

## DELIVERANCES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019

### COUNCIL OF ASSEMBLY

#### The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Report.
2. Approve for implementation the following elements of the Radical Action Plan as set out in the Report:
  - a) the establishment of a Growth Fund of £20-£25m for the period 2020-2026 and ensure that the experience in good funding practice gained through the *Go For It* Fund and its predecessors is harnessed and employed in the governance of the Growth Fund;
  - b) the establishment of a total of around 12 regional Presbytery structures in Scotland by the General Assembly of 2024 or sooner, paying appropriate attention to the implications for the Barrier Act, including the possible need for transitional arrangements during implementation;
  - c) the preparation of draft legislation for the General Assembly of 2020 to enable the establishment of networks, hubs and other additional forms of local church;
  - d) a review of the size and responsibilities of Kirk Sessions;
  - e) co-operation with other denominations in the provision of territorial ministry in accordance with section 3 of Act V, 2010 alongside a re-examination of what territorial ministry means within today's context;
  - f) the creation of a single, easy and accessible platform of faith and nurture resources;
  - g) a flexible education, training and support programme for every person in the Church including material on discipleship and leadership;
  - h) initiatives to help the Church to engage those aged 40 and under;
  - i) instruct that in 2021 and subsequent years there shall be no increase in a congregation's Ministries and Mission allocation over that which was asked in 2020 until such time as alternative arrangements have been approved by the General Assembly;
  - j) the exploration of changes to the current vacancy allowance, including the discontinuing of the current system of vacancy allowance for congregations and making this available to Presbytery along with the Presbytery Discretionary Allowance;
  - k) the development of new ways to support congregations in long-term vacancies;
  - l) the support of the General Trustees' initiative entitled 'Well-equipped Spaces in the Right Places';
  - m) the exploration of whether proceeds from the sale of redundant buildings following adjustment processes might in certain circumstances be applied for the benefit of a congregation other than the united or linked congregation concerned;
  - n) the provision of support at a regional/local level to congregations including:
    - i) buildings expertise
    - ii) safeguarding
    - iii) financial accounting
    - iv) local staff employment
    - v) developing effective partnerships
  - o) developing the most appropriate relationship between CrossReach and the broader work of the Unincorporated Councils and Committees (UCC) and the local church to enable this work to be sustainable and to flourish; and
  - p) a refocus of the national office staff team so that there is a focus on equipping and supporting local churches, including accessing the Growth Fund.
3. a) Appoint a Special Commission of five persons to prepare a report on the effectiveness of the Presbyterian form of Church government, giving particular consideration to the effectiveness of the Presbyterian form of Church government in promoting and supporting the mission of local congregations, and

- developing leadership in the Church and to report to the General Assembly not later than in 2021; and
- b) Instruct the Selection Committee to present names for this Special Commission to a later session of this General Assembly.
4. Instruct the Assembly Trustees\* to draw together a cross-departmental team to ensure that the Action Plan is implemented.
  5. Instruct the Assembly Trustees\* to report annually to the General Assembly on the delivery of the Action Plan.
  6. Encourage all General Assembly Councils and Committees to focus their activities from June – December 2019 on an effective implementation of the Action Plan.
  7. Encourage a ‘season of prayer and preparation’ across the Church from September – December 2019.
  8. Urge Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to engage with the ‘Try Praying UK 2020’ campaign in April 2020 as an extension to the ‘season of prayer and preparation’ by promoting use of the Try Praying resources to encourage prayer for missional outreach, including to those in prison.
  9. Note that further work has been undertaken by the Council of Assembly on the National Offices Buildings Project and instruct the Assembly Trustees\* to present a further report to the General Assembly in 2020, taking into account the outcome of decisions around the Action Plan and the Report of the Special Commission on Structural Reform.
  10. Note the continuing work of the Gaelic Group.
  11. Approve changes to the membership of the Ecumenical Relations Committee.
  12. Approve the revised remit of the Church Art and Architecture Committee as set out in Appendix I.
  13. Receive the 2018 Report and Accounts of The Church of Scotland Unincorporated Councils and Committees.
  14. Approve the total to be contributed by congregations in 2020 of £46,586,000 based on the projection of congregational income for 2020 and its disposition among local congregational expenditure, the Parish Ministries Fund and the Mission and Renewal Fund.
  15. Note the indicative budget for 2020.
  16. Approve:
    - a) the winding up of the Huts and Canteens Grants Fund and the distribution of the balance as follows:
      - (i) a payment of £150,000 to SSAFA Forces Help; and
      - (ii) the remainder of funds, both capital and interest, to be transferred to the Mission and Renewal Fund.
    - b) the retention within the Huts and Canteens Pension Fund of an appropriate amount (based upon current annual pension payments, increased by an annual amount determined as reasonable by the General Treasurer) until such time as no beneficiaries remain, and thereafter the closure of the Pension Fund and transfer of the remaining funds to the Mission and Renewal Fund.
  17. Note the position with regard to the New College Library, approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the University Court of the University of Edinburgh and authorise the Moderator and the Principal Clerk to sign it on their behalf.
  18. Pass the Growth Fund Regulations as set out in Appendix IV, but subject to the deletion of paragraph 3 in the print and substitution with the following:
 

“The purposes of the Fund are to support: the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and new Church of Scotland worshipping communities; community transformation; and tackling poverty.”
  19. Instruct the Assembly Trustees to bring to the General Assembly of 2020 a closing report on the work of the *Go For It* Fund, sharing the learning that has been gained through the life of the Fund and celebrating all that the Church of Scotland has achieved through its funded projects.