Fund Students	Restricted Appeal Black Watch	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£						£
Balances at 1 January 2010	387,616	(19,394)	285	9,587	136,540	5,607	-	-	24,957	12,473	5,335	563,006
Surplus on Statement Of Financial Activities												
General	(90,806)											(90,806)
Legal	(19,394)											(19,394)
SS Prizes	285											285
Seminary Building	9,587				1,259							9,587
Mission							33					33
Sustentation Buildings Legacy								541				541
Students Legacy										(3,488)		(3,488)
Black Watch Appeal												-
Transfer to General Fund		19,394	(285)	(9,587)								-
Transfer to Restricted Funds						(5,607)	5,607					9,522
Balances at 31 December 2010	287,288	-	-	-	137,799	-	5,640	541	24,957	8,985	5,335	470,545

In the prior year, the Legal Fund, SS Prizes Fund, and the Seminary Fund were closed as Designated Funds. These are actually deemed to be part of the General Fund with no specific designation on spend, and as such have been transferred to the General Fund.

Again in the prior year, Mission Funds had been classed as Designated Funds. These funds can only be used for specific spend and as such they are deemed to be restricted in nature, therefore they have been transferred to Restricted Funds.

There are four other Restricted Funds where monies donated can only be used for the specific purpose for which it was given. These Restricted Funds are Buildings Legacy Fund, Student Legacy Fund, Black Watch Appeal Fund, and a new Restricted Sustentation Fund specifically to be used for payment of Minister's stipends. There is also a Designated Fund for Church Building Projects.

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STANDING ORDERS OF ASSEMBLY

As revised and classified by Act VIII, 1853; and amended by Act VIII, 1855; Act VI, 1856; Act III, 1857; Act X, 1858; Act III, 1859; Act III, 1860; Act X, 1861; Act IV, 1864; Act IV, 1865; Act IX, 1866; Act VIII, 1868; Act I, 1873; Act I, 1876; Act I, 1885; Act IV, 1888; Acts VI, and VII, 1889; Acts IX, XIII, XIV, 1890; Act V, 1891; Act V, 1893; Act VII, 1894; Act IX, 1896; Act X, 1907; Act X, 1908; Act VIII, 1909; Act V, 1911; Act VIII, 1912; Act IV, 1913; Act V, 1913; and findings of 26th May 1916, 30th May 1921, 16th November 1921 and 29th May 1923 and Act III, 1926; finding of 31st May 1927; Act V, 1929; Act VII, 1930; Act VIII, 1931; Acts VIII, IX and X, 1933; Act III, 1936; Act VII, 1937; Act II, 1940; Act II, 1947 and Act IX, 1948; finding of 25th May 1950; Act VII, 1950; finding of 22nd May 1952; Act IV, 1954; Act VI, 1961; Act I, 1963; Act VII, 1963; finding of 19th May 1964; Act I, 1965; Act II, 1966; finding of 26th May 1966; Act XIV, 1967; Act I, 1968; Act IV, 1968; Act II, 1969; Act III, 1969; Act IX, 1970; Act XXV, 1973; Act I, 1975; Act XXXVII, 1975 amended by Act XI, 1980 and Act XXIII, 1977; Act XIV, 1978; Act II, 1979 amended by Act XII, 1980 and Act XXIII, 1979 and Act VIII, 1982; Act II, 1984; Act VIII, 1987; Act III, 1989; Act III, 1992; Act VIII, 1993; Act XXVI, 1993; Act XVI, 1995; Act I, 1996; Act III, 1996; Act IV, 1997; Act II, 1998; finding of 22nd May 1998; Act XX, 1999; finding of 10th May 1999; Act XXII, 2001; Act III, 2002; Act XVIII, 2003; Act III 2008.

