

You should have received a set of figures for 2017. It used to be that the congregation had to agree the accounts but now it is the Kirk Session that does it. That means that although we need to have an annual meeting it no longer has to be a separate meeting. That does take away from the opportunity to ask questions but I want to say to you that if you ever have questions about the finances, or anything else, please ask.

Today I'm going to talk a bit about our congregation and where we fit into the wider church. For those who don't really know, or don't remember, here's a brief run down the structure of the C of S. Bear with me and you'll see why this is important.

- Congregations – Elders and minister form Kirk Session which manages spiritual and practical life of the congregation. Minister and an Elder represent congregation at
- Presbytery – Elders and Ministers plus additional Elders.
- General Assembly – Elders and Ministers; around 750, plus reps from other denominations/ countries

Councils – Ministries Council, Mission and Discipleship plus Trusts to manage the work and produce reports for GA

30 reports this year – write report and 'proposed deliverances' go through them – "urge Presbyteries and KS to engage with the Year of Young People initiative". We'll come back to that.....

What about MPN? Our members

Between 2013 and 2017 110 removed from the roll

And 36 added

That affects the number of people on Sundays and who are available to volunteer to help, as well as our income.

Slide of income v expenditure – that is the total income and expenditure: includes café income, money for the tower repair, Participatory budget days etc

This next graph shows actual offering income – fairly steady across the years which is amazing when you see the next slide

The orange blocks show number on the roll and the blue line shows the offerings – as numbers have declined the amount you are giving has risen because you are giving more. Thank you for your generosity.

Some of the things we do:

- Gather for worship on Sunday
- Gather for worship on other days
- Gather for worship at Messy Church

On Sundays

- Creators Club
- Preaching and teaching

- Different types of service
- Prayer ministry

Engaging with the community

- Alpha course
- Knitted angels
- Prom Day
- Alternative Nativity
- Other events Osiligi Warriors

We support

- Street Pastors
- The Ark
- Christ in Action Foodbank

The main project for last year was

- Path of renewal

That doesn't take into account the many people who volunteer and help keep the congregation going.

But, we are not independent, we are part of something bigger and decisions made elsewhere affect us – positively as well as negatively!

Instructions:

- Explore how the fresh vision for Eldership given by the Mission and Discipleship Council applies to our context
- Consider how the aspirations outlined in the report shape our ongoing ministry and engagement with children and young people in the parish

Radical:

Council of Assembly – Strategic Plan: 10 years, 13 priorities and vague as anything

- Instruct the Council to work collaboratively with other Councils, Committees and Presbyteries to bring proposals to the General Assembly of 2019 for structural change.....to enable a Church structure that is lean and fit for purpose to lead reform.
- Instruct the Council to bring forward proposals to the General Assembly of 2019 that will allow more funds for mission work, including the freeing of funds held only for property matters and a reformed Ministry and Mission allocation process.
- Instruct Presbyteries meantime to challenge themselves in their Presbytery Plans to be robust, imaginative and courageous in reducing the number of charges, creating ministry hubs, and enabling new pioneer and new church planting opportunities

Instruct Presbyteries to be robust, imaginative and courageous in reducing the number of charges, figure in the report 20% - that would be 6 ministries in Ayr Presbytery. Can't simply be those that are/ become vacant, can't exclude congregations that give more, take account of tenure of ministry changes are coming

Unlikely that in years to come there will be more than two ministers in Prestwick. I don't know what that will look like, or how it will be achieved, but what I am convinced of is that we are part of Christ's church and that's what we are to build – we are to build a kingdom, not an empire. The ongoing work of the kingdom is more important than the survival of any specific congregation and, we need to remember that loss of ministers doesn't necessarily mean loss of congregations – it does mean careful, thoughtful and collaborative plans need to be implemented.

How it affects us:

- Instruct Kirk Sessions meantime to meet in conference, to reflect on the state of decline of the national Church and in particular how that affects the Church locally and determine what their vision and mission is for the next three years in collaboration with Presbytery Planning teams.

That needs all of our Elders to get involved but it also give you the chance to have your say at an early stage. Talk to me, or to Lesley Keenan our Session Clerk, or email the office, tell your elder. The future is likely to be painful and many of you here already carry scars from a previous union. Share worries and anxieties, talk about the issues of the previous union (good and bad), but remember this is a different time and it's better to be involved in discussion and planning to try and get something we're relatively happy with than have it imposed on us.

The harvest is ready:

- We all have gifts given by God
- We all have our part to play
- We are called to do our part for the Kingdom

We need each other. Particularly now we need to support and encourage each other, using the skills we have and the gifts we have been given. We also need to remember that the body is not just here. It's not just MPN, that body is also present in the other congregations across Prestwick.

We must remember that it is our responsibility to represent Jesus to the best of our ability and in the Spirit's strength. If we make that our focus the rest will take care of itself.