

## June 2020 Newsletter from Holburn West Church, Aberdeen

As I write to you today, we enjoy the beauty, light, and warmth of a Summer day.

There are three things that I want to draw your attention to in this June Newsletter, most significant of which is the revised Presbytery Plan.

**1. The Revised Draft of the Presbytery Planning and Deployment Committee Proposals**, to be approved by the Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland at a later date to be arranged. You can express your views to your Elder or Session Clerk or Minister, as we determine our response to the revised proposals.

**2. A Request for your email address**, so that regular communications and updates can be made from the Minister, Session Clerks and Church Office to you by email. This would save greatly on time involved for printing and posting; it would also save money and be more environmentally friendly regarding less use of ink, paper and postage stamps. Please fill in and return the Consent Form (attached)

**3. A request for quotes** which would be of value to the quality of life and the nurture of our human spirit. You could send a favourite quote, poem, prayer, bible verse that might help send God's love and message to all through the website. (The item should not be copyright protected or at least the copyright should be such that we are permitted to use the item on the website.)

### Revised Presbytery Plan proposals

The Presbytery Planning and Deployment Committee is pursuing the direction of its first draft of proposals i.e.

- a moving towards ministry teams working in groups
- a significant reduction of the number of church buildings across the City of Aberdeen
- a reduction of the number of ministerial charges

It is intended that these changes will enable the Church of Scotland to be leaner and healthier, providing a way for the Church to be more missional, focused, and sustainable. All congregations will be affected, whether their buildings are being retained or not. Representatives of the congregations in a grouping, will all have a say, in the use of, disposal of and development of buildings that belong to the group. When a ministerial vacancy occurs, representatives of each of the congregations in the Group, will participate in the appointing of a new Minister of Word and Sacrament or Ministry Development post. It is hoped that more ministry and mission will take place out with the four walls of a church building.

The second draft of the Presbytery Plan Proposals is an 18-page document. The full document can be accessed online via the Holburn West Church web site or the Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland web site, from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

In the selections from the report, I have included the group the PDC are proposing we go into and also the other groups neighbouring us. Feedback on the initial plan from the Holburn West Kirk Session and the congregation noted differently held views, divided between going with the City Centre and West End Grouping or the Aberdeen West Grouping.

The PDC is recommending that Holburn West be within the City Centre and West End Grouping. This may be partly due to the Aberdeen West Grouping, having already worked hard on planning a progression of stages. For Holburn West to come into that group at this point, would complicate and delay the process.

The Presbytery Plan proposals foresee the Holburn West building no longer being used as a sanctuary by the Church of Scotland in the lifetime of the plan (2020 – 2030) As your minister, it is difficult for me not to respond to this other than with sadness. The particularly painful part of this is the breakup of the Holburn West Church Family, who have valued and enjoyed meeting together in the building. I hope and pray that we can work positively along with community groups to ensure that the Holburn West building may continue to be a place for them to meet and so still provide a service to the community.

A hard copy of the Presbytery Plan proposals can be sent out to you if you phone me and request a copy.

Please continue to visit the Holburn West Church web site and Facebook page to receive regular updates on worship services being streamed. The building may be closed at present, but the life and witness of the Church continues.

with my good wishes and prayers  
Take care and God bless you  
from Rev. Duncan C. Eddie

**The Presbytery Planning and Deployment Committee recommend that the Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland**

1. Receives the Plan for the period 2020-2030 and accompanying Report. Key for abbreviations: UT – Unrestricted Tenure V - Vacant TM – Transition Minister IEM – International Exchange Minister I Min – Interim Minister MDS – Ministry Development Staff RT - Reviewable Tenure

**10. Approves the Plan for the City Centre and West End Area Grouping.**

Name of Congregation	2018 Congregational Membership	2011 Gross Pop'n	2011 Net Pop'n	Current Status	Plan for congregations by end of Plan	Interim steps required	Structure of staffing required	Total staffing in Plan	Building Classification	Notes
Holburn West	317	4,022	3,130	UT	Team Ministry		3 Ministers , 1 MDS	4	B	
Midstocket	423	7,473	5,828	UT					A	
Queen's Cross	403	6,815	5,112	UT					A	
Rubislaw	398	1,970	1,529	UT					A-Centre B-Church	
Kirk of St Nicholas Unit	305	3,422	2,371	V					D	
St Mark's	422	14,177	10,355	V					D	
City Centre Initiative										

28,352

- 10.1 By the end of the Plan, the aim is to have one congregation, with four full time staff, including three Ministers of Word and Sacrament with 3 or 4 buildings, sponsoring and staffing the new City Centre Initiative.
- 10.2 The Parish Grouping (as defined in the Report) will be formed within six months of approval of the Plan.
- 10.3 As a first step of adjustment in this locality, the congregation of the Kirk of St Nicholas (Church of Scotland) should be united as soon as possible with the congregation of Queen's Cross, failing which the congregation of the Kirk of St Nicholas (Church of Scotland) will be dissolved. Responsibility for the Kirk of St Nicholas Building is to be handed over to the General Trustees. Occasional worship, such as for Civic Occasions may still take place there, with any form of occasional ministry there including the wider Parish Grouping.
- 10.4 At St Mark's, in the first instance, a period of Interim Ministry Accompaniment should be undertaken with the congregation there, and in the context of the wider Parish Group, will discern whether there is a long-term future for ministry in the building. Following the discernment of the Congregation and Presbytery in this matter, a period of transition ministry with an appointed Transition Minister would take place.