It is ordered —

I. AS TO REPRESENTATION OF PRESBYTERIES

1. That all Commissions, transmitted to the Clerk of Assembly, shall be revised by him, in so far as regards their regularity in point of form, and that the Clerk shall prepare a Report on the subject and submit the same to the Committee appointed by the Assembly for the revising of Commissions.
2. That the Clerk of the Assembly shall furnish all Presbytery Clerks with printed copies of the form of Commission to Representatives hitherto in use, and also printed copies of the bona fide Certificates to be used by Kirk Sessions, according to Act VIII, Assembly 1853, and Act IX, Assembly 1863, for certifying elders who are chosen to be Commissioners to the General Assembly.
3. That there shall be attached to Commissions a statement, certified by the Presbytery Clerk, of the number of charges in each Presbytery at the date of the Commission, and of any changes that have taken place during the previous year.
4. That Clerks of Presbyteries shall send intimation to the Clerk of Assembly on the death of a colleague, or of the induction of a colleague immediately after that event has taken place.
5. That the Assembly Arrangements Committee at its stated meeting in October shall ascertain the effects as regards representation of any changes in Presbyteries which may have occurred in the course of the previous year, by the death or removal, or by the induction of Colleague-ministers, or by the sanctioning or the reduction of charges by the preceding General Assembly or its Commission, or by any other cause, and shall immediately thereafter intimate to the Presbyteries concerned what will be their representation in the ensuing General Assembly.
6. That the decision of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, so intimated to Presbyteries, shall be subject to review by the General Assembly, if appealed against or dissented from.
7. That should any question arise between the month of January and the meeting of Assembly, not provided for by these Orders, the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall meet for the consideration and

disposal of such questions.

II. AS TO THE TRANSMISSION TO THE CLERK OF ASSEMBLY FOR THE COMMITTEE ON BILLS,

COMMISSIONS, OVERTURES, RETURNS TO OVERTURES AND PETITIONS

1. That the names and full postal addresses of the Representatives of Presbyteries shall be transmitted by Presbytery Clerks to the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of May in each year, so far as they have been elected by that time.
2. That all Commissions shall be sent up by Clerks of their respective Presbyteries, so as to be in the hands of the Clerk of the General Assembly at least one week before the Assembly meets.
3. That all Overtures from Presbyteries and Synods, passed by the first day of May, be sent to the Clerk of Assembly not later than that date each year, in order that they may be duly arranged and printed, at the expense of the Assembly, for the use of the members, and that said Overtures be in the form of certified extracts from the Minutes of the Court by which the Overtures are transmitted.
4. That Presbyteries shall transmit to the Clerk of Assembly their Returns to Overtures not later than the first day of May in each year; that said Presbyterial Returns shall consist of certified extracts from the Minutes of Presbytery; and that a separate leaf of paper shall be used for the Return on each Overture sent down by the General Assembly.
5. That papers and cases intended to be transmitted to the Assembly through the Committee on Bills, shall be laid before that Committee by the Clerk of Assembly, and parties concerned shall be in attendance at that meeting.
6. That all such papers shall be printed by the Clerk, except such papers as he may consider undesirable to print; that papers not printed shall be submitted in manuscript; and that if the Committee does not endorse the view of the Clerk, the papers shall forthwith be printed for the use of the Assembly.
7. That these regulations shall not apply to Petitions for authority to sell congregational property, which Petitions shall not be transmitted through the Bills and Overtures Committee, but in the case of those addressed to the General Assembly shall be forwarded through the regular channels so as to be in the hands of the Principal Clerk not later than 28th February in each year. In the case of such Petitions addressed to the Commission of Assembly, they shall be forwarded so as to be in the hands of the Principal Clerk not later than one month before the date of the meeting of Commission to which it is proposed to submit them. The Principal Clerk shall lay each Petition before the Committee on Custody of Titles with a view to a report thereon being timeously prepared.

III. AS TO COMMITTEE FOR BILLS AND OVERTURES

1. That the Committee on Bills and Overtures appointed by the Assembly at their first diet, shall meet at the close of the first sederunt that day, and again if necessary on the following day before the meeting of Assembly.
2. That there shall be no other meeting of the Committee except by leave of the Assembly on special cause shown.

