

# UNITED REFORMED CHURCH - SYNOD OF SCOTLAND

## SOUTH AREA COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF AREA MEETING HELD IN HAMILTON CHURCH

WEDNESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER 2005

Rev Gordon Smith welcomed those present and opened the meeting with a reading from 1 Cor:1 followed by a meditation by Edmond Barnyard.

**APOLOGIES** were received from Rev. C. Bonner and Miss E. King.

**Minutes of the meeting** held on 28 September 05 at Stonehouse were approved with the following amendment, given as follows:

*Grahamston. Alan Paterson raised the matter of a recent letter from Grahamston United Church indicating that the church now saw its ministerial needs as being the 1.2 persons currently in post. The incumbent of Grahamston was Church of Scotland and the Methodists provided 0.2 of a minister. It was important that the Area Council give its approval to this as a further step in involving the United Church in the URC's procedures. It was part of a wider process in which the Ecumenical Officers of the three denominations in the United Church were helping to up-date the constitutional position in Grahamston. The Area Council agreed.*

The amendment was seconded by Mr McKillop, area council then agreed to the minutes, moved by Alan Paterson, seconded by Jim Cowan.

**Business Arising from the Minutes:** All venues and dates for 2006 are now confirmed.

**Notification of AOCB** - None

**Welcome to Stewart Cutler, YCWDO**, who has been in post since September. Stewart was invited to address the meeting and started by asking if the questionnaires sent out to churches could be returned to him as soon as possible. He asked "why do we want to work with children?" Is it 1. To keep the church going? 2. Do we want to introduce them to the Christian Faith? 3. Do we want our children to have the same faith as ourselves? And 4. Why is it important for us?

He went on to say that tradition is passed on from generation to generation. We have to be honest with young people. We were all young once – yes, really! The people we remember from our past are those who spent time with us. Are we too precious with our 'things' - buildings etc? How confident are we with our own faith? How are we going to pass this on to the young people? Are we frightened of them? Not doing anything over the last fifty years has got us where we are now! Children are interested in God and in mystery - how do we get these questions explored? Jesus is the answer, - what is the question?

Stewart was warmly thanked for his attendance at Area Council, he certainly gave us plenty to think about.

**Synod Committee Reports: Education: (Jim Allerdycy)** Take-up of retreats, seminars etc. have been encouraging. Anyone interested in any of the items, please check with the office and put your name in quickly as some have had to be cancelled due to lack of response, then find people making enquiries at the last minute.

Since Scottish College has been disbanded, International Christian College in St James' Road (along Cathedral St) have taken over our library.

Seven Deadly Sins: 1<sup>st</sup> November will be 'Pride' and 1<sup>st</sup> December 'Anger'

Look out for events coming up looking at the new CH4 hymn book.

The film, 'The Shipping News' was thought provoking.

**Mission: (Douglas Hay)** We are now a Fair Trade Synod with 23 churches signed up by the Synod meeting in September. Cumbernauld have now received their certificate and Mosspark and Dundee received theirs last week. It was a very successful campaign. Nescafe are now making 'Fair Trade' coffee.

**Church & Society: (Alan Paterson)** Police can close down places of worship if terrorism is suspected or expected. (See URC website) The UK committee is backing a plan to outlaw possession of extreme pornography associated with violence which is demeaning and degrading to people. The kind of stuff the internet is full of.

'Safer and Secure Homes for Children' Lists of those who might adopt or foster are opening up to single parent or same gender couples.

Dawn raids are still happening and are still unacceptable.

**Finance & Property: (Ron McKillop)** The question of meetings being held in evening was asked and the answer was 'no, it had to be during the day' This is understandable due to the distances some of the members had to travel in order to attend, however, this precludes members of Area Council who are unable to get time off work to attend during the week, and limits the numbers of those willing to go onto this committee. It was asked if a Saturday meeting would be a possibility. It was the wish of the meeting that we contact the convenor of F & P committee asking if this could be considered.

**Pastoral:** Does not meet until next Saturday.

**Area Treasurer's Report: (Jim Allerdycy)** Avonbridge and Grahamston have still to decide how they are going forward. Righead has problems with massive bills for the restoration work they have been required to do. All the other churches have pledged to give the same amount apart from three churches who will raise their giving by approx 2%.

**Area Reps to General Assembly in Exeter in 2006.** Names have to be in by the January PPS meeting. Rev G. Smith and Mr Jim Mack are willing to attend. The Executive committee will approach Rev. C. Bonner and one other.

**Appointment of Area Ecumenical Representative:** Mr Haydn Higton is longer able to fill this appointment. The Executive will approach Mr John Wilcox.

**Assembly Resolutions: Assembly Record: Res.6 'Safe Church Report'** response by March '06

'Code of Good Practice' working with Children and Young People

'Elders' 'Training of Elders' etc

## **Res.30 Deployment 'Imagination & Flexibility'**

**Res. 36 'Area Council'** One level by next year's Assembly ? Encourage local churches to do what is necessary. The Area Executive will look at this.

### **Church News:**

Carlake: Doing well. Increase in numbers of children attending on a Sunday morning. They now have a Kids Club.

Righead: Celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year holding different things throughout the year, culminating with a service at the end of October. All their former ministers took part with Revd Lindsay Sanderson taking the place of her grandfather, Revd Rice. Their first minister, Revd James Dey was the after-lunch speaker at the Bruce Hotel.

East Mains: Celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> last year. They are looking into selling a strip of ground to their next door neighbours, who will then have the upkeep of the old wall between them.

Stonehouse: Rev. Kathryn Smith-Anderson returned to her post in September. Church attendance varies. Their Christmas Fayre is next Saturday in the Parish Church Halls. The members work well with the other village churches.

Avonbridge: Rev. Derek Corner will be giving up as interim moderator as he is awaiting surgery. The Area Pastoral committee will look into a replacement. The manse is in poor repair, the church a headache. They can't sell the manse to repair the church. (Can they sell the church and have a house church?) we need to let the members know that Area Council is behind them. A Christmas card will be sent from the Area.

**Correspondence:** Swanick (5 to 8 June '06) Theme 'Rock or Sand?'

Youth and Children's work: General Assembly 2006. We will be thinking about how good God is to us and how we discover that, celebrate it, and share it within our churches and the world. Revd. Neil Thorogood, invites us to involve the children and young people in our churches to create a postcard that says something about the things they love most about God. Eg: write a prayer, draw pictures, tell a story etc. The choice is up to them. These should be sent in by end of April as gifts for each member of Assembly in July. If possible, the child's Christian name (only) could be put on the card so whoever gets the card will know at least a little about the child (but no other information at all) Send these to Revd Neil Thorogood, Director of Pastoral Studies, Westminster College, Medingley Road, Cambridge, CB3 0AA.

First Bulletin of the Intentional Church from the Moderator. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bulletin will be out by the beginning of December to advocate the Roadshows being held during January and February.

Revd Alan Paterson gave a Vote of Thanks to Hamilton members.

**The Date of the next meeting** will be Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March '06 at Righead.

The meeting was closed by saying the Grace together.

