

# **SCOTTISH UNITED REFORMED AND CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE**

## **THE ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS**

The accounts for year ending 30 September 2018, will be available from the college website from March.

[www.scottishcollege.org.uk](http://www.scottishcollege.org.uk)

### **SCOTTISH UNITED REFORMED AND CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE**

113 West Regent Street Glasgow G2 2RU

Scottish charity 004318

#### **The College Committee**

Chairperson	Myra Rose, DipPrimaryEd
Secretary	Professor Jean MacLellan, OBE BA MSc DipSW CQSW CSWE FRSA
Treasurer	Mark Kirkbride, BSc FCIBS
Principal	Revd Dr John McNeil Scott, BA BD LLM DMin, FRAS

Margaret Fairgrieve

Dr Graham Templeton

Mr Douglas Hay, BSc

Revd Craig Jesson, BA MA

Revd Sue Kirkbride, BSc MTh CertEd

Susan Henderson (Student representative, elected by the ordinand students)

Revd Dr John W Dyce, BA LLB MA(Ed) MSc MLitt PhD FSA Scot FCIPD (Professor)

Vacancy

## **The College Staff**

Revd Dr John McNeil Scott BA BD LLM DMin FRAS  
Principal

Revd Lindsey Sanderson, MA BD MBA  
College Tutor

Dr Scott Spurlock, BA MTh MSc PhD FSA Scot  
College Tutor

Revd Dr John W Dyce,  
BA LLB MA(Ed) MSc MLitt PhD DipAdEd DPSE AdvDipEd Dip Viking Studies FSAScot FCIPD  
Emeritus Research Professor of Nordic Theology

## **Ordinands**

Susan Henderson

United Reformed Church Synod of Scotland  
Scottish Episcopal Institute

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

The College's struggle this year is one that has been widely shared among our churches: the challenge of building and sustaining learning communities where all are disciples in conversation together. In particular, the College has had to adapt to having only one ordinand student currently in training.

The College's commitment to a model of learning community that encourages, wherever possible, learning together that brings into dialogue and sharing of experience folk from across the life of the Church – members, elders, ministers, students – remains strong. Not least we seek to make this true in that part of learning that we call training, aware always that different callings within the life of the Church have to be, and ought to be, exercised collaboratively. We are grateful to those who have participated in the various elements of the College programme. We appreciate the commitment of time, energy, insight and engagement involved, and are always aware how much we rely on such involvement.

Knowing that the College cannot give its best service to the church without the involvement and support of a wider community the College seeks to renew and deepen our partnership with the National Synod of Scotland, and the wider United Reformed Church.

We reflect in particular on the challenges of social change within and without our churches, and the impact that this has on the life of churches and ministers. Ministers of Word and Sacrament often find themselves called upon to give service and perform tasks that they feel ill-equipped for. We are committed to supporting all in ministry, throughout their ministry. This places a responsibility on us to carry forward the best of what has been and to develop new ways of working, learning and worshipping to fit the needs and expectations of the present and future church.

### **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY 1**

The College is recognised by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church as one of three recognised resource centres for learning for Great Britain. Our recognition agreement requires the College to ensure that its training pathways for EM1 are available and suitable for ordinands throughout the URC, with particular attention to provision for those residing in Northern England.

### **Students**

Susan Henderson is now well into her penultimate year of initial ministerial education. She pursues college studies and placement work alongside studies for the diploma in theology through the Scottish Episcopal Institute. We are delighted that she was able to participate in the Face to Face India programme through the Council for World Mission. This seven-week programme invited students preparing for ministry from around the world to reflect together on the theme "Building Life-Affirming Communities" and engage with cultural, social, theological and contextual realities in a global context. Susan has been on placement in the Clydebank pastorate and at Rutherglen United Reformed Church. She is currently gaining experience and exposure with the Interfaith Chaplaincy at Glasgow University, under the supervision of the Revd Stuart MacQuarrie. We know that Susan is a valued and loved member of the formational community at the Scottish Episcopal Institute.