3. That the Committee shall see that all papers presented to them in Cases from Inferior Courts, whether forming part of the Record, or produced in evidence before said Courts, have been duly dated and numbered by the Clerk of said Courts, and marked with his initial; and that the Committee shall not receive any paper which is not authenticated, unless upon special cause shown, to be reported by them to the General Assembly.

IV. AS TO PRINTING PAPERS IN CASES COMING UP TO THE ASSEMBLY

1. That all papers coming before the Assembly — viz. Memorials, Petitions (excepting those for power to sell property), Applications, References, Complaints and Appeals, with Extracts of Minutes of Inferior Courts, relative thereto, as also Reasons of Complaint or Appeal; and in cases of Libel with the Defences and Evidence adduced — which are passed by the Inferior Court before the first of May, shall be transmitted in manuscript to the Clerk of Assembly not later than that date in each year, in order to be printed in sufficient numbers for the use of the members of Assembly; and that papers passed by the Inferior Courts at a later date shall be transmitted to the Clerk without delay.

2. That all such papers shall be printed by the Clerk, except any papers which he considers may lead to discussions in the Committee on Bills and Overtures; that he shall retain these in manuscript, and submit them in that form to the Committee, and that a list of them shall be appended to the volume containing the papers passing the Clerk.

3. That in cases of discipline brought before the Assembly by reference from a Presbytery or Synod, or by complaint by a minority of the Court, the expense of printing shall be borne by the Assembly Arrangements Committee; in other circumstances by the Complainer or Appellant; and that in all other cases, such as Petitions, References not in Causes, Memorials, etc. the expense shall be borne by the party having interest in same, or desiring a deliverance from the Assembly.

4. That all such papers be printed in a form corresponding to pages of the volume of Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

5. That all such papers shall be stitched together, and provided with an alphabetical index; and that a copy thereof shall be placed in the hands of each member of the Assembly.

6. That a copy of every printed paper shall be kept by the Clerk of Assembly to be bound up and kept among the Records of Assembly.

V. AS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Devotional Exercises

1. That a bell shall be rung for one minute; and members shall take their places in the House before the Moderator takes the Chair; that the Assembly Hall doors shall be closed each day during the opening exercises to prevent interruption by persons entering the House during that time; and that the Assembly shall spend the first hour or more of the first diet of the second full day of their meeting in devotional exercises.

2. That any proposal for a pause in the Assembly's proceedings with a view to engage in special devotional exercise, shall be made to the Assembly only through the Moderator.

2. Business Committee and Committee for Printing the Acts

1. That the Assembly shall, at their first diet, appoint a Committee to arrange the Business of the House (other than the Report A of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, which hereafter shall be considered at the first sederunt of the Assembly, the proposed Deliverance on said Report to be free from the application of Standing Order V.3.4); that the Business Committee shall be prepared to make their first Report to the Assembly at the first diet of the first full day, immediately after the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures has been read; and further, that the Business Committee shall report from time to time to the Assembly till the whole business has been disposed of.

2. That the Business Committee shall in their Report indicate such petitions as are of routine nature; that motions and amendments regarding such petitions shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the first adjournment on the day before they are intended to be moved; and that if at the time of consideration of such a Petition there is no objection to it being classified as of a routine nature, the motion regarding it will be formally moved and seconded.

3. That the Assembly shall, at their first diet, appoint a Committee for printing the Acts of Assembly and that the Committee shall arrange that the Acts be divided into two classes — Class I: those which have passed the Barrier Act; Class II: Acts which are of General Interest to the Church.

3. Reports of Committees

1. That the Reports of all Committees reporting to the General Assembly (excepting only (1) that part of the Report of the Youth Committee which sets forth the results of the Youth Examinations, and (2) any report from the Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committees which complies with Standing Order VI.5.10) shall, together with Deliverances to be proposed, be transmitted for printing to the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of April. All Reports, inclusive of the Report in terms of Standing Orders VI.5.10, shall be stitched together, and sent to Commissioners to the General Assembly not later than ten days before the meeting of the Assembly.

