



The Church of Scotland

Presbytery of Inverness

LOCAL CHURCH REVIEW

Sections 1 & 2

Congregation – Kirkhill

Minister – Rev Jonathan Humphrey

Visiting team leader – Rev Bruce
Ritchie

DRAFT of 1st March 2017

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SECTION 1: OUR CONGREGATION'S STORY

1. Present purpose

1.1. Introduction

Kirkhill church is a linked rural congregation in the Highlands with a history that dates back to the middle ages and a commitment to living in the love of Jesus, becoming more like him, and making his love known to all in our community. We are a family who love having fun together and honouring God in the way we live. We are passionate about Jesus being the centre of everything we do.

Our aim is for everyone to feel welcomed and find a home at Kirkhill Parish Church, regardless of church background, or whether they have faith, a little faith or none.

1.2. Worship

[Tell us about your weekly services; how they are led; the music; the use of audio/visual equipment; congregational participation; any plans for the future?](#)

Since the arrival of Jonathan the new minister in March 2015, the emphasis in worship services has to been to seek the presence of God above all else and to keep the worship and adoration of Jesus at the centre (see section 4 on Values and Convictions). We have also sought to develop service style and content that is accessible to all ages and life situations, and particularly those of younger age groups who are significantly under-represented currently in the congregation (see appendix 1). This approach has entailed: diversifying the musical content of services to include a rough 50:50 split of modern and traditional hymns; facilitating an informal, loving and family atmosphere; and emphasising the importance of warmly welcoming new people.

Over the past 18 months, attendance at morning worship has remained static at about 40-50; occasionally three new young families now attend. A number of people have left the congregation and attend worship elsewhere.

A typical Sunday morning worship led by Jonathan includes:

- Welcome and opening prayer; praise
- Intimations delivered orally and on screen (these are also covered in weekly bulletin distributed at door)
- All-age address
- Modern praise song (after which children depart to the Guild room)
- Offering, dedication/prayers for others and praise song
- Reading and sermon, ending with final prayer, praise and benediction

Words and sermon illustrations are projected on AV screens. This is co-ordinated by Jonathan with the help of congregation members on a rota basis. Our regular organist Tonya Clement accompanies praise on organ or keyboard. Jonathan usually also accompanies on guitar some praise items and Shona MacDonald sings, but we would love to have more musicians join us to bolster the music group and enhance and diversify worship.

Members of the congregation contribute to prayers and readings each week on a rota basis. Two members also help with the all-age address and there are regular contributions from other members of the congregation on specific topics. There are also a number of family services during school holidays. Evening services are held monthly (excluding summer) jointly with Kiltarlity, are more informal and include contemporary worship, testimony, teaching and prayer ministry.

Café church services have been held in the Community Centre and in the church. The latter made possible by the upgrade of the sanctuary carried out in 2011 and the removal of the pews (see section 2.2). There have also been joint café church services with Kiltarlity and these are well attended (120-140) and are proving more accessible to non-church people.

The congregational questionnaire (appendix 2) revealed that currently 94% of the congregation “agree” with or “strongly agree” with the statement that we are friendly to new people and 84% agree/strongly agree that our worship services are welcoming and accessible to all ages; 64% said they would be happy to invite their friends to be part of the congregation.

Through the congregational questionnaire, about 20% of the congregation expressed their opposition to the current approach to leading Sunday worship and requested a “return to a more traditional service format” with use of the organ and traditional hymns.

1.3. Local Mission

Tell us about how you engage with your parish and your wider community; how do you reach out to others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; what school involvement or other chaplaincies are you involved with; how do you communicate with members, adherents and parishioners; do you work in partnership or have strong links with other churches and/or other organisations in your parish?

Sunday teaching emphasises the need to engage in mission and of sharing the gospel with our local community and parish through evangelism, witness and service. When asked in the congregational questionnaire whether “the church encourages me to share my Christian faith in my daily life”, over 80% of the congregation agreed/strongly agreed that it did (appendix 2). This reveals an open-ness in the congregation towards an emphasis on local mission. Over 70% of the congregation agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that we are “known for being loving and helpful in our community.”

We have a good relationship with Kiltarlity Free Church and occasionally share worship with them. So far in conjunction with them and our sister congregation of Kiltarlity, two well-attended and successful "Cafe Church" events have been held. In 2016 there were 0 baptisms, 7 funerals and 3 weddings in our church/parish. Funerals in particular are well-attended (upwards of 150), which provides opportunities to preach the gospel within the context of pastoral care of the bereaved family.

On Armistice Sunday Jonathan presides at a service held at the village war memorial next to the church and a Watchnight service is held at the church each Christmas Eve.

Jonathan regularly conducts assemblies at Kirkhill Primary School and provides teaching relating to the R.M.E. part of the National Curriculum. School Easter services are held in the church. Kiltarlity and Kirkhill jointly participate in the "Open the Book" programme by visiting the primary schools in each parish to spread the gospel story by way of dramatic presentation.

In 2012 we identified a need for fellowship in our Kirk, outwith our Sunday worship. On 12th June 2012, three members of the congregation started our Tuesday coffee mornings. Back then we had 8 folks on that first Tuesday in the Guild room. Soon word spread about the fellowship and we soon had to move into the Church sanctuary. We now have as many as 40 people on a Tuesday with many regulars. Folks come from Kiltarlity, Beaully and Inverness as well as our own village, enjoying fellowship and a laugh! The aim is to build and encourage friendships in our Church and community, in so doing, we can all share a sense of belonging in our Kirk.

Donations made, have been used to benefit our Church and the wider community by donating a defibrillator which is placed outside the community centre. Our local school has also benefitted from a donation to enhance their garden area for outdoor learning. We also support Macmillan every year and support other charities.

