

At Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate Parish Church on 11th July 2017, which date and place the Presbytery of Ardrossan met for a *pro re nata* meeting and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator, Rev James McNay MA BD.

Sederunt

Rev James McNay (Moderator) Mrs Jean C Q Hunter (Clerk)

Ministers:

Alan Falconer, Alan Ford, Mandy Hickman, Marion Howie, Roderick Macdonald, D Ross Mitchell, John Purves, Andrew Taylor, Martin Thomson, David Sutherland, Elizabeth R L Watson, David Watson, Tanya Webster, Jeanette Whitecross

Diaconate:

Elders:

Mary Blair, Ian Brown, Lindsay Campbell, Archie Currie, Margaret Green, Ian Hackney, Judith Howieson, William (Roy) Kelso, Finlay Kerr, Ronald Lavalette, William McKay, J B (Sheena) Marr, Stuart McMahon, Jemima McSwan, J Fulton Murdoch, Deirdre Murray, Fiona Page, William Parker, Magnus Ross, Kathleen Tudor, Ann Turner, Ken Welch

Corresponding Members:

Andrew Bruce, Moira Buchanan, Mary Ford, Christine Thomas

Apologies for Absence

Ministers:

Angus Adamson, Dorothy Granger, Marjory Mackay, Alexander McCallum, Lily McKinnon, Fiona Ross, Alan Ward, David Whiteman

Elders:

Christine Black, Lynn Hunter, Annie Martin, Linda McLelland, Jean Niven, David Noble, Anne Pringle, Allan Richardson, Eleanor Taylor

Constitution of Presbytery

Sederunt & Apologies

The Clerk explained that the Moderator had called the meeting to deal with a letter from Mr Vermeulen intimating his resignation as a minister in the Church of Scotland and to consider the vacancy of the charge of Fairlie l/w Largs: St Columba's.

This was not a normal situation and as a Presbytery we had to deal with this within the constraint of the censure of suspension for 5 years without limit of time that had been placed on Mr Vermeulen. Advice had been sought from the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Solicitor of the Church for the Business which was held in the terms of both section 20 of the Discipline Act and Section 33 of the Vacancy Act and there was no conflict between the two.

The congregations of Fairlie and Largs St Columba's has been cited for their interest.//
//interest.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Was as in the print with amended words at No. 3 and No. 4 and a new No. 6 was added relating to Fairlie Manse and renumber after No. 6.

Rev Ian Currie, Business Convenor presented the Business

Presbytery:

1. approved the Moderator's action in calling the *pro re nata* meeting.
2. noted the decision of the Presbyterial Commission that the Rev Chris Vermeulen be suspended from the status and functions of the ordained ministry without limit of time with a minimum period of suspension of five years from the date of judgement i.e. 6th June 2017.
There was a discussion about the word should (Rev Chris Vermeulen should be suspended) be removed from the sentence. It was proposed, seconded and Presbytery agreed that the word 'should' be removed.
3. noted that the Clerk had received a letter from the Rev Chris Vermeulen dated 17th June 2017 intimating his resignation as a minister of the Church of Scotland and that the Moderator had conferred with Mr Vermeulen in terms of the Vacancy Act VIII 2003 section 33.
4. agreed to accept Mr Vermeulen's permanent demission of status with immediate effect.
5. noted that as Mr Vermeulen was under censure of suspension of status without limit of time by the decision of the Presbyterial Commission he could not apply for readmission as a Minister of the Church of Scotland until 5th June 2022 at the earliest.
6. agreed that Mr Vermeulen was required to remove from the manse by 6th August.

Mrs Alison McKellar, Session Clerk of Fairlie Parish Church was invited to speak on behalf of the congregation. Mrs McKellar told Presbytery that it had been a difficult year for them. They wanted to draw a line under the events of the last 12 months and were now looking to the future and to move on. She thanked Rev Roddy Macdonald for being their Interim Moderator. Mr John Lewis, Session Clerk of Largs St Columba's was then invited to speak. He concurred with Mrs McKellar that they too wanted to move on.

7. declared the charge of Fairlie linked with Largs: St Columba's vacant and agreed to suspend the section of the Presbytery Plan covering the parishes of Fairlie and Largs: St Columba's.
8. discharged and thanked Rev Roderick McDonald as Interim Moderator and appointed Rev John Purves as Interim Moderator in the Vacancy until 31st August 2017.
9. instructed the Vacancy Procedure Committee to consult with local parties with a view to bringing forward proposals for future ministry provision in these parishes, no later than the meeting of Presbytery for Ordinary Business on Tuesday 3rd October.
10. instructed the Clerk to send intimation of the decisions to the Ministries Council, the Solicitor of the Church and the Principal Clerk.

Adjournment

Presbytery adjourned to meet on Tuesday 5th September 2017 within Largs: Clark Memorial Church for the Installation of the Moderator elect and for the conduct of Ordinary Business.

Presbytery was then adjourned by the pronouncing of the benediction by the Moderator Rev James McNay MA BD.

.....Moderator

.....Clerk