2. That Reports shall not be engrossed in the Record, but, after being printed, a copy of each, certified by the Clerk as being that given in to the Assembly, shall be kept in retentis, and the Reports shall be appended to the printed volume of the Acts and Proceedings of Assembly.

3. That verbal Reports shall not be received, and no Sub-Committee shall give in any Report to the Assembly.

4. That amendments to the proposed deliverances on the Report of the Committee on Assembly Arrangements may be moved without previous notice and amendments relating to Ecumenical Relations shall be handed to the Clerk and read by him before the adjournment of the first sederunt; that amendments to Reports to be taken during the second and third sederunts shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the suspension of the second sederunt: amendments to deliverances on all other Reports shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the first adjournment on the day before they are intended to be moved.

5. That paragraphs of a proposed Deliverance on the Report of a Standing Committee shall be numbered, and the mover shall not be required to read it when it is already in the hands of members of Assembly.

6. That when any Committee is appointed during the Assembly's sittings it shall be competent to move amendments to the proposed Deliverance on its report without previous notice.

7. That it shall be competent for commissioners to give notice in writing of questions to be put to the

person presenting a Report to the General Assembly — this without prejudice to the right to add supplementary questions or the right of members generally to propose questions from the floor.

4. The Reading of Speeches and Length of Speeches

1. That in the discussion of any subject brought before the Assembly, by Overture or by the Report of a Committee, it shall not be allowable, without leave granted by the House, for any member to read his speech from a Manuscript prepared previously to the discussion, except in the case of a member introducing an important subject to the attention of the House.

2. That, previously to the discussion of any question which does not arise upon or contemplate the approval or disapproval of the Report of a Committee, the House shall determine, in such manner as may seem expedient, the order of priority belonging to the motions given notice of, and that, when a motion approving of a Report has been made and seconded, the House shall determine in the same manner the order of priority belonging to any other motions given notice of.

3. That in the discussion of any question the proposer of each motion may address the House for not longer than 25 minutes, and the seconder for 15 minutes; and no subsequent speaker shall address the House for a longer period than 10 minutes; and that these limits shall only be exceeded when the Moderator shall have ascertained that the House desires any speaker to continue, and shall intimate the ascertained desire to that effect.

4. That when a Convener, not being a member of Assembly, is permitted to present his Committee's Report, the Convener and the mover of the Deliverance shall be required to come to an arrangement by which their combined speeches shall not exceed the time normally granted to the mover of a motion in terms of Standing Order V.4.3, or as that Order may be amended by this or any subsequent Assembly. It shall be competent for the person who presents a Committee's Report to answer questions relating to the Report and to reply to the discussion, even if he be not a member of Assembly.

5. That a member of the Assembly in moving or seconding an amendment shall confine himself to the matter of the amendment, and shall have the right to speak at a later stage to other matters in the Report and other amendments, provided that the total time taken in speaking shall conform to Standing Order V.4.3.

5. The Conducting of Causes

1. That Counsel shall not be heard at the Bar in any Causes which may come before the House.

2. That when a Presbytery acquiesces in the sentence of a Synod, it shall not be entitled to appear as a separate party at the Bar of the Assembly, but the members of Presbytery may nevertheless be heard as members of Synod.

3. That in no case shall there be more than two speakers for each party at the Bar, including the reply to which the appellant or complainer shall be entitled; and when there are more than two parties, there shall only be one speaker, and one speech for each, besides the reply — it being understood that where there is more than one complainer, each shall be considered as a different party only in case of its appearing to the Assembly that the complaints rest upon distinctly separate grounds.

4. That, previously to hearing the parties in any Cause, the Clerk shall read the following announcement, — viz., “The members are reminded that justice requires the pleadings as at the Bar to be heard by all those who vote in the Cause, and that, in particular, no member ought to vote against either side of the Bar who has not heard the pleadings on that side”.

