

The Church of Scotland

Stevenston
High Kirk



2009

Regulations & Guidelines

2010

Moderator:

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Session Clerk:

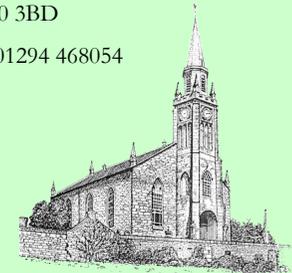
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"Touching the World with the love of Christ"



Stevenston High Kirk
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<http://www.highkirk.com>

Funerals

59. The Minister is expected to provide parish funeral services.
60. If the Minister is unable, for good and sufficient reason, to conduct a funeral service, he is expected to arrange for a neighbouring colleague to deputise or a fully trained Elder who has been approved by Presbytery.
61. Collections for charitable organisations at a Funeral Service are not permitted at the High Kirk. Families ought to be encouraged to have a collection at the Funeral Parlour or the Crematorium.

Baptism

62. Ministers cannot baptise a candidate who has been baptised already.
63. A Service of Dedication and Blessing for a child may be offered to parents who are not members or regular attenders of this church.
64. All candidates for baptism must be approved by Kirk Session.

Complaints

65. Complaints from the congregation regarding the business and ongoing work of the church should be addressed to the Kirk Session, Session Clerk or the Minister. The Administration team will exercise with sensitivity in how complaints are brought to Session Meetings. In some cases complaints may be dealt with privately (if appropriate).
66. It is advisable that complaints over the behaviour of elders, members & adherents should be dealt with in a private setting (See **regulation 65**).
67. It is advisable that complaints over the life and doctrine of the Minister should come to the Session Clerk who can speak in a private setting with the Minister. If a resolution is not forthcoming, then the Session Clerk may write (with permission from the Kirk Session) to the Presbytery Clerk.
68. In regards to complaints from the congregation over the content and conduct of worship, please refer to **regulation 9**.

1. Regular meetings of the Kirk Session shall be held on the third Tuesday of **September, November, February, April** and **June** at 7pm. If the April meeting falls within Holy Week, then the Kirk Session shall meet the week before Holy Week or on the next suitable Tuesday night.
2. Any other meetings of the Kirk Session and special meetings for conference shall be held as required.
3. For urgent meetings of the Kirk Session, 3 days notice must be given and all members of Session contacted. If possible, Sunday meetings should be avoided.
4. Convenors from the Standing Committees and Teams are asked to make sure that all their members are contacted when giving notice of meetings. Sunday intimations should not be used as a primary means of communication.

Moderator

5. The Minister shall preside as Moderator at all meetings of Kirk Session. When the Minister is absent, another Minister may be approached by written request of the Moderator (or Session Clerk in his absence).
6. The Minister shall have a casting vote, but not a deliberative vote.
7. The Minister shall use his discretion when using robes and clerical attire in his Pastoral Ministry.

Conduct of Worship

8. It is the responsibility of the Kirk Session to appoint times for the conduct of public worship.
9. The Minister has sole jurisdiction over the content and conduct of worship. Suggestions, fresh ideas, constructive criticisms, and complaints must be directed to the Minister privately and not to the Kirk Session. Ministers are accountable to Presbytery, not the Kirk Session.
10. Congregational participation is welcomed and used at the discretion of the Minister. Ministers who enjoy and exercise a Team-Ministry Model may share responsibility with specific ad hoc teams made up of Elders, Members & Adherents.

