



The Church of Scotland
Presbytery of Edinburgh

CURRIE PARISH CHURCH – 2018

NEXT STEPS

Local Church Review – Section 3

Jesus said: "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

NEXT STEPS

This is the part where we look ahead.

It's not the last word on what the future will bring – rather it's a start on a cycle of review and reconsidering the congregation's activities.

So how do you see church life changing and developing?

What you are hoping to do?

Why are these the right steps on the journey?

How are you going to take these steps?

When you hope to do these things?

What will you **need** to take these plans forward?

Note that the boxes will expand when you type in the answers. If you need for sections simply highlight, copy and paste at the end of the document.

Eldership

WHAT?

Re-evaluate and re-energise the Eldership over the next five years.

WHY?

It was clear to the Local Church Review committee in 2013 that the role of the Elder in Currie Kirk lacked shape or structure. The Very Rev. Dr Derek Browning felt that there was a lack of clarity on what the role of the elder was. Mainly, this was because Session agreed to depart from Elder's districts in late 2008, with care being provided through a pastoral committee. Whilst there had been issues with Elders visiting, the abolition of districts meant that this primary connection and communication with the members was now lacking.

On 1st January, 2013, following the retiral of the pastoral associate, new arrangements were put in place but after a six-month pilot they were found not to be working.

In 2014, a major pastoral review involving all members of the church asked who would like a visit and, if so, once or three times a year. There was also the option offered to receive communication by email. The Rev. Dr Easter Smart was inducted into Currie Kirk in June 2015. The same year the Rev. Smart took the results of the survey and formed three pastoral teams to ensure that those who requested visits were cared for in this way. Some of the pastoral visitors are Elders, but not all. These three teams comprise 19 pastoral visitors who currently visit 92 church members, once or three times each year.

The Session is made up of 28 Elders and we have a membership of 465. No new Elders have been ordained since 2004 however, in August 2017, two Elders were re-admitted to Session. Many of the current Session members are in their seventies/eighties and some have expressed an interest in becoming emeritus. It is clear that Currie Kirk needs to provide structure and training for the Session and also to recruit, train and ordain new Elders.

HOW?

In recognising the above situation, the Minister has embraced the Local Church Review report and is determined to re-invigorate, re-energise and re-empower the role of the Elder. The Minister has preached several sermons on the importance of the role of the Elder and the need for the Elders to represent the voice of the congregation on Session and to be able to discuss and vote on matters.

The Session Clerk and Minister have since approached nine individuals to discuss the role of the Elder and to enquire if they would be interested in coming onto Session. Four of the individuals have expressed their interest and have since been approved by Session. In June 2018 an Elder's Taster Session was held in the Kirk to which potential new Elders and the existing eldership were invited. This was a two-hour session on the role of the Elder going forward into the 21st century and the exciting challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The Taster Session was run by Ian Graham of Palmerston Place Church and was attended by 23 Elders and three potential new Elders.

The session proved very successful and those present were enthusiastic to learn more. We intend to approach Mr Graham to plan and co-ordinate an Elder's Training Programme for both new and existing Elders, utilising the Kirk's new AV equipment.

Going forward, we will work at devising a support structure for Elders and consider the value of allocating teams of Elders to a geographic area, possibly asking Emeritus Elders to consider becoming mentors to new Elders. We also need to define the variety of roles which Elders may prefer to undertake, eg occasionally leading worship, convening committees, etc.

As well as the membership of 465, we are also conscious that there are a further 400 people associated with Currie Kirk, some of whom contribute financially to the life and work of the Church. Consideration will be given as to whether or not we should offer pastoral care to them and, if so, in what form and how it would be resourced.

WHEN?

Following on from the successful Taster Session, we will be contacting Mr Graham in September 2018 to discuss and plan an Elders' Training Programme to run through 2018 and into 2019. This will be tailored to meet the needs of Currie Kirk and will include a section on our pastoral care, which will continue to be monitored on a regular basis.

NEED?

Currie Kirk needs to improve its communications with its members, many of whose circumstances may have changed since the pastoral survey was conducted. Mr Graham has offered to do the training and we can use the Kirk itself with the new AV equipment to provide the training. It is also anticipated that the pastoral demands on our Minister will increase due to an ageing population and some professional pastoral care may be required to meet this need.

