

NEWHAVEN, NORTH LEITH, and SOUTH LEITH
New Parish Steering Group

Note of Meeting held on Monday 14 March 2022 by Zoom

Present:

John Hodge (JH), Jen Robertson (JR), North Leith (NLPC): Karen McKay (KMckK), (Chair), Anne Lamont (AL), Tim Bell (TB), Michelle Doig (MD), Stewart Lowe (SL) South Leith (SLPC): Rev Iain May (IM), Anne Rutherford (AR), Gavin Booth (GB), Sheena Glen (SG), Keith Martin (KM),

Note-keeper: Susan Robb (NLPC)

1. Welcome, Constitution of Meeting and Introductions

Karen McKay welcomed everyone and, after a short reflection, constituted the meeting in prayer. Members then introduced themselves.

2. Apologies

Rev Peter Bluett (NPC), Susan Edwards (NPC), Colin MacNeill (NPC),

3. Our Mission and Purpose

(a) Joint response from the three congregations to Presbytery:

Everyone was content with the first paragraph of the joint response. As to the second paragraph, there was a concern that it was perhaps overly restrictive. There should be scope to work with any other churches as appropriate. On that basis, the final sentence of the second paragraph would be omitted.

Action: Karen to delete final sentence of second paragraph before submitting response for 15 March

(b) It was noted that, when we come to meet with the DSG (Deployment Subgroup), we will be asked to identify what “mission” means to us, as three congregations in this part of Edinburgh. It was noted that there was already evidence of the three congregations being on the same page, given the holding of joint services, elders’ conference etc. The key was now to work out in more detail what brings us together and how we can use that to effectively achieve our Mission and Purpose.

As things stand, each congregation might not be especially familiar with the work that is going on in the other two, in relation to mission. It was agreed that the “Five Marks of Mission” approach was an appropriate starting point. Each member of the group would look at that individually and consider how it applied at the moment in their own congregation, and how it may apply in the future, possibly in discussion with others in their own church. This would then be fed back to the steering group, with a view to developing the mission statement & plan for the new parish. These thoughts could then be fed to the DSG.

Action: All to consider the Marks of Mission, and notes to be submitted to the Chair before the next meeting.

Action: Anne L to send a copy of the Presbytery consultation document, including Marks of Mission, to all.

4. Arrangements for Steering Group Meetings

(a) *Format-* There was a general consensus that there would be merit in the group holding a face-to-face meeting, preferably in the near future. It was, though, recognised that online

meetings offered some advantages – they alleviated concerns over potential Covid risk, and may allow people to attend where time, illness or other logistics may otherwise have prevented attendance or made it difficult. It was agreed that thought should be given to making any in-person get-togethers hybrid, so that those who preferred had the option of joining by Zoom or another similar platform.

- (b) *Frequency and venue* - given that the timescales are fairly tight, it was agreed that a meeting at least once a month seemed necessary. In general, a hybrid meeting (if possible) would be held on a Sunday afternoon directly after the joint service for the month. The meeting would take place in whatever church the service had been held in/the closest church if the service was held outside. It would be preceded by some form of lunch. If there was a need for short meetings in between times, they could be done on Zoom, on a weeknight, and hopefully lasting not much more than hour. The arrangement would be kept under review over time.

In the meantime, the next joint service (barring Sunday 20 March) would be Easter Sunday. To avoid a steering group meeting on that afternoon, it was agreed that a doodle poll would be sent round to fix a date for an in-person/hybrid meeting between now and the joint service scheduled for May.

- (c) *Minute-taking* – We would try to operate on the basis that each congregation would take it in turns to supply a minute-taker, month by month. Newhaven would try to come up with someone for the April meeting, followed by South Leith for May.

**Actions: Karen to send round a doodle poll to fix the next meeting of the group.
John to look to find a minute-taker for next group meeting.**

5. **Communications**

The overarching thought is that we need clear, transparent, and honest communications about the work of the steering group, and how moves towards a coming together as a new parish are progressing at key stages. The message needs to be consistent among all three congregations.

The message will have to be communicated clearly during services, online, and in ways accessible to those who may not yet have resumed attending church as we emerge from the pandemic, nor be in the practice of accessing material online. Also, information shouldn't just be available at joint services, given that some people may tend not to attend those. There will be a need for information at services in the individual churches.

Practical steps

There may be scope to issue an update in the form of a news sheet shortly after each meeting of the group. This would be short (probably around a page) and operate purely as a quick way for people to stay in the loop. Gavin would work to produce the sheet, and each church would be responsible for distributing it to its members.

It may also be worthwhile looking to try and record occasional videos about different aspects of the coming together, perhaps starting with the function of the steering group.

We could perhaps also look to hand out feedback sheets at the end of joint services and gather views, comments, questions etc. that way. This could be anonymous.

As to web resources, we could look either to tap into the existing webpages/ Facebook pages of the three congregations, and/or to have one new webpage/Facebook page for the three congregations coming together. This could include an electronic feedback form, for individuals to submit comments and questions. We may also think about an FAQ section.

Action: Gavin and Jen will take forward work on comms; with Gavin focusing on the newsheet and Jen on webpage and video aspects. Michelle and Sheena are happy to help with the electronic side of communications, as needed.

6. **AOCB**

Joint service – Karen is to give an update on progress at the joint service on 20th March. There will also be a slot where a member of each congregation would share some thoughts on how they feel about the prospect of the coming together – hopes, fears etc.; this could be repeated in future joint services.

7. **Date of next meeting** – to be confirmed by doodle poll (see above).

The meeting ended with a Blessing