- 5.(1) That the Clerk of Assembly shall not issue the papers to the members of Assembly, with reference to cases which he thinks require to be conducted with closed doors until specially instructed by the Assembly to do so; but he shall report such cases to the Convener of the Business Committee, for its information immediately after its appointment;
- (2) That the Business Committee shall, in their first Report, specify any case which, in their judgment, requires to be conducted with closed doors; and any case which does not appear to them of that character, although the Clerk may have reported it as such;
- (3) That, in all cases thus reported on by the Business Committee the Assembly shall itself determine, by a special deliverance, at what stage of the proceedings the papers shall be issued to the members; and
- (4) That in every case which the Assembly appoints to be conducted with closed doors, the instruction to issue the papers shall be accompanied by a special exhortation to the members to keep them private.

6. Motions and Votes

1. That every motion, whether original or amended, if not already in the hands of the Clerk, shall be given into the Clerk in writing, as soon as it shall have been made to the House.
2. That the person who makes the first motion shall be entitled to the privilege of giving a reply, in which new matter must not be introduced; and that thereafter the debate shall be held to be definitely closed, and no other person shall be entitled to speak excepting with regard to the manner of putting a vote.
3. That all motions after the first that are truly amendments on the first motion shall be disposed of in accordance with Standing Order No. V.6.6 and that when an amendment raises an issue different from that in other amendments, it shall be dealt with as a direct counter-motion.
4. That where there are only two motions before the House, the question put to the vote shall be second or first motion.
5. That when there are three motions, the first question shall be, whether the second or third motion shall be put as amendment against the first; and the second question shall be, whether the first motion or the amendment so fixed shall be the decision of the House.
6. That when there are more than three motions, the first question shall be whether the last proposed shall be put as the amendment, and so till only three remain, when the procedure shall be as prescribed in the immediately preceding sub-section.
7. That in Causes, it shall not be competent to move an amendment to the motion, unless it be of such a nature as to decide the case, or to forward it in its progress.
8. That when any proposal has been submitted in the Report of a Committee any motion for approval of such proposal shall take precedence of any counter-motion or amendment.

7. Mode of taking the Vote

1. That on a division being called for, all parties who are not members, but have the privilege of entering the House, shall withdraw.
2. That on a division being called for the Clerk shall announce that no member ought to vote against a motion or amendment who has not been in attendance during the discussion thereof; that thereafter no one shall be permitted to enter the House till the vote has been taken and the result declared; that two or four

Tellers shall be appointed by the Moderator, drawn equally from supporters of each motion before the House; and that these Tellers shall take their place at the Clerk's table. But when the issue of a vote by show of hands is not immediately obvious the Tellers shall count the votes seat by seat taking up their positions at the ends of each seat in turn in order to do so.

3. That the vote shall, in the discretion of the House, be taken either by calling of the Roll or by a show of hands, or by card.
4. That as soon as the vote shall have been taken, the Tellers shall report the state of vote to the Clerk of Assembly, who shall write it down, and announce it to the House.
5. That the Report of the Tellers, when announced to the House, shall be held as final and conclusive, and not subject to any revision by scrutiny or otherwise.

8. Dissents

That no dissents against any deliverance of the Assembly shall be given in until the matter in which it is pronounced is, for that sederunt, disposed of, the Minutes are completed and adjusted, and the House is ready to proceed to other business.

9. Drafts of Declaratory or Interim Acts and Overtures

That the Draft of any proposed Declaratory or Interim Act, as also the Draft of any Overture which it is proposed to transmit to Presbyteries for their opinion in terms of the Barrier Act, shall be laid on the Table of the Assembly, and printed and circulated among the members, at least one diet before a motion be made for the passing of such Declaratory or Interim Act, or for the transmission of such Overture to the Presbyteries of the Church.