### **Placements**

Practical professional experience is a vital part of initial ministerial education and we are grateful to those ministers, elders and congregations that so willingly and helpfully receive ordinands on placement, particularly in the past year. Service as a Minister of Word and Sacrament is more challenging than ever before, and the need to develop resilience, insight, wisdom, flexibility and

judgement has never been greater. Placements give our ministers in training an opportunity to learn from innovative practice, to engage with a range of contexts, to enter into the rhythm of ministerial life and service, to try out their own ideas, and to practise the skills of ministry. It is good to know that those who receive students very often report that they are the beneficiaries of having ordinands with them. We acknowledge that changing patterns of ministry are placing additional burdens on both ministers and local leadership and we are glad and grateful that the education of our ordinands remains important to them.

We believe that our way of educating – a close relationship to the life of the Church, drawing on a range of disciplines and perspectives, rooted in a radical tradition, ecumenical in commitment and undertaken primarily through conversation – is one that contributes well to ministerial formation in a changing context.

### **Vocations and Candidating**

The Church continues to have need of fresh calling to ministry and we look to be partners with congregations in nurturing the gifts of all, some of whom we hope will sense a call to ministry of Word and Sacrament. As other forms of service continue to develop for worship, leadership and service, we are ready to play our part in offering the learning and development opportunities that will be required.

We ask ministers and congregations to be active partners with us in helping people to reflect on God's calling to them. To this end, the College is co-operating with the Synod to organise a day event in June to encourage reflection on calling to ministries in the church, including Ministry of Words and Sacrament and Church-Related Community Ministry.

The United Reformed Church's Mission Council has authorized the introduction of a new pattern of non-stipendiary ministry, to be identified as 'Model IV'. Ordinands will be trained for this mode largely in their current context of service, with the expectation that they will remain in that sphere of service following ordination. The Principal is working with others in the denomination to develop appropriate patterns of formation.

The College has a tradition of hosting a period of residential learning for ordinand students, alternately at home and away. In September 2018 we joined the URC Waldensian Fellowship for a study tour in southern Italy. We are grateful to the leader, the Revd John Bremner, for his help and stimulating input on this trip.

## **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY 2 AND 3**

### **EM2**

The College co-operates with the General Assembly's EM2 Officer in the support of ministers in their early years through the Education for Ministry 2 phase, currently we have the Revd Andy Braunston, the Revd Stewart Cutler, the Revd David Scott (Scotland) and the Revd Dr Paul Dempster (Northern) completing this programme with us. The Revd Catherine McFie completed this phase of ministerial formation during the year. We are grateful to those who act as pastoral advisers through regular meetings with their colleagues and through having a listening and responsive ear at other times. We are aware of increasing pressures of time and commitment and hope that experienced ministers will continue to be willing to agree to serve in this role. We are looking forward shortly to our annual day gathering of EM2 ministers and their pastoral advisers.

### **Sabbaticals**

It is good that some ministers are continuing to avail themselves of the opportunity to take sabbatical leave of three months. Taken usually after each ten years of ministerial service, this can provide the minister with spiritual refreshment, reflective time, the learning of new ideas or

the development of new skills, and indeed space to be more fully human. Where there is an educational component, ministers can seek a grant towards costs. Projects pursued have been and continue to be very varied; some more church-focused, some more personal. We hope that those experiences have been able to benefit not only the minister but their churches, their families and friends. It is important that those contemplating taking sabbatical leave start their thinking and sharing their ideas, as soon as they can, ideally a year in advance.

### **Ministers Gathering**

In 2018 a Gathering was held for all United Reformed Church ministers at Yarnfield Park in the English midlands. This replaced the conferences and summer schools normally held in each Synod. We look forward to a Synod of Scotland ministers' conference in May 2019, to be held at Drumalis, Larne, Co Antrim. Plans are currently under consideration for another Assembly-wide Gathering for ministers in 2022, which will again replace individual conferences in the synods.

## **SUPPORTING AND RESOURCING LEARNING**

### **Stepwise**

The first stream of the Stepwise resource for discipleship development is now being piloted in some English synods. The College is involved through the Principal's engagement on the Learning Standards Board of the initiative.

### **Communion Training and Lay Preaching**

The College values greatly its role as provider, partner and encourager of training, initial and ongoing for a wide range of roles in the church. The Principal is always happy to receive requests and suggestions concerning gaps in provision that the College can usefully be involved in filling.

