

In this issue:

Area meetings
What we discussed
Where we go next

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“Central Fife feels like a very different land compared to even just 10 years ago. Changes in communication, economy, shopping and media, are just 4 examples. How can we now “be church” here?”
(Marc Prowe)

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Coming soon:
Presbytery Conference, to be held 23rd March, information to be sent out soon.

The task is to ... set free substantial energies, creativity and gifts of sharing the faith, not to add more workload.

Strategy and Resourcing

Facing the facts

Over 3 days, 156 representatives of all 23 congregations in Kirkcaldy Presbytery met in three different area groups, to deliberate, dream and exchange views about the future shape of the Church in our part of Fife. We are grateful to the congregations of Leven Parish, Christ’s Kirk and Templehall who hosted these events. Almost everyone found the discussions and exchange of views most helpful. For many the content of the meetings was a reality check!

Area Meetings (12-14 Nov.2018)

After opening worship, we watched a short video by Sanctuary First that made very uncomfortable viewing, but showed some of the stark facts currently facing the church. If you would like to share this more widely with your congregation, you can look at www.falkirkpresbytery.org.uk/resources/reimagine

In groups we then discussed **What it means to be a church**, looking at

1. a church shaped by friendship;
2. shaped by what Jesus taught us to do;
3. shaped by the gifts of God’s people;
4. shaped by our local area.

To explore these themes further, go to “Church without Walls” which you can find online at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/church_without_walls

Three unique and vital tasks of the Church:

Worship and Pray
(diverse and varied)

Teach the faith
using new media

Serve
(being part of the community)

From feedback from **the area meetings:** the vast majority wanted to share information from the meeting with their kirk sessions, and congregations. This is what you said you wanted to share:

- after so many years of deliberations, **change** should be NOW.

- there's a strong willingness for more collaboration and **sharing resources** and solutions to common problems

- we need to "**think outside the box**".

- Most people appreciate that the process should be **transparent, and discussion continuing.**

Thus, the Strategy and Resourcing team are strongly encouraging congregations to engage with these topics, and to use handouts, newsletters and conferences to **inform and discuss**

Look out for opportunities for prayer for our Presbytery!

We looked at alternative models of "doing church"

"Hub ministry" 2. Covenant, as in Leith churches; 3. The Shetland model of a single parish; 4. "Clusters" as in St Andrews Presbytery; 5. Internet church; and 6. "Pioneering ministries".

The challenges...

Feedback from the Area meetings told us that we need to be honest and to listen to congregations and their suggestions and to continue to engage elders, congregations and wider communities. However, not everyone wants only to talk!! There is a large number of people who see the urgency of the situation and say: "we need to take action **urgently**", we need to be **radical**, and change has to happen without further procrastination. We have been asked to "**rethink how to distribute human resources, buildings, and all staff**".

So how can we do church in our areas?

1. **sharing:** Let's share resources, gifts, expertise, ideas, organisations;
 - . let's network, be better at **communicating** events, supporting local initiatives, raising awareness in our communities.
 - . let's work more closely with **other churches**, have more regular contact.
2. **Radical reform to set free resources.**
 - . more user friendly and youth-friendly buildings, with spaces for families.
 - . reduce number of buildings to free up money for new initiatives;
 - . combine and share buildings, with hubs for pastoral care, sharing workers as well.
 - . flexible worship times; up to date technology.
 - . actively develop and use everyone's gifts

"Remember I have commanded you to be determined and confident. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for I, the Lord your God, am with you wherever you go"
Joshua 1:9