10. Letters addressed to the Moderator

That all letters addressed to the Moderator for the purpose of being communicated to the Assembly, shall, in the first instance, be laid by him before the Business Committee, who shall advise the Moderator as to the way of disposing of them.

11. Deputations from other Churches, etc.

1. That the list of corresponding Churches and Societies shall be as determined by the General Assembly from time to time on the recommendation of the Assembly Arrangements Committee.
2. That deputies from corresponding Churches or Societies shall forward their commission or letters of introduction so as to reach the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of May in each year; and he shall submit the same to the Business Committee so that arrangements may be made for the deputies to address the General Assembly.
3. That deputies from Churches and Societies other than those aforesaid shall likewise forward Commissions or letters of introduction to reach the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of March, and he shall report the same to the Commission of Assembly meeting in that month, who shall be empowered to decide which of the deputies shall be received by, and invited to address the Assembly. In the event of failure of the Commission to meet, the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall meet at the earliest opportunity, and shall decide which deputies shall be received by, and invited to address the Assembly.
4. That in the case of strangers who may be desirous of being introduced to the Assembly and

addressing the House, notice thereof shall be conveyed to the Moderator, who shall report the same to the Business Committee, that they may advise in the matter.

12. Visitation of Synod Records, and Examinations of Minutes of Committees

1. That the Synod Books shall be called for at the first diet of the Assembly, and that a Committee or Committees shall be appointed for visiting the same, who shall fill up a schedule with the information required by the Assembly regarding each book — said schedule to be returned when the Report of the Visitors shall be called for.
2. That a copy of the Report, as sustained by the Assembly, shall be transmitted to the Synod, and engrossed in their Record.
3. That the Minutes of Committees and the Foreign Board shall be laid annually on the Table of the Assembly, and visited in the same manner as the Synod Books.

13. Printing of Assembly's Proceedings, etc.

1. That the Minutes of Commission, together with roll of matters to be taken up on the following days, and lists of members of Committees, be printed and placed in the hands of the Members of Assembly on the opening day.
2. That when a motion is duly seconded, and in possession of the Assembly it shall not be competent to make any alterations upon it without the permission of the House, excepting in the shape of an amendment, or second or third motion, as the case may be, regularly proposed to the Assembly.

14. Minutes

That the minutes adopted at any of the diets be read over and approved of only at a morning diet, with the exception of the Minutes of the last day of the Assembly's sittings, which Minutes shall be read over and approved of before the rising of the Assembly.

15. Standing Orders

That the Standing Orders be read, or, by vote, be held as read immediately before the appointment of the Business Committee, and that they be printed in the first day's proceedings.

16. Conduct of Commissioners

That courtesy demands that all diets of the Assembly be attended by Commissioners, and that private meetings should not be held during the sederunts of the Assembly.

17. Declaration of Interests

That it is the duty of any member or party having an interest or close personal relationship relating to business under consideration to disclose and declare that interest or close personal relationship. Furthermore, the Moderator, Convener or Chairman shall take due cognizance of the appropriateness or otherwise of an individual or individuals having an interest or close personal relationship being present during consideration of such business and, if the member or party having an interest or close personal relationship, having been requested to withdraw do not withdraw voluntarily for the duration of consideration of the business in which he has an interest or close personal relationship, the Moderator, Convener or Chairman shall call for the appointment of a committee or sub-committee comprising all members, other than those having an interest, to deal with the business in question during a period of suspension and to report back with recommendations immediately after the suspension.

VI. AS TO COMMITTEES

1. *Types of Committee*

That the business of the Church between one Assembly and the next ensuing shall be carried on by Standing Committees and Special Committees.