The Nature and Duties of the Elder

11. The Eldership is a spiritual office in the Church, concerned with the rule and pastoral oversight of the congregation. It is distinct from, though closely associated with, the Ministry of Word and Sacraments. It is therefore expected that an Elder is a deeply committed Christian, one who seeks to glorify God in all things. Elders are encouraged to attend the various prayer meetings and discipleship courses, as Elders are to set an example to the Membership.
12. **Election of Elders:** The congregation is invited to nominate members to eldership using registration forms. The Kirk Session will then produce a short-list through the nomination process. The Minister will then present a final list (after an interview process) for approval to the Kirk Session. A date will then be agreed for the Ordination to Eldership of approved candidates.
13. Elders are encouraged to be at worship on Sunday mornings, taking due part in public worship regularly, and diligently performing duties allotted. Please inform a member of the Kirk Session when other duties of “necessity and mercy” take precedence over eldership duties (e.g. working, ill-health, bereavement, family issues, holidays, etc).
14. Elders are to share in the work of the Kirk Session, carrying out all their duties as required. They must play their part in dealing with Church business, both spiritual and temporal through the various meetings and to recognize and support the Kirk Session’s positive role in promoting the Christian good of the congregation and parish.
15. All Elders have the privilege of dispensing the elements at Holy Communion. Communion duties will always take priority over normal door and collection duties when duties conflict. Duties are well documented in appropriate rotas.
16. Elders are to assist the Minister in the development of the Spiritual life of their district. They are to care for their district by regular visits into each home, by praying regularly for the members of the district by name, by sharing any difficulties, especially in cases of extra need (e.g. bereavement, illness or a baptism). The Minister should also be informed through the Prayer Line.

50. Adherents are permitted to participate in supportive roles of ministry (e.g. Bible reading, public prayers, playing music, singing, children’s work, etc).
51. Adherents involved in children’s ministry must have their Child Protection certificate, Disclosure Forms approved, show spiritual maturity and have been regular attenders for at least two years.

Church Hall Lets

52. The Hall Convenor is responsible in dealing with all bookings, complaints, and concerns regarding the Church Hall.
53. Church Law states that the Minister has responsibility over who may and may not use the church halls and other church property. Our present Minister has asked Kirk Session to help take responsibility in this matter. In regards to **irregular** use by Church Members or outside **“Christian”** organisations and charities, the Minister will use his discretion and will consult with Hall Convenor and can give or withhold permission (in some cases the Minister may ask the Kirk Session to make the decision).
54. In regards to an **irregular** use of the hall by **“non-Christian”** individuals or groups, the Minister, Session Clerk and Hall Convenor will consult over the issue and can give or withhold permission or, if appropriate, may hold the request for a Kirk Session decision.
55. Where an individual or group desire a more **regular** use of the hall, then approval must always be sought through the Kirk Session.

Financial Limits

56. The monthly stationary budget is set at £150. Any expenditure that exceeds this limit, but not exceeding £1,000, may be approved by the Fabric & Finance Team. Any expenditure that exceeds £1,000 must be approved by the Kirk Session.
57. The Kirk Session must obtain three quotes for any expenditure that exceeds £2, 000.
58. The Kirk Session must obtain three quotes and Presbytery permission for any expenditure exceeding £10, 000.

Members

40. Those seeking Membership are encouraged to attend a 4-week Membership Course led by the Minister. The Alpha Course or Christianity Explored may also be recommended as a follow-up course.
41. Candidates may be admitted to Membership by Profession of Faith, Transference, or by Resolution of the Kirk Session.
42. Members are expected to share in the responsibility of praying, supporting, giving and serving in the ministry of the Church.
43. Members are encouraged always to seek the unity and peace of the Church.
44. Just as parents exercise loving care, leadership and discipline in their families, elders are to exercise this role in the Church amongst its Members.
45. New Members should be encouraged to use their first year to grow in their faith through worship and regular attendance at Church and other courses to help in their discipleship. They should not be encouraged to get involved in leadership too soon.
46. All Members have a right to vote on all congregational matters.
47. Only members can be approved as nominees for Eldership. The nominee should have been a Christian for at least three years and a High Kirk member for at least two years by the ordination date. For other roles of responsibility (e.g. Bible reading, public prayers, playing music, singing, children's work, etc) nominees should be Christians with spiritual maturity and have been a member for at least one year.

Adherents (Regular Attenders)

48. Adherents cannot hold the office of Elder or any other responsible Leadership role until they have come into full membership.
49. All Adherents have a right to vote on all congregational matters (as long as their name is recorded on the Adherents List).

Stewarding

17. People will often make up their minds about whether they return to a Church by the warmth of welcome they receive. Elders must therefore exercise their stewardship duties with Christ-like conduct.
18. Elders are to take note of their Stewarding dates and are asked to be on duty by 10.00am.
19. If an elder is unable to be on duty, it is the elder's responsibility to find a replacement.
20. The congregation is to be welcomed at the door and everyone offered a Bible and an Order of Service. Visitors should be shown into the Church and, if appropriate, led to their seats.
21. Be courteous, exercising with grace and patience to those who are not aware of our parking restrictions, and to those who are not familiar with the protocols and traditions of this church.