We hold regular Alpha courses in partnership with Kiltarlity Church. The last course was held during the day in the church, starting with coffee and finishing up with lunch. This attracted some young mothers with children and we had an average of 10-12 attending weekly. Many grew in their faith and some found faith for the first time. A life group was started during the day as a follow up to the Alpha course (see section 1.5 below).

In January 2016, members of Kirkhill Congregation partnered with the Kiltarlity congregation to host a "ladies' night" at Kirkhill Church. Local businesses were invited to set up stalls and provide Valentine themed shopping opportunities for local ladies from both communities. Over 100 attended and £1000 was raised for the Elsie Normington Foundation for children with learning difficulties.

1.4. Communication

We have a "church" column in the "Crannog" community magazine, and along with Kiltarlity produce our own quarterly newsletter, "The Anchor". Our website (www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk) is regularly updated and provides access to recordings of the weekly service (up to Sept 2016). Our Facebook page, joint with Kiltarlity, is well "liked" and has proved to be very effective in communicating church events and activities to the wider community. Christmas and Easter invitation cards are produced jointly with Kiltarlity and the Free Church and distributed to households throughout the whole parish. Communication with the congregation is by way of church intimations, weekly news-sheet/Bulletin, website, Facebook and "The Anchor". Minutes of Kirk Session meetings are available to all unless covering issues where confidentiality is necessary. Being linked with

Kiltarlity we obviously have a close relationship with them and joint services and meetings of office-bearers take place regularly.

1.5. Discipleship

Tell us about how you encourage and help people to grow in their faith; how do you promote personal devotion, bible study and opportunities for reflection; how do you encourage people to consider becoming a Communicant member of the church; what resources do you use?

The congregational questionnaire revealed that 70% of the congregation agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that “the church has helped me understand more clearly what it means to be a Christian” and 78% agreed/strongly agreed that they had “grown in their faith in recent years”. Along with the emphasis on mission, Sunday morning teaching has focused on encouraging people to grow in their faith, applying scripture to daily living and fostering a discipleship culture within the congregation. This approach will take time to bed in and needs to be complimented with other initiatives and activities.

In the past there have been a number of bible study and house groups across both parishes. This year we established 3 Life groups, which aim to encourage and help people grow in their faith, become “whole of life” disciples and positively impact the world around them for God’s Kingdom. These groups incorporate worship, prayer bible teaching and discussion in table groups (see Appendix 3 with description of Life groups). Attendance at the Life Group “Connect & Encounter” is currently around 18 folk. The other two Life Groups are currently dormant due to the leaders not having enough time to restart or leaving the area.

There is a prayer meeting held jointly between Kirkhill and Kiltarlity at 7.30pm on Mondays (previously Wed). Attendance varies from 5-10 people from both churches and prayers are offered extemporaneously or pre-prepared. We also held two fuller evenings of prayer for renewal and revival in the area in 2015.

Jonathan and Kate are Scottish Ambassadors for Love After Marriage (LAM) Scotland (www.nothinghidden.org.uk/meet-the-team). The goal of Love After Marriage is to instruct and guide married couples into a relationship characterized by openness, vulnerability and love as an ongoing lifestyle. The belief is that healthy strong marriages make for strong leaders and strong churches. Jonathan and Kate partner with other churches in the area to facilitate 3.5 day intensive workshops. They also held a 12 week LAM course for 5 couples in their home, attended by members of Kirkhill congregation and others resident in Kiltarlity parish.

In August this year, we held a region-wide worship event with “Filling Station Scotland” joint with Kiltarlity to provide opportunities for renewal and revitalisation of faith. About 50 people attended this from various churches in the area and provided a spring-board for the launch of the Life Group “Connect and Encounter”.

Over the past 18 months we have welcomed 3 new members. Jonathan visits prospective members and discusses membership vows and what commitment to a local family of God

might mean. Sermon themes regularly emphasise the importance of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit, and the building up and expansion of the local fellowship. Regular invitations to membership are issued on the back of these sermons.

1.6. Children & Youth

Tell us about how you engage with children and young people; what youth organisations are attached to your congregation; how do you support them; and what Christian education do you offer children and young people?

See section 1.2 re schools. We have Sunday Club on about half the Sundays of the month. Attendance ranges from 0-3 children and we currently have two leaders. We do not currently have sufficient resources to offer Sunday Club every Sunday. We hold family services from time to time. Young people of secondary school-age meet together in "Youth Church" in the manse. Currently we have three S3 and one S4 teenager who come on roughly a monthly basis.

Along with Kiltarlity and Kiltarlity Free Church we have participated in the quest for a youth worker under the "Young Life" programme to focus on building relationships with churched and unchurched teenagers. Plans for recruitment are at an advanced stage.

In summer 2016, we partnered with Kiltarlity Church and Youth With a Mission (YWAM) to bring a team of 12 teenagers from the US to carry out a week-long engagement with young folk in Tomnacross and Kirkhill Primary Schools. During the day, the team interacted with the young people, doing assembly and teaching slots as well as engaging in sports over lunch and break time. The team were very well received. In the evenings we held gatherings in Kirkhill Church and grounds, which grew in attendance to over 40 kids by the end of the week. We believe that 10-12 made commitments of faith in Jesus for the first time during this week.

1.7. Pastoral Care & Fellowship

Tell us about how you care for your congregation; how do you build and encourage friendships and a sense of belonging amongst your congregation and beyond?