Family Outreach

WHAT?	To provide ways for families to grow in faith.
WHY?	<p>Like many churches, the congregation of Currie Kirk is predominately an ageing population. However, there are also many young families in the area, some of whom are grandchildren of residents and others who are newcomers. As a Parish Church, it is imperative that the Kirk reaches out to these young families, to connect with them. We also want to support those parents who have had their children baptised or blessed, encouraging them to raise their children in faith. As in many other churches, this is proving to be a challenge.</p> <p>At present, the traditional Sunday service attracts a dwindling number of families, with pre-school and primary schoolchildren leaving after the children's address to attend Kidz@Currie. Although Kidz@Currie has not been well attended, the monthly Messy Church, held on the last Friday of the month, has attracted many children from babies up to Primary Seven age. Some are accompanied by parents whilst others come with grandparents or childminders. Due to many parents being unable to accompany their children on a Friday afternoon, an alternative Pop-Up Family church was tried on a Saturday afternoon. After this had been in operation for a year and had attracted very few families, it was decided to return to the more successful model of a Friday Messy Church.</p> <p>This year has presented an opportunity to re-invent and re-brand where and how we minister to children on Sundays.</p>
HOW?	Page 5

Recognising our need to minister to families, it was decided to advertise the post of 'Youth and Family Worker' in conjunction with Juniper Green Parish Church. Heather Merriman was appointed to this shared post in August 2017 and has spent some time getting to know the needs of the two churches and developing her role. She leads Scripture Union groups in the local primary schools and the secondary school, thus building bridges between the churches and the schoolchildren. Her Sundays are spent alternately in the two parishes and she gives assistance with Kidz@Currie, which is now being re-branded as the Sunday Club.

This year, 2018, is the Year of the Young Person. In light of this, a vision statement was written to express our intentions. This involved increasing Messy Church from once to twice a month and pledging as a church to work more closely with Currie Community Council to continue to connect and support the pupils in the two Currie primary schools, the high school and Woodlands School for children with special educational needs. This has been much appreciated by all and pupils have been brought to Currie Kirk for educational visits as well as for Christmas and Easter services.

Currie Kirk also supports and volunteers help at the local Mother and Toddler Group held in our Gibson Craig Hall on a Friday morning. This is generally very busy and gives an opportunity for church members to connect with local families.

We are keen to build on the momentum of our Monday Madness and Holiday Club to cement the connections to youth and children these helped to create.

WHEN?

A start has already been made with Messy Church increasing to twice a month from January this year and we will continue this model for the foreseeable future.

A new Sunday Club for primary children has just started in the Gibson Craig Hall from 9.45am to 11.15am, which gives parents an opportunity to leave their children and still attend worship in Currie Kirk.

With the Gibson Craig Hall now having audio-visual resources, we are able to offer a much more vibrant and meaningful ministry to the children. Some of this equipment has already been used at Messy Church.

All Age Family Services are to be held on a regular basis in the Church, thus ensuring that both children and their parents become familiar with the church environ and can worship together. It is hoped that both youth and children will play a large part in the leading of these services.

It is important that these initiatives are given time to prove themselves, so it is envisaged that they would be reviewed after a year unless it becomes clearly evident earlier that they are not working.

Consideration has also been given to youth Alpha Courses, jointly with other local churches, which could appeal to both teenagers and young adults. Whether these would be conducted in a school or church setting has still to be determined.

Follow up visits to families whose children have been baptised or blessed will help to strengthen connections between these families and our Church. In addition, we will be inviting these families to our All Age Family services and for more social interaction.

NEED?

At present most of these initiatives are run by older members of the congregation, with the exception of our family worker. We need younger helpers to come with fresh ideas and a more youthful notion to inspire children and teens.

When we were visited in the summer by a church youth group from California, the potential for developing our ministry for youth was clear for all to see, with youngsters from the Boys' Brigade, Explorer Scouts and the neighbourhood generally showing a keenness to be involved in joint activities. We do require assistance with how our ministry can be made more meaningful to this age group.

Worship

WHAT?

WORSHIP – To broaden our reach to the community by providing creative worship both in the Kirk and, potentially, in the Gibson Craig Hall.

WHY?

Since the last Local Church Review, the Kirk Redevelopment Project has been successfully completed with a new multi-functional annexe as well as a state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment and screens. This has allowed for more creative use of worship materials including videos and pictures and the playing of new Christian songs. This has been immensely positive, opening up possibilities for all-age worship.

However, the current worship format in the Kirk is mostly traditional (with hymns, prayers and a thought-provoking sermon) and, whilst appreciated by our membership, is not attracting younger generations.

We want to encourage every generation to worship. Under previous ministries there was a worship committee that routinely led prayers every week and often took the whole Sunday Sabbath worship. This was discontinued before the new Minister came and meant the Minister spent her first two years writing all prayers, creating all themes for worship and preaching every Sunday. Hence, there is a need to make worship more inclusive and involve the creativity, input and gifts of others.