10.5 The Parish Grouping has the task of sponsoring the new City Centre Initiative and discerning its shape for the future.

### 5. Approves the Plan for the West Aberdeen Area Grouping:

Name of Congregation	2018 Congregational Membership	2011 Gross Pop'n	2011 Net Pop'n	Current Status	Plan for congregations by end of Plan	Interim steps required	Structure of staffing required	Total staffing in Plan	Building Classification	Notes
Craigiebuckler	715	6,248	5,162	UT	Team Ministry, 1 or 2 Kirk Sessions, multi-site		3 Ministers , 1 MDS	4	A	Investigation of possible further development of Kingswells buildings.
Cults	694	9,059	6,948	UT					A	
Kingswells	308	4,915	3,877	UT					D	
Mannofield	912	4,951	4,169	UT					A	
Peterculter	523	5,639	4,731	UT					A	

5.1 By the end of the Plan, the aim is to have either one or two congregations working together with four full time staff including three Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The five Kirk Sessions have already agreed a way of moving towards this aim, beginning with a Parish Grouping (as defined in the Report) to be formed within six months of the Plan being approved.

5.2 Kingswells, with the help of other members of the Grouping, will investigate how best to serve the communities of Kingswells and new developments at Countesswells whether using the existing Kingswells buildings or otherwise. A report on progress will be made to Presbytery within 2 years of the approval of the Plan.

### 6. Approves the Plan for the Riverside Area Grouping:

Name of Congregation	2018 Congregational Membership	2011 Gross Pop'n	2011 Net Pop'n	Current Status	Plan for congregations by end of Plan	Interim steps required	Structure of staffing required	Total staffing in Plan	Building Classification	Notes
Ferryhill	307	6,915	5,271	UT	Team Ministry, 1 Kirk Session, 2 Buildings		2 Ministers , 1 MDS	3	A	South Holburn includes former Parish of Garthdee
South Holburn	591	10,019	8,052	UT					A	

Ruthrieston West	301	4,578	3,858	UT					B	

- 6.1 By the end of the Plan, the aim is to have one congregation with two centres of worship and 3 full time members of staff including two Ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- 6.2 Confirms the position of Ruthrieston West under the existing Plan, namely that whenever a vacancy occurs, the charge will be united with another in the Presbytery, and that union will be in the Riverside Area Grouping.
- 6.3 In the meantime, a Parish Grouping (as defined in the Report) will be formed within 6 months of approval of the Plan, with a view to moving towards eventual union.
- 6.4 The Parish Grouping will have responsibility for undertaking and sustaining a new form of mission focussed on the Garthdee community.

**Building Classification under the Presbytery Plan** The Church of Scotland’s Appraisal and Adjustment Act (Act VII 2003) states that “In respect of every ecclesiastical building in every charge in the Presbytery (except manses and houses occupied by retired ministers and/or their spouses) the Plan shall contain one of the following declarations:

1. (a) That the building is expected to remain in use beyond the lifetime of the Plan;
2. (b) That the building is expected to be closed during the lifetime of the current Plan, under an adjustment contained therein or otherwise;
3. (c) That the building is expected to be disposed of as soon as possible under an adjustment contained in the Plan or otherwise;
4. (d) That the Presbytery is unable to make a determination in relation to a building; and in cases (b), (c) and (d) the General Trustees shall be empowered, at their discretion and in consultation with the Assembly’s Committee, to refuse any application made in respect of that building in terms of Regulations I 1998 regarding Work at Ecclesiastical Buildings (as amended by 2000 Regulations VII).”

**12. Approves the following provisions for Property Expenditure:**

- 12.1 For Buildings categorised as B (“that the building is expected to be closed during the lifetime of the current Plan, under an adjustment contained therein or otherwise”), C (“that the building is expected to be disposed of as soon as possible under an adjustment or otherwise”) and D (“that Presbytery is unable to make a determination”), these should be kept wind and watertight. All expenditure on such buildings in excess of £5,000 per annum will require to be approved by Presbytery before the instruction or commencement of these works.
- 12.2 For buildings categorised as A (“expected to remain in use beyond the life of the Plan”, any work proposed will now require the input and agreement of the other congregations in the Parish Grouping from the initial stages of planning and costing, and will be subject to existing limits on annual expenditure without specific Presbytery consent.