We are a small congregation and everyone knows everyone else. Tea/coffee is served after morning worship and most folk stay on for fellowship. Because Jonathan has to leave for Kiltarlity by 11.15, pastoral interaction is often restricted to simple exchange of information and essential discussion about forthcoming events etc. In contrast, Jonathan is able to offer deeper pastoral interaction after the service at Kiltarlity. There is a lot of informal visitation of members amongst themselves and each elder has a district. Jonathan visits as time permits and need arises. On an average week, he makes about 3 pastoral visits and deals with 7 pastoral situations by phone and/or email across both parishes. There are about 12 funerals per year jointly between the two parishes. Members and adherents are prioritised for visits by their elder or minister on the basis of the triage system below.

1. Sudden trauma – illness/bereavement
2. In hospital for few days
3. Too old/infirm to come to church, live on own and don't have much family support
4. Too/old infirm to come to church, live on own and have good family support
5. Able to come to church, but for various reasons need encouragement to be actively part of the church family

As a vital part of the Church of Scotland, the Guild welcomes both men and women of all ages from our local churches and wider community to any or all of our meetings. Both Members and visitors enjoy the fellowship of the meeting as well as the interesting Speakers whose theme is often suggested by the members themselves. A varied programme of topics – local, national and international – provide active participation in both question and discussion and encourages even the quieter amongst us to serious or lighter-hearted involvement. Membership has increased from 8 to 18 in the last four years including Kiltarlity. Sadly they have not subscribed to date so we are down to 15.

We are a friendly group with lively minds taking advantage of the fellowship that the Guild offers. The Christian Spirit, which is its foundation, enables us to support each other in good and difficult times, as well as giving aid to Guild Projects and the organisations, which give their time in addressing us.

Since our linkage with Kiltarlity in 1982 many friendships have been made and relationships formed amongst folk from each parish. However, it would also be true to say there have been tensions in the past and there is a need for continuing diligence and intention to honour each other and work together for the gospel.

The congregation also has a high proportion of people in the “elderly” category (appendix 1). Pastoral needs are likely to continue to increase, and without urgent attention to mission and discipleship there will be fewer younger and fit folk to provide this care.

1.8. World Mission

[Tell us about what you do to support the work of the whole church in the world?](#)

We participate in "Souper Sunday" for the Church of Scotland AIDS Project when the service is conducted by office bearers/congregation. We have a representative on Christian Aid Scotland's Inverness committee and actively support its ongoing "Mothers in Malawi" project - with Kiltarlity we have held 2 fund raising concerts for this. We have a collection for Christian Aid week.

1.9. The wider Church of Scotland

Tell us about your relationship with Presbytery? Do you understand where your church fits into the Presbytery Plan? What involvement do you have with the Councils and Committees of the General Assembly?

Our relationship with Presbytery is a bit remote but getting better since we have our new Minister. Jonathan is currently a member of Presbytery Finance and Doctrine/Worship committees. The elders understand how we fit in to Presbytery Plan. Our Session Clerk, treasurer, fabric convenor and safeguarding coordinator liaise with appropriate folk/depts. at 121 generally and on an ad hoc basis. Our treasurer, Louise Monaghan is a member of the Finance Committee. We have 12 subscribers to "Life & Work" and we are not particularly engaged currently with Crossreach or other Church of Scotland initiatives or councils.

2. Resources

2.1 Finances

Comment on your ability to finance all that you are doing, is it sustainable financially? How is the work of your church financed? When did you last do a stewardship programme? Do you produce an annual budget? Are you able to meet your annual Mission & Ministries allocation fully?

Over the last few years we have spent a great deal on both our church and our manse. This has been generated through existing fabric reserves, fund-raising and sale of land next to the church for a house plot. Our main source of income comes from weekly offerings in the open plate and from the weekly envelopes plus regular giving by standing order. The open plate income has seen a significant decrease on a weekly basis but giving by SO has increased despite a number of large and regular givers having moved from the area. Table 1 below shows the income of the last three years. There is some fluctuation due to timing of Gift Aid reclaims.

Table 1: Kirkhill Church – total income over past three years (not including any contributions from Fabric Fund)

	Income	% change on previous year
2014	28507	
2015	25727	-9.8
2016	30387	18.1

We produce an annual budget with each year's accounts, and we have always been able to meet our M & M allocation. We, like Kiltarlity, though classed as a "Necessary Charge" by Presbytery, do not raise sufficient income to generate an M&M contribution equating to 50% of the full cost of ministry. We undertook a stewardship programme in autumn 2015, focusing on financial giving. The background and rationale for tithing was taught over a series of Sundays, and the congregation invited to increase their giving in response to God's

call. Also the treasurer regularly exhorts members to review their giving and encourages giving by standing order so that there is a regularity to the income received. We are not able to fund everything we are doing from revenue but we still have sufficient reserves to deal with unusual expenditure should it arise. Notwithstanding our large fabric and vacancy expenses being over, we will still be unable to balance the books without encroaching on reserves. For the foreseeable future this is sustainable. Our policy is not to hold excessive reserves and intend to utilise the funds we have for the purpose of mission, as the need arises. We have raised funds for "Young Life" (see section 1.5) separately through an appeal.

2.2. Buildings

What state of repair is your/are your buildings in? How much are your premises used each week? Are your premises fit for purpose, do they comply with all current legislation e.g. disabled access? Do your buildings serve your mission? Do you have any plans for refurbishment?

Both manse and church are in a good state of repair and fit for purpose, complying with all current legislation. On-going maintenance and routine repairs are anticipated and we have plans for a refurbishment of the gallery and vestibule at some point.

The roof of Wardlaw church was replaced in 2007 at a cost of £55k as the first part of a refurbishment programme. The next stage was to tackle dampness coming from ground level. This extensive refurbishment was completed in the last quarter of 2011 at a cost of over £135k. The pews were replaced by chairs to allow flexible seating. More recently, outstanding "Sound desk" work has been completed to enable protection of the AV equipment and to centralise controls for heating and lights.