2. *Standing Committees*

1. That Standing Committees shall comprise three Groups

2. That the Groups shall be arranged as follows:

Group 1: Legal Advice & Property — *Adviser: Principal Clerk*

Finance & Sustentation — *Adviser: Treasurer*

Group 2: Public Questions, Religion & Morals — *Adviser: Editor of Witness*

Publications (including defence of Church Principles) — *Editorial Team as Advisers*

Training of the Ministry & Admissions

Group 3 Welfare of Youth & Education — *Adviser: Editor of Explorer*

Foreign & Home Missions

Assembly Arrangements & Nominations — *Advisers: Assistant Clerk of Assembly, Moderator of immediately preceding Assembly, Moderator of last but one Assembly.*

Ecumenical Relations

These groups shall have stated meetings on the same dates as appointed by the General Assembly for the meeting of the Commission of Assembly but shall also meet, as may be necessary, on dates additional to those dates.

3. Each Group shall comprise four members from each Synod, two Ministers and two Elders, and each Presbytery, in so far as is practicable, shall be represented on each group of Committees.

4. That every person nominated to Group 1, 2, or 3 of Standing Committees must serve on all the Committees of the Group.

5. That the General Assembly shall each year appoint the Convener and Vice-convener of each Standing Committee, due regard being had to effective working and continuity of policy. In the event of the death or resignation of the Convener of any of the Standing Committees, the Vice-convener shall forthwith become the Convener, and in the event of the death or resignation of the Vice-convener or his succession to the position of Convener in the circumstances described above, the Committee shall forthwith appoint one of their number in room and place of the said Vice-convener so departing from office, but any Vice-convener so appointed by the Committee shall hold office only until the second-last day of the meeting of the next-ensuing General Assembly.

6. That in addition the General Assembly shall each year appoint a Strategy Committee comprising the Conveners of Groups 1, 2, and 3 Standing Committees together with, as advisers, the Principal Clerk of Assembly, the Assistant Clerk of Assembly and the General Treasurer; the Convener of the Legal Advice &

Property Committee to be Convener and the Assembly Clerk's Department to provide clerking support, the Committee to meet at least once annually and on such additional occasions as is expedient.

3. *Special Committees*

1. That these shall be appointed by the General Assembly.
2. That Special Committees shall comprise the following:
 - 2.1 A Psalmody Committee which shall have a Membership comprised of one Minister or Elder from each Presbytery, nominated by Presbyteries on the ground of special knowledge of and practical experience in Psalmody.

4. *Nominations to Committees*

1. That of the Standing and Special Committees, a certain number of members, in normal conditions those who have served longest on the Committee, shall retire annually, so that within four years the membership of each Committee shall be changed throughout, and these retiring members shall not be eligible for appointment to the same Standing Committee for at least two years from the date of their retirement aforescribed; and that in the event of the death or resignation of a member of a Committee before his four years' service have expired, the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee are empowered to nominate to the Assembly, or to its Commission, a substitute who will complete the unexpired portion of the period of service of the member in whose place he has been appointed.
2. Although in terms of Standing Order VI.4.1 above any individual who has served on a group of Committees shall not be eligible to serve on the same group of Committees without a two-year break, that shall not preclude his potential eligibility for service on another group of Committees following, though not concurrent with, his service on the first group.
3. That resignation of membership of one of the Standing or Special Committees shall be intimated to the Convener of the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee; that resignation from one Committee in a Group of Standing Committees shall involve resignation from the other Committees in that Group; and that any member of a Standing or Special Committee who shall, without good reason to be stated by him to, and sustained by, the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee, have failed to attend any of the meetings of the relevant Committee during the period between the last General Assembly and the meeting of the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee for the purpose of Standing Order VI.4.9 shall be deemed to have resigned his membership of that Committee.
4. That when a member who represents a Presbytery on a Group of Standing Committees resigns his membership of Standing Committees or ceases to be an office-bearer of a Congregation within the Presbytery which he represented, then that individual loses his membership of Standing Committees and the Presbytery is permitted to appoint in his stead another office-bearer who shall take his place on the said Committees until the ensuing General Assembly at which time the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee shall make recommendations with regard to the fulfilment of the remainder of the term of office of the member whose term of office had been prematurely terminated.
5. In the event of a member of a Special Committee not completing his four-year term of office a replacement shall be made by the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee and reported on to the ensuing General Assembly.
6. That not later than the first day of January in each year the Principal Clerk of Assembly shall furnish to the Clerk of each Presbytery a list of the members of the Standing and Special Committees, indicating

thereon which members of these Committees will retire from office at the next-ensuing Assembly and which members may have died or become disqualified.