Collections

22. Taking up the collection is an act of worship and must be done respectfully. Elders will receive assistance from Members who have requested their names to be on the Collection rota.
23. When monthly Communion is celebrated, the offering remains at the front of the Church. At all other times the offering is removed to St Monach's Aisle after the Benediction. Elders on duty on first Sunday of the month should attend Monthly Communion and then count the collection.
24. Elders on duty are asked to count the collection after Morning Worship. If an Elder has to leave after public worship, they must find a replacement to assist in the count. Elders who sincerely have difficulty in this ministry must inform the Session Clerk as early as possible who may help in finding a replacement.

Communion Duties

25. Elders on Communion duty are asked to attend a rehearsal for Communion which will normally take place at 6.30pm on the Thursday before Communion Sunday.
26. Elders on Communion Duty will also prepare the Church and help with the clearing up after the service.
27. The Kirk Session meets at 10am in St Monach's Aisle. This is a properly constituted meeting for all elders.
28. Although there is no dress code, elders are asked to dress "sensibly and respectfully" while serving at Communion.
29. If an elder is unable to be on duty, it is the elder's responsibility to arrange a replacement; the replacement is also required at the rehearsal.

Conduct at Kirk Session Meetings

30. All elders are required to attend Kirk Session meetings. Any elder unable to attend a meeting is asked to submit an apology to an attending elder, the Session Clerk or the Minister.
31. Meetings shall be constituted with devotional exercises, which shall normally include Praise, Bible Reading, Bible Study, and Prayer.
32. During discussions elders are encouraged to keep to the point of issue.
33. Elders must be courteous and show Christ-like behaviour [see Galatians 5:22,23]; and must do all in their power to "seek the unity and peace of this Church".
34. When bringing complaints from Members, Elders must be specific, offering names (privately, if appropriate) in order for the Kirk Session to make well-informed decisions (See **regulation 65**).

Standing Committees & Teams

35. Standing Committees and Teams have specific remits to assist in fulfilling the vision of the High Kirk: ***"To Glorify, Enjoy, and Serve God, Ministering hope and the love of Christ to the World."***
36. MISSION & DISCIPLESHIP have responsibility in the sphere of Worship, Christian Growth & Discipleship, Evangelism, World Mission, Children & Youth Work, Conferences, Communication, Education, and all matters falling under the remit of the General Assembly's Council of Mission and Discipleship. Although Mission & Discipleship have their own MISSION FUND, they may apply to the General or Fabric Funds (if appropriate) to assist with major projects.
37. FELLOWSHIP & MINISTRY have responsibility in the sphere of Pastoral Care; co-ordinating parish visitations, bereavement support, care in the sphere of marriage, baptism, child protection, first aid, health & hygiene, health & safety and any other sphere of care towards our Members, Adherents & Visitors. The fellowship & ministry team also provide opportunities for fellowship, social gatherings, outings, and other areas where friendships can be built, and unity preserved in the Church's life. Although the Fellowship & Ministry Team have their own SOCIAL COMMITTEE FUND, they may apply to the General or Fabric Funds (if appropriate) to assist with major projects.
38. FABRIC & FINANCE have responsibility over matters of stewardship, the Mission and Renewal fund, the collation of financial statistics and the Kirk Session's financial affairs. They also give oversight to matters of Church, hall, manse and all other property. Maintaining and updating of congregational fabric and property registers and any other documentation regarding Property & Finance will be under the remit of the Fabric & Finance Committee. During the summer recess, powers are given to the Fabric & Finance Committee to make decisions on behalf of the Kirk Session in all financial matters.
39. ADMINISTRATION have responsibility for arrangements in dealing with all Kirk Session business and all administrative tasks; agendas, rotas, procedures, correspondence, discipline issues, appointments (including the appointment of Presbytery Elder & Elders to attend the General Assembly), legal matters, dealing with business items that may come from Presbytery or General Assembly. This team is normally made up of Moderator (and in some cases, may include an Assistant Minister), Session Clerk, Depute Clerk, Treasurer and Church Secretary.