The church only partially serves our mission as space is limited on Sunday morning – our youth cannot currently be accommodated in the church building and meet in the manse.

2.3. People - Ministry team and Leadership

Do you have a ministry team (paid and/or volunteers)? What support is there for your minister/ministry team e.g. admin support? How many people do you employ and in what capacity are they employed? Do all your employees have contracts of employment? Do you meet the new pension law requirements? How do you appraise and develop your employees? How does your Kirk Session function? How do you encourage and develop new leaders from your congregation?

Our ministry team constitutes the Minister Jonathan (50 % of full time Word and Sacrament). Our organist, Tonya, is self-employed and is line-managed by Jonathan. Appraisal and development is conducted "on the job" and through regular one-to-one meetings. There is no ministry team as such in the strictest sense and there is no formal admin support for the minister. Office-bearers and members of the congregation support the management of the church through help with AV on Sunday mornings, production of the Anchor magazine and weekly bulletin, and management of rotas, for Sunday tea/coffee,

flowers, finance, AV and Sunday Club. Nevertheless there is still a heavy admin load that Jonathan has to deal with across two churches.

The minister has a small advisory group constituting Session Clerks from both congregations and other elders as required. This group has recently been reconstituted following appointment of a new Session Clerk at Kirkhill. The minister and Session Clerks of both churches regularly meet to match up people to roles/calling based on the FATSO assessment (John Wimber), where we ask is someone Faithful (to God and others), Available, Teachable, Spirit-filled and Obedient. We also ask whether they have the skills and talents needed for the role identified.

2.4. People – Structure and Organisation

[How do your organisational structures enable and encourage the work of your church?](#)

On 17th October 2016, Kirkhill and Kiltarlity churches moved from a Deacon's Court Constitution to a Unitary Constitution. We anticipate that this will provide increased organisational efficiency and encourage more members to take on tasks and roles without the long-term commitment to an ordained position. Currently the Session comprises 7 elders and we are looking to appoint further elders.

3. Relationships

[Tell us about the nature of the working relationships between office bearers, the Minister/Ministry team and the congregation?](#)

The relationships between minister, office bearers and congregation are good; 95% of the congregation agreed/strongly agreed that the "our church leaders are approachable." And no one disagreed with this statement. However, the issue of how Jonathan leads Sunday worship has caused difficulty in relationships with some people over the past 18 months.

Jonathan meets with Frances Grant, Session Clerk on a regular basis to plan services, discuss any pastoral concerns, orchestrate Kirk Session meetings, and explore any outreach initiatives and communication initiatives/issues with congregation and community.

4. What are the values and convictions which shape and direct the life of your congregation?

During the latter part of 2015, the office bearers engaged with the Presbytery Planning Committee (PCC) to take forward our thinking on mission, vision and values. We engaged the help of a professional facilitator and met together for an afternoon. The outcomes of this meeting (jointly with Kiltarlity) were written up and submitted to the PCC, and are summarised below. During January and February 2016, the teaching on Sunday mornings covered the 7 areas included under "Our Vision and Values".

Our overall Mission: We are two rural congregations in the Highlands who are committed to living in the love of Jesus, becoming more like him, and making his love known to all in our communities. We are a family who love having fun together and honouring God in the way we live. We are passionate about Jesus being the centre of everything we do.

Our Aim: is for everyone to feel welcomed and find a home at Kirkhill & Kiltarlity Parish Churches, regardless of church background, or whether they have faith, a little faith or none.

Our Vision and Values

- I. **God first in everything –**
 - We love Jesus and keep Him at the centre of everything
 - We worship God with passion and devotion – “surely God is in this place”
 - We believe the Bible is the word of God and directly relevant to how we live our lives today
 - We live and pray at all times in the power of the Holy Spirit

- II. **Every generation and all sorts of people engaged in the life of the church –**
 - We love everyone well - honouring, caring for and serving each other
 - We ensure that everyone feels welcome at our worship services, meetings and events

- III. **People becoming disciples –**
 - We believe that each person has gifts and talents and should be encouraged to develop and use these to bless the church and grow God’s Kingdom.

- IV. **Developing leaders -**
 - We believe that Christ gave the gift of leaders to his church – apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists and the church will grow in size and maturity when we identify and develop the leaders he gives us

- V. **Actively engaging with our communities -**
 - We are a family on mission with a heart to serve our community and see it filled with the life of God and everyone experiencing the good news of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom

- VI. **A growing church**
 - We believe that God’s will is to add to the church, on a regular basis, those who are being saved
 - We believe that numerical growth will be such that we will outgrow our buildings

- VII. **Engagement with the wider church**
 - We seek to partner with other churches across our neck of the woods and beyond so that we can unite in pursuing God’s Kingdom and seeing lives transformed by his love

5. How has the life and witness of your congregation developed and changed since the last review by Presbytery?

When asked what they thought their church did best, the main feedback (of those that responded to the question), was that they thought the church was warm and welcoming, yet providing a challenging engagement for all age-groups.

6. What challenges have you faced in the last five years and how have these been dealt with?

Since 2002 we have had 4 ministers with fairly long periods of pulpit supply in between appointments. After the previous minister Rev Kobus Schmidt left, the congregation grew together and a range of people stepped forward to help lead and provide stability. This allowed people to grow in their giftings helped by the valued input from Rev Peter Donald the Interim Moderator.

However, our congregational age profile is too high compared to our parish. Nearly 45% of the congregation is aged 65 or over and younger age groups are under-represented (Appendix 1). We are hoping, and succeeding to some extent, to reduce it by making things more appealing to younger families and individuals. However, more work needs to be done to evolve our church services towards a more family- friendly style and format.