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The location of the Kirk on the other side of the main road in relation to the Gibson Craig Hall is perhaps less appealing and less accessible for

	<p>buggies and prams, so new ideas may include the use of the Gibson Craig Hall.</p>
HOW?	<p>The Minister has set out several new initiatives: to set up a new worship committee with a revised remit in order to encourage others; to collaborate with neighbouring churches on the planning of themes and exploring diverse worship resources; to explore the possibility of Praise Services to encourage younger generations and inter-generational worship in a more informal setting.</p>
WHEN?	<p>Summer 2018 saw new AV technology and internet installed in the Gibson Craig Hall which means Messy Church, the Boys' Brigade, the new Sunday Club and the Guild can now use the hall both for vibrant biblical teaching as well as worship.</p> <p>In February 2018 an approach was made to initiate a new committee for worship and the first meeting was held in June. A new worship team remit was agreed at Session. The new team will meet routinely to provide creative ideas, hymn suggestions, prayers and talks in worship.</p> <p>The Minister has met with neighbouring ministers to look at worship planning using both the Revised Lectionary and the Narrative Lectionary. We intend to re-introduce Praise Services with the intention of developing a Praise Service ministry, with the first service on October 6. From time to time we have shared in worship services with Currie Community Church, accompanied by their praise band and this ecumenical relationship has worked well.</p>
NEED?	<p>We need to explore the possibilities of developing a Praise Band. At present there is an electronic keyboard in the Gibson Craig Hall but we are not aware of many musicians in the church to provide that style of music.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p> <p>There is a need for both financial and human resources to realise more frequent or diverse worship. This leads on to the finance section and the need to look to the best resourcing of our ministry in order to be able to</p>

nurture the spiritual life and provide a diet of worship that nourishes all ages in Currie.

Finance

WHAT?

Currie Kirk wishes to provide a strategic financial vision for the future.

WHY?

There is a pressing need to spiritually undergird financial decisions taken in Currie Kirk so that there is a more seamless correlation between the funds available and our vision for ministry. Up until now our main focus for spending, out of necessity, has been fabric related. This has been very successful and has seen the completion of a major reception area at the Church and the refurbishment of the tower is in hand. Other work has included the repainting of the Kirk and both the inside and exterior of the Gibson Craig Hall, new outdoor paving, new indoor flooring and a new heating boiler at the hall. All these represent a huge achievement but none on their own will grow our rapidly ageing congregation and the number of Christ's followers in Currie. In spite of the financial restraints they were operating under, the finance team was still mission focused.

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The completion of all this fabric work presents us with an opportunity to turn our attention to matters spiritual and for the Session to set about its vision for our ministry. We need to give more consideration

to resourcing our mission and ministry. In the past, there has been little engagement by Session in financial issues and if Elders are to properly fulfil their role they need to make their voices heard.

We also, as a matter of urgency, have a need to recruit assistance for our Minister to spread the load and also to allow us to provide greater coverage on the pastoral work front.

HOW?

We will do this by continuing to involve the Session more in the financial direction that Currie Kirk takes in the future and by creating a new finance team which has a spectrum of age, gender and experience and who can provide fresh vision for our Church. The finance team is encouraging greater engagement of Session in financial decision-making and the Treasurer is providing quarterly reports.

We will also focus more of our attention and limited funding on the all-important spiritual side of our mission.

WHEN?

The good news is that we have already started this vital work. Earlier this year, seeking to utilise Good Governance procedures, we have revised and re-invigorated all committee remits, including that of the Finance Committee. It now has eight members, including the Session Clerk and ex-officio, the Minister. There is a gender balance but, as with any new team, it faces a steep learning curve.

The Kirk Session is, for the first time in many years, witnessing a growth in its membership and a recent Taster Session for potential new Elders saw a gratifying number of existing Elders wishing to be part of that experience. It is our hope that all Elders, existing and potential, will wish to continue that trend so that they can all more clearly understand their full role.

Self-contained within the proposals of the 2018 Budget, is a separate budget, created by the previous Finance Committee, to enable our shared Youth and Family Worker to maximise the opportunities presented by the Year of the Young Person.

All these measures that have been put in place will not yield instant benefits, but they will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that we are heading in the right direction or allow us to judge if some form of

revision is required.

NEED?

We believe that on our Finance Committee we continue to have people with the experience that will take this work forward. However, should the need arise, we will not hold back from seeking assistance from our counterparts in neighbouring churches or asking for guidance from the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

As for our Kirk Session's role in matters financial, we are in the course of arranging further sessions for both new and existing elders which we hope will help them to understand more about the importance of this part of their role. As trustees they are now taking more responsibility for the stewardship of the Church.