7. That each Presbytery of the Church shall forward to the Principal Clerk of Assembly by the first day of November of each year a list of names of such Elders, within their bounds (along with their designations, full addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses; together with a note of previous service, if any, on Committees, or their suitability for service on a Standing or Special Committee), as they desire to submit for the information of other Presbyteries, and being known by them to be eligible, suitable and available for nomination to vacancies on Standing or Special Committees. The Principal Clerk shall collate all these returns and forward a list of the names of the Elders so recommended to the Clerk of each Presbytery at the same time (viz. the first day of January each year) as he forwards the names of existing members of the Standing and Special Committees showing which members fall to be replaced.

8. That each Presbytery shall, not later than the last day of March next ensuing, furnish to the Principal Clerk of Assembly the names of Ministers and Elders (not necessarily members of Presbytery) recommended by the Presbytery as suitable for appointment to Standing and Special Committees, these lists not to contain more names than the known number of vacancies. The Principal Clerk shall forthwith cause these lists to be laid before the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee.

9. That not later than the first day of May the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee shall select, out of the names submitted by Presbyteries, as many Ministers and Elders as shall fill the vacancies of the various Standing and Special Committees, and shall recommend these to the General Assembly, and the names so recommended shall, not later than the first day of May, be communicated by the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee to the Clerk of Assembly, and shall be included in the papers to be printed. That part of the Report of the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee which relates to nominations to Standing and Special Committees shall be submitted separately from any Report dealing with other aspects of their remit.

10. The Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee, in making their nominations, shall take due cognisance of the recommendations of Presbyteries and shall (1) take special cognisance of the recommendations of potential Committee members by the Presbyteries of which these men are members; (2) have regard to fitness for the work of the particular Committee or Committees for which the persons are to be nominated; (3) have regard to as even a distribution of influence as possible over the Church; (4) have regard to economy in relation to the expense connected with attendance at meetings of Committees.

11. That it shall be competent for any Member of Assembly to move an amendment or amendments to the recommendations of the Assembly Arrangements and Nominations Committee, provided that notice of such amendment shall have been given to the Clerk of Assembly in writing, not later than the second last day of the Assembly, and provided that such amendments are in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders VI.4.1-4 above.

12. That the appointment of Clerks to each Committee or Special Committee shall be made by the General Assembly, such appointments being made with due regard to such special requirements as may be peculiar to the Committees concerned and the suitability of the skills of the individual appointed. The Clerk appointed need not be drawn from the membership of the Committee.

13. That Advisers to Committees as detailed in Standing Order VI.2.2 above shall have entitlement to be present at all meetings of Committee and shall have a right to participate in the deliberations of the Committee but shall have no vote.

14. That each Standing and Special Committee shall produce and maintain an up-to-date Memorandum on Procedure to serve as a guide to members as to how the Committee should proceed in terms of the Laws

and Practice of the Church.

15. That each Committee named in Standing Orders VI.2.2 and VI.3.2 above shall, for the purposes of legislation existing prior to the General Assembly of 2001, be deemed to be the Standing or Special Committee the remit of which is included in the remit of the Committee referred to in Standing Order VI.2.2 or VI.3.2 above.

16. That in the selection of Ministers and Elders to form any *Ad hoc* Special Committee, which is to report to a subsequent Assembly, the Assembly shall not be restricted to its own members.

17. That when the appointment of an *Ad hoc* Special Committee has been resolved on, the Committee shall not be nominated until the following day, except in cases the urgency of which does not admit of a day's delay.

18. That no Committee shall sit while the Moderator is in the Chair at any diet of the Assembly's meeting.