7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

SECTION 2: CONGREGATIONAL FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

1. Vision for our mission as a local church over the next five years

1.1. Introduction

In Section 1 (our story) we described what we are presently doing, whether what we were doing was sustainable, and what challenges we thought were facing us in each area of church life. These deliberations were based on the views of minister and office-bearers, returns from the congregational questionnaire (38 returns), and suggestions made at a congregational meeting (24 attendees) in which participants were invited to express their views on what should be the priorities for mission and church life.

In this section, we have set out our SMART goals based on what we have said in section 1, feedback from the congregational meeting, and further deliberations by the eldership. The goals focus primarily on our emerging vision for mission, outreach and growth, and how this impacts each area of church life.

1.2. Worship

At the congregational meeting there was continued support expressed for the current approach to Sunday worship (see Section 1, item 1.2). It was suggested that there could be more joint services with Kiltarlity and Kiltarlity Free Church, and more all-age services. There was a strong desire expressed in the congregational questionnaire for continuing with, and developing, more contemporary family-friendly service formats on a Sunday (and possibly other days during the week), including café church services and messy church. In contrast, about 11 people expressed a desire to return to a more traditional form of worship. With the departure of Kirkhill elder Alasdair Morrison in September 2016, we now have a significant gap in our music worship leading capacity, which impacts the potential viability of our Third Sunday evening worship service.

Worship goal 1: *by end Dec 2017 increase the number of members involved in service preparation and leading, including readings/prayers, children's' addresses, catering, preaching and music.*

Worship goal 2: *in partnership with Kiltarlity, establish a regular pattern of café church services; initially 3 joint services on the first Sunday of Feb, May and October in 2017; pattern to be reviewed in conjunction with Kiltarlity by end Jan 2018; regular logistic team to be identified and set up by end Feb 2017.*

Worship goal 3: *Jonathan and Session Clerks to review the aim and format of Third Sunday praise evening service by end April 2017 and to encourage everyone to pray for a worship leader to replace Alasdair Morrison; recommendations to Session meeting in May 2017.*

1.3. Local Mission

A number of options for local mission initiatives were discussed at the congregational meeting in addition to what we already do in the schools (Open the Book; Assemblies; YWAM) and in the community (Tuesday Coffee and cake). These included:

- having an Annual BBQ/open day
- workshops focusing on health needs, finances, addictions and loneliness
- establishing a young parent's group
- giving thought as to how people outwith the villages might be drawn in more effectively.

In addition to the above, a need has been identified to help folks who have difficulty picking up prescriptions at the chemist and sourcing transport to medical appointments. Eight volunteers have kindly put their names forward to help. We will now make cards available to folks with contact numbers of the people who can help. This will be a help not only to our Church friends, but also the wider community.

Local Mission goal 1: *put in place a Medical Services Transport team by May 2017; working procedures to be piloted over summer 2017; feedback to Session Sept 2017 with a view to making this a permanent initiative.*

The last Alpha course, held in Kirkhill in 2015 was popular and well attended, but after re-location of previous key team members, there is a need to establish a new team to service new courses on a regular basis.

Local Mission goal 2: *in partnership with Kiltarlity, form a new team for delivering a yearly Alpha course. Location and team to be agreed by April 2017; training June 2017; course to run Sept-Dec 2017; review Jan 2018.*

Lastly, it is notable that we currently focus our mission around what **WE** believe we should be doing to serve the community and share the gospel. It would be valuable to carry out an exercise/survey of how the community views the church and where the church could partner more effectively with the local community to meet needs.

Local Mission goal 3: *in partnership with Kiltarlity, identify tools available for carrying out a community mission audit and form a team to undertake it. Team and tools to be decided by March 2018, with audit carried out over June- Dec period of 2018; reporting to Session in January 2019.*

1.4. Communication

At the congregational meeting it was suggested that we could publish the Anchor monthly and include forward dates of church services and events.

Communication goal 1: *formalise procedure for putting together monthly forward plan of services; publish on web site, and post on notice boards in both churches and community; procedures to be streamlined by June 2017.*

1.5. Discipleship

For the vast majority of the Kirkhill congregation, discipleship takes place on a Sunday morning and via private devotions. Five people attend the Connect and Encounter Life group, and 2-5 others attend the joint weekly prayer meeting at Kirkhill. The most pressing need is to develop a discipleship culture within the congregation, i.e. that we exist as disciples of Jesus Christ in order to make disciples of Jesus Christ. A key element in this is to have a regular preaching series on discipleship.

Discipling Goal 1: *to have at least one sermon series per annum focusing on discipleship starting with a series on Acts running from April-June 2017.*

Feedback from the congregational meeting on the topic of discipleship identified the following priorities:

- Encouraging people to grow in their faith with love as the key
- Helping people to discern their gifts and to help them to use them
- Getting to really know people, befriending and loving people first – through informal fellowship in bigger/smaller groups to suit different personalities
- A weekend retreat – time away together
- Continuing to pray for each other and promoting personal devotion and bible study

Discipling Goal 2: *in conjunction with Kiltarlity, and building on previous success, continue with plans to hold regular fellowship/discipling evenings; plans to be put forward by end Dec 2017*

There is also interest in developing the prayer life across both congregations and a partnership with some Inverness Churches has led to possible involvement in 24/7 prayer weeks.

