

Meeting of Selkirk Parish Church Kirk Session
held by Zoom video conference on Tuesday 10th November, 2020, at 7pm

1 Constitution

The moderator, Rev. Margaret Steele, welcomed Robert Turnbull and Keith Simpson, representatives of the Presbytery Planning Implementation Committee, and invited R. Turnbull to open the meeting.

R. Turnbull read from Psalm 33 vv 8-22, then constituted the meeting with prayer.

2 Elders present

Anne Bethune, David Bethune (minutes), Fiona Corbett, Mark Corbett, Pauline Davidson, Elma Hendrie, Fiona Holmes, Jacqui Lee, Lynda McCraw, Margaret Milne, Louise Raffier, Katrina Smith, Myra Ward, Linda White and Glynis Wilkie.

Apologies were received from Gordon Junor, Jim Noble and Jim Smith.

3 Draft Basis on Linking

The Basis of Linking (version 4: 27/10/20) of the congregations of Ashkirk, Etrick and Yarrow, and Selkirk, was tabled, and was unanimously approved by members of the Kirk Session.

The protocol to be used for the congregational vote was also unanimously approved by the Kirk Session and Presbytery members.

The full details of this will be agreed by all three Kirk Sessions of the Linkage.

R. Turnbull and K. Simpson then left the meeting, and Rev. M. Steele took over as Moderator.

4 Approval of minutes

The minute of the Kirk Session meeting of 13th October was accepted as a true record, proposed by M. Corbett and seconded by G. Wilkie.

5 Matters Arising

(a) Listening to under-50s

L. Raffier reported that the under-50s group were glad to be asked to contribute, but had nothing specific to raise at this meeting beyond what they had already raised at the Congregational Board. They would be happy to attend if there was a good reason to do so. M. Corbett suggested that some might like to attend a Start Course.

(b) Resignation of Session Clerk

D. Bethune reported that both Colin and Marion Macintosh have resigned from the Kirk Session, but were willing to continue as visitors for the out of town members. A card will be sent to them thanking them for their contribution and wishing them well for the future.

M. Steele thanked all for sending their suggestions and reported that F. Corbett and D. Bethune have agreed to be joint Session Clerks for up to 5 years. This was unanimously approved. F. Corbett took the "oath de fidele".

(c) New Elders

M. Steele asked all to think and pray about those who might be invited in becoming elders, and to bring these names to the January meeting.

6 AOB

One item to be added to the agenda: Notes of thanks

/continued

7 **Roll**

M. Steele, E. Hendrie and P. Davidson will check the roll. All were asked to consider any regular attenders who could be invited to become adherents.

8 **Worship matters**

(a) **Review of opening for services**

Numbers attending continue to be low (typically around 15-20). Over 100 “attended” the online remembrance service. Only one person appears to be using the dial-in service regularly. It was noted that the song words can be difficult to see from the back pews. M. Steele asked for more volunteers for the welcome rota.

It was agreed that funerals would be allowed, with the number of attenders limited to 20, and with doors kept open.

(b) **Remembrance Sunday (8th November)**

The service had been appreciated. The Ettrick and Yarrow wreath-laying video will be posted on the church website and Facebook pages.

(c) **Communion**

It was agreed that, due to the current restrictions, the communion service on the 1st Sunday of Advent will be online only, and the congregation will be encouraged to take part together at home at 6pm.

(d) **Christmas**

Tentative arrangements for Advent and Christmas events and services were discussed:

(a) 13th Dec: instead of a **Service of Remembering**, M. Steele will write a letter to be sent out by the office to those who might have attended, and K. Smith will write a note for The Hird.

(b) Lita McHale may be arranging a **virtual carol singing** event

(c) The **Haining Trust** / John Nicol is organizing a “Merry Meander” on the 18/19th Dec, 6-8pm, to celebrate Christmas.

(d) **Christmas Eve**: there may be a national “doorstep carol singing” at 6pm, an online Christingle Service and an online Living Nativity.

(e) **Christmas Day**: we will have a short online service, followed by a zoom coffee and chat. Individuals will be encouraged to make a donation to Shelter.

(f) The **church will be decorated** inside with the usual angels on the window cills, and outside lights on the cherry trees.

(g) **Gifts for the BGH** can be handed in a Scott’s Selkirk shop.

9 **Cluster matters**

Dates for the various stages in the process towards the linking are still to be confirmed, but it is likely that the first communication will be in January 2021.

It was agreed that one Sunday’s **pulpit supply** should count as 2 services (live and online), and so should be paid at that rate (currently £90).

A request has been sent to presbytery Business Committee restating the need for a **pastoral post** of at least 0.25FTE to work with the minister of the cluster.

M. Steele asked for a volunteer to join the **Cluster Implementation Group** to replace C. Macintosh.

10 **Evangelism and Discipleship Focus**

Reachout is organising the knitting and distribution of knitted angels, each carrying a Christmas message from the churches in Selkirk and the valleys, and also an email-based Advent group.

The **Discipleship course** is continuing fortnightly.

/continued

11 **Community Focus**

- (a) **Open Door:** M. Ward reported that there will be a trial run of the new format Open Door on 30th November, using existing volunteers as “customers”.
- (b) **Foodbank** continues – no report.
FreshStart Borders – no report.
Fairtrade M. Ward reported around £200 of sales in the last order, with another order being sent next week.
Chamber of Trade – no report

12 **Safeguarding** – no report

13 **Children and Families work**

Mo Brown is stepping down from the **Sunday Gang** team, leaving D. McCann, G. Hamilton and J. Moley.

Hot Chocolate club for teenagers continues fairly regularly, managing to keep in touch with several young people and families in safe ways.

Prayer was requested for these groups.

14 **Eco-congregation**

COP26 Pledge As we have already divested our congregational funds, as far as we are able, from fossil fuel investments, and have expressed our wish for the Church of Scotland to do so as a denomination, the Kirk Session agreed that we should sign the COP26 pledge.

A final “**Baked Alaska**” video and discussion will be held online on Sunday 15th November.

Instead of another eco-conference, the Eco-group is planning to have **monthly events** on different themes throughout 2021, leading up to the COP26 conference in November.

15 **Presbytery**

L. White reported that the 121 committee had been impressed by our Draft Basis of Linking document. A “**Good Ideas**” fund is being set up, using the 5% Ministry and Missions rebate, from which we might be able to get a grant of between £250 and £500 for Open Door or other outreach projects.

16 **Correspondence**

Two opportunities were noted:

(a) an email from 121 inviting interest in an online seminar on “**God’s call in Covid time**”

(b) a discussion document from Jane Peers on “**The church in a time of pandemic**”.

These have been circulated and all are encouraged to respond.

Worship Leader Certificates for F. Corbett, E. Jones and D. Bethune have been received.

17 **AOB**

M. Ward asked that we consider how to be more intentional about **thanking people** for the ways they contribute to church life. This will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

/continued

- 18 **Dates of next meetings:** next meeting 8th December (at 8pm, following the Congregational Board at 7pm)
Following Kirk Session meetings (2021): 12th Jan, 9th Feb, 9th Mar, 13th Apr, 11th May, 8th Jun.
- 19 **Close of meeting** The meeting closed with the saying of “the grace” to each other.

_____ Moderator

_____ Session Clerk