Discipling Goal 3: *in partnership with other Inverness churches, and Inverness Presbytery, encourage involvement of the congregation in the Church of England's UK initiative on 24/7 prayer in June 2017 and in future years.*

1.6. Children & youth

Feedback from the congregational meeting suggested we should do more to make children and families welcome at church. This could include:

- Extending Sunday Club events beyond a Sunday
- Having a church hall (see section 2.2) to allow for regular events
- Partnership with other organisations such as “Prospects”
- Varying refreshments after the service
- Providing support for the Young Life worker and not relying on that person to do all our work with young people

In addition to the above, we do not currently have sufficient leaders to run Sunday Club for more than two Sundays in the month.

Children and youth goal 1 – identify and recruit two additional Sunday Club leaders by end April 2017; ensuring they, and all other Sunday Club leaders have carried out PVG Disclosures in accordance with our Safeguarding policy.

Children and youth goal 2 – Jonathan and Iain Clyne to continue to play active role on Young Life Local Committee and contribute to induction of Young Life Area Director Richard Dahl in 2018, ensuring good relationships and information exchange with the congregation and encouraging participation in Young Life Activities as volunteers.

1.7. Pastoral Care & Fellowship

Suggestions from the congregational meeting included: developing a more formalised system for remembering people in prayer, or noticing when people are not around, and finding a way within Data Protection Legislation to share personal contact details. The congregation also has a high proportion of people in the “elderly” category (appendix 1). Pastoral needs are likely to continue to increase, and without urgent attention to mission and discipleship there will be fewer younger and fit folk to provide this care.

At present our Church in Kirkhill does not have an active pastoral care team. The Pastoral care of parishioners is an essential part of Christ’s calling to the Church, particularly in times of need. As a church, we want to develop our provision of pastoral care to reach a wider group of people. A team needs to be set up to support the Session in this task as not all of the 7 current elders are able to visit, and Jonathan’s time for visits is limited (see Section 1; item 1.7). With the appointment of new elders, there will be opportunities to re-work the districts and ensure that our vulnerable and elderly are visited regularly.

Pastoral Goal 1: Mary Bell to be appointed as head of new Pastoral Care team by end Aug 2017 and to actively encourage non-elders to get involved in visiting and be part of the team by end Nov 2017

Pastoral Goal 2: *after new elders are appointed, Jonathan and Frances Grant to review the districts and ensure that each elder has a manageable pastoral visiting workload by end June 2017*

1.8. World Mission

The following suggestions were made at the congregational meeting:

- Continue to pray for wider mission work during our Monday night prayer meeting
- Continue to support Highland Foodbank
- Increase profile and support for Hannah Clyne, working in Kenya, with Mamma Hope charity
- Ask members what they are involved in and share news in the “Anchor”
- Appoint a person to manage our Fair Trade Church Status and consider options for marketing Fair Trade goods etc.
- Encourage folk to participate in wider church training and events e.g. Global Worship Day; REFUEL

We also have links with the Highland Supports Refugees and are considering how best we can support this project. From time to time, we are asked to consider supporting other charities and requests are dealt with as appropriately by the Session. To improve this ad-hoc working there is scope for selecting a sub-set of charities to be our main focus for fund-raising in the year.

World Mission Goal 1: *Continue to hold at least 3 fund-raising events (e.g. music concerts) per annum in support of the Highlands Supports Refugees (Jan); Christian Aid (May); Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS project (June); these events to be held in partnership with Kiltarlity*

World Mission Goal 2: *Linked to goal 1, Kirk Session to review our fund raising for charities in January each year and agree a yearly short list of our “preferred” charities on which we can focus our efforts.*

1.9. Relationships with wider Church of Scotland

The congregational meeting revealed a lack of awareness of the relative responsibilities of the General Assembly and Presbytery or how they interacted with the local church. An information meeting could help address this and encourage those other than office bearers to engage with the wider church.

There is also scope for better partnership working with churches in our Presbytery. Current relationships with non Church of Scotland congregations are good; e.g. the Free Church and other churches in town (King’s Inverness, and Christ Church Inverness) with sharing of resources and joint ventures (e.g. Café church, Love After Marriage and Life Groups).

Wider Church of Scotland Goal 1: in October 2017, jointly with Kiltarlity, invite Trevor Hunt, Presbytery Clerk (or another Presbytery Office Bearer) to an information evening to give an overview of the workings of the Church of Scotland

1.10. Finances

Financial giving has decreased slightly on average over the last two years, and more needs to be done to ensure financial sustainability. Although we meet our M&M contribution each year this contribution is not sufficient to sustain 50% of a full time Ministry post and we are therefore aid-receiving. Give that income has increased by an average of 18% over the last two years in Kiltarlity church it would seem possible that Kirkhill (like Kiltarlity) should set an ambitious goal of increasing our income over the next 5 years to generate sufficient M&M to fund 50% of ministry. It was proposed at the congregational meeting that:

- We make sure that everyone who gives is aware of the gift aid scheme
- Regular information on finances published in the Anchor magazine.
- We follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit in alerting us to financial needs within the congregation
- Fund-raising events provide opportunities for bonding

Financial goal 1: to increase financial giving by an average of 12% per annum with the aim of generating an income of ~£40,000/annum by end 2021; regular calls for folk to review their giving (and move to direct debit and Gift Aid) through regular stewardship teaching (3 Sundays autumn each year), the Anchor magazine and end of year “Big Wins” service

1.11. Buildings

It was suggested at the congregational meeting that we should investigate erecting a new permanent/semi-permanent building in church grounds to provide meeting room space for both church and community. Discussions have been on-going with the Community Hub Committee (part of Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Trust) on the potential of establishing a Community Hub building on church grounds funded externally. Highland Council Planning have subsequently advised that any planning application for a building within the vicinity of the church (which is B-listed) would almost certainly be rejected.

There are also some relatively significant maintenance issues for manse and church bell tower that need to be addressed in the medium term.

Buildings goal 1 – replace soffits and facias on manse porch and utility room by June 2019; 3 quotes obtained by March 2019

Buildings goal 2 – renovate church bell tower by end Dec 2018; survey and quotes to be obtained by July 2018

1.12. People - Ministry team and Leadership

There is a pressing need to identify and disciple emerging leaders. The age profile of the congregation suggests that within 10 years numbers may be up to half what they are today (appendix 1). Therefore we need to begin now with the task of nurturing and discipling leaders, with a particular focus on mission and outreach rather than expecting new leaders to carry on maintaining a *status quo* that is no longer sustainable. It could be argued that the most important task for Jonathan at this stage in the life of Kirkhill Church is to invest time in discipling new leaders, be that elders, Sunday Club leaders, house group/life group leaders etc.

People and leadership goal 1: Jonathan to review different approaches to identifying and discipling leaders and make recommendations to Session in June 2017; pilot approaches by end Dec 2017, with a view to establishing a leadership development programme across both churches in January 2018; programme likely to include a mix of meetings, private study, face to face meetings etc.

It was suggested at the congregational meeting that photographs of minister and elders should be added to the notice boards with roles attached.

People and leadership goal 2 – by end August 2017 erect a new notice board with photographs of minister, elders and other ministry leaders and short bios for each

1.13. People - Structure and Organisation

With the on-going reduction in the number of full-time Word & Sacrament Ministry posts in the Church of Scotland there is a need for Presbytery plans to include provision for reducing the number of full time W&S posts. In the past this has been achieved by establishing new linkages and unions. In recognition that this strategy has not been successful in fostering local mission and church growth, and more often than not cements decline, the General Assembly 2016 approved the following deliverance:

“Recognising the need for a variety of models of ministry in a changing culture, instruct the [Ministries] Council to explore further practical proposals and a legal framework for the implementation in appropriate places of a ‘Hub-style’ ministry”

Presbyteries have been urged to (General Assembly remits 2016):

“begin to consider how they might prepare for hub style ministries through their Presbytery Plans and other local arrangements”

The prospect of a Hub style ministry where a number of charges are grouped together under one fulltime W&S and other ordained ministries, may offer, in time, an alternative model of organisation to that of linkages and unions and closure of places of worship. Nevertheless

for our context there may be efficiencies to be gained by considering an administrative union between Kiltarlity and Kirkhill.

The current Presbytery Plan will be finalised in May 2017 and includes a proposal to unite Kiltarlity and Kirkhill and close Kiltarlity Church building. The plan is under debate at time of writing.

There was discussion at the congregational meeting on this topic. It is recognised that there is duplication in the work of the two Sessions although there was strong support for maintaining two places of worship.

Currently, worship at Kirkhill is from 10 to 11am, and worship at Kiltarlity from 11.30am-12.30pm (approx.). This current arrangement took some time to be agreed and is a compromise between the desires of both congregations to have a morning service, and the need for Jonathan to travel between the two charges and have some pastoral and fellowship time with the congregation at Kirkhill. However, the current timings a Sunday morning reduces the amount of post-service pastoral and fellowship time that Jonathan has with the Kirkhill congregation to around 10 minutes compared to on average 40 minutes with the Kiltarlity congregation. The current arrangement also makes it difficult for Jonathan to sustain energy for a different kind of service later in the day, e.g. Third Sunday praise. One option might be to train people to lead services (see People and Leadership Goal 1 above), so that Jonathan would lead worship at each charge on alternate Sundays. Such an approach might facilitate growth through multiplying ministry.

Given that the Presbytery Planning Committee will require input from congregations in relation to deliberations on future constitutional arrangements, pattern of services and allocation of ministry posts etc. across its charges, there is therefore a need for us to be proactive in evaluating options in these areas.

Structure and Organisation goal 1: together with Kiltarlity, set up a joint working group to explore a possible union between Kirkhill and Kiltarlity; the remit of the group being to consider the benefits or otherwise of a union, to explore future provision of worship centres and patterns of worship, and make recommendations for consideration by both Kirk Sessions; group to comprise Jonathan and one office bearer and non-office bearer from each congregation; working group approved by end March 2017; reporting by end November 2017.

1.14. Timing of goals

The chart below displays the timing and duration of goals for the first 3 years of the plan.

Topic	Goal	Time Span					
		Jan-Jun 2017	July-Dec 2017	Jan-Jun 2018	July-Dec 2018	Jan-Jun 2019	July-Dec 2019
Worship	WG1- increase the number of members involved in service preparation and leading	■					
	WG2 - establish regular pattern of café church services	■					
	WG3 - review aim and format of Third Sunday praise evening service	■					
Local Mission	LG1 - establish Medical Services Transport team	■					
	LG2- form a new team for delivering a yearly Alpha course	■					
	LG3 - Carry out a Community Mission Audit			■			
Communication	CG1 - formalise procedure for monthly forward plan of services	■					
Discipleship	DG1 - at least one sermon series per annum focusing on discipleship		■		■		■
	DG2 - plans for fellowship/ discipling group	■					
	DG3 - involvement in 24/7 prayer with Inverness churches	■					
Children & Youth	CYG1 - identify and recruit 2 Sunday Club leaders	■					
	CYG2 contribute to induction of Young Life Area Director Richard Dahl			■			
Pastoral Care & Fellowship	PG1 - establish a Pastoral Care Team	■					
	PG2 - review elder's districts	■					
World Mission	WMG1 - hold at least 3 fund raising events per annum	■	■	■	■	■	■
	WMG2 - review short list of sponsored charities	■		■		■	■
Wider Church	WCG1 - Presbytery Clerk information evening		■				
Finances	WCG1 - increase financial giving by 12%/annum; stewardship teaching each autumn		■		■		■
Buildings	BG1 - replace soffits and facias on manse porch and utility room					■	
	BG2 - renovate church bell tower			■			
Ministry team & Leadership	PL1 - review, pilot and implement leadership development programme	■					
Structure & Organisation	SO1 - establish joint working group to explore union between K&K	■					

Appendix 1 – Comparing parish and congregation

The graph below compares the age profile of Kirkhill parish in 2011 with that of the congregation in May 2016 (Church census day). Note the under-representation of folk under the age of 65 in the congregation.

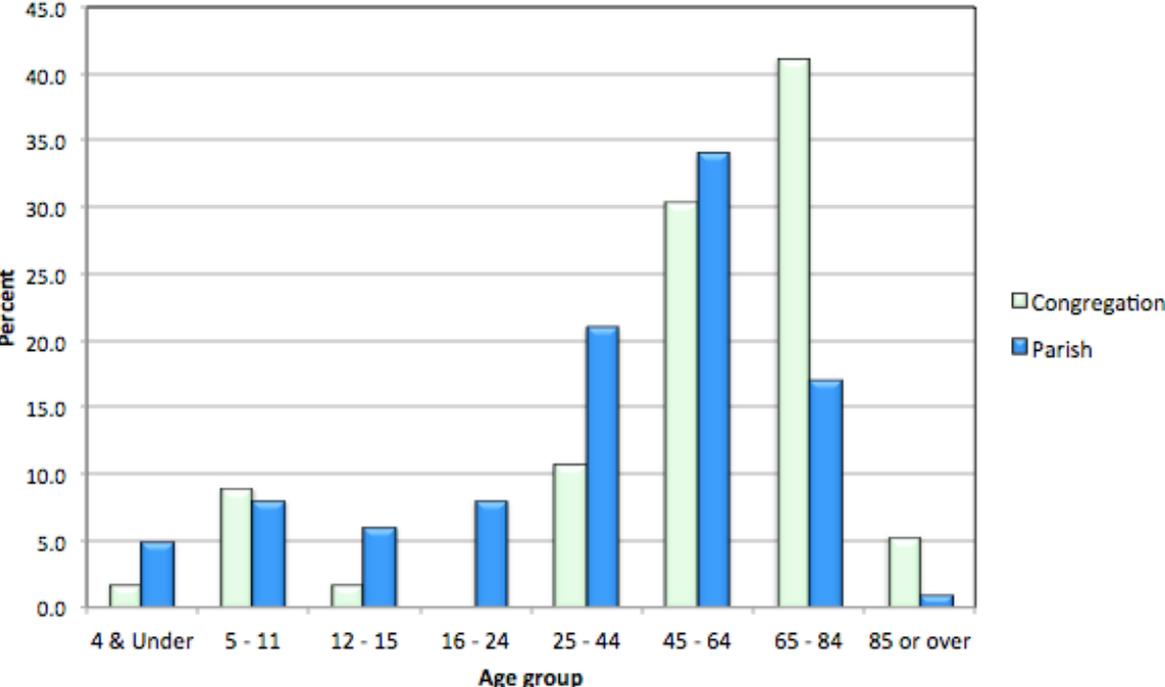


Fig 1. Comparison of age profile of Kirkhill parish with that of the congregation

Appendix 2 – Congregational questionnaire summary

Table 1: Extent of agreement (% of responders) expressed by Kirkhill congregation with 8 statements relating to church life

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Total Responses: 38					
Our congregation is friendly to new people	55%	39%	3%	3%	0%
Our congregation is welcoming and accessible to all ages	45%	39%	3%	8%	5%
I would invite my friends to be part of our congregation	33%	31%	28%	6%	3%
We are known for being loving and helpful in our community	32%	41%	24%	0%	3%
Our church leaders are approachable	65%	30%	5%	0%	0%
The church has helped me understand more clearly what it means to be a Christian	38%	32%	27%	0%	3%
I have grown in my faith in recent years	35%	43%	14%	5%	3%
The church encourages me to share my Christian faith in my daily life	42%	42%	8%	6%	3%

Appendix 3 - Description of life group “Connect & Encounter”

Aim

Gathering to connect with God, and each other, to encounter Jesus by His Spirit and grow to be more like Him.....

.....So that we represent our Heavenly Father well, and we are on fire, equipped and ready to impact our world

The idea

- We meet together to share life with Jesus (John 10: 7-10)
- We grow as a follower of Jesus – knowing more of his presence in our lives by the Holy Spirit; and get to know who we are in him and the great plans he has for our lives (Ephesians 2: 10)
- We grow in faith and confidence so that God can impact people and the world around us, through us
- We can focus on a particular aspect of our faith life such as, identity, purpose, prayer, bible study, worship, leadership development, prophecy, mission to particular groups (e.g. keep fit, schools) etc.

How often do we meet? – fortnightly (roughly)

How long do we meet for? 19.00-21.30

What do we do?

- **Worship** –soaking, singing – focusing on God, thanksgiving and praise
- **Teaching** – on a specific topic each week with particular bible passages
- **Table talk** – in our table groups we reflect on how we apply the teaching to our lives- and we pray it in for each person and hold each other accountable to what God is saying to us from week to week.
- **Prayer Ministry** – on table groups and all together
- **Fellowship** – having fun! eating drinking, laughing, crying, make friends

How do we care for each other?

1. **Honesty.** As trust builds we learn to be honest with each other about our successes and our failures and shortcomings
2. **Love** – welcoming, where people can be themselves and know they are loved and honoured no matter what
3. **Listening** – when one person is sharing everyone really listens. In all responses we think about how to build people up
4. **Confidentiality** – our commitment to each other is to respect the vulnerability and the trust given to us within the group.