We continue to support lay preaching, which is a strong and valued feature of life in the Synod of Scotland. We recognise the great contribution of the Lay Preaching Advocate and look forward to participating in the annual residential consultation for lay preachers at Millport. The College also administers the continuing education grants scheme for accredited lay preachers, which is used both for attending training events and for purchasing books.

The Synod Pastoral Committee has responsibility for agreeing the nomination of people proposed by churches to celebrate Holy Communion in recognised circumstances. The College supports this through the provision of both initial learning, and in refresher learning. Courses have been held in Glasgow and locally on three occasions during the past year. Further opportunities are being planned.

Other opportunities to reflect and learn together have included an occasional series of lunchtime lectures, as well as public workshops. In February 2019 a seminar on "Brexit and the Book of Ruth" was offered at Glasgow University and Morningside United Church.

## **COLLEGE STAFFING**

This has been the first full year in role for our current Principal. John McNeil Scott. John completed and then defended his doctoral dissertation in Chicago during the first part of 2018, graduating in May. He has been active in developing our partnerships with Trinity College Glasgow, the Scottish Episcopal Institute and the University of Glasgow. Greater co-operation and engagement with the Council for World Mission is a welcome development. John will present a conference paper at the forthcoming CWM Discernment and Radical Engagement (DARE) Forum in Taiwan in June.

The Revd Lindsey Sanderson continues as a college tutor, bringing to that role local ministry involvement, significant ecumenical and world church experience, and wide-ranging gifts from third sector leadership to hymn - and liturgy-writing. Lindsey has been a committed and supportive tutor and we are grateful for her involvement in this work.

In June Dr Scott Spurlock joined us as tutor. Scott is an elder in Morningside, as well as Senior Lecturer in Scottish Religious Cultures (Theology and Religious Studies) at Glasgow University. We thank Scott for the energy and commitment he has brought to his role with us.

The Revd Dr Jack Dyce continues as our Emeritus Research Professor of Nordic Studies, working in Nordic regional studies and their contribution to theology and inter-disciplinary dialogue. Jack has had a very full schedule speaking at conferences, and writing articles for journals and book chapters. Jack's most recent conference took him, and with him the College's reach, to Svalbard. He continues to offer reflective presentations and talks in congregations.

During the year the College marked two inaugural lectures, that of our Emeritus Research Professor of Nordic Studies, Dr Dyce at Kirkwall in March and of our Principal, at Rutherglen in October.

### **Committee**

On receipt of a call to a new pastorate outwith Scotland, the Revd Judith Tatton-Schiff resigned from the Committee. We thank Judith for all that she brought to the Committee's deliberations.

### **ECUMENICAL**

The Scottish Episcopal Church has for many years been a significant partner with us in theological education. The partnership continues in initial ministerial education for those ordinands for whom this is the most appropriate pathway, but the collaboration has been diverse and continues to develop beyond the scope of EM1. The Principal of SEI, the Revd Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson, as well as Revd Dr Mike Hull and Revd Richard Tiplady are valued colleagues, whose support we gratefully acknowledge. The SEI is making arrangement to be able to offer the full suite of Common Awards (Durham) qualifications to Masters degree level. It is also planned to have an annual intake to their formational programmes.

Discussions are proceeding with Trinity College Glasgow about closer co-operation including use of a 'shared hub' at Wellington Church and some elements of shared formational programming.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The College's strategic plan was re-visited in May 2018. The new plan recommits the College to ecumenical and academic co-operation with our partners and to innovation in ministerial formation and discipleship development. The College seeks to provide opportunities for support and continuing personal and professional development for ministers throughout their service.

### **FINANCES**

Copies of the annual report, and accounts for year ending 30 September 2018, will be available from the college website from March. Members will be asked at the meeting to note the trustees' proposal to re-appoint DCH Carslaw, Chartered Accountant, as independent financial examiner to the College.

### **NOMINATIONS TO COLLEGE COMMITTEE**

- 1 To re-appoint Miss Myra Rose, Professor Jean MacLellan and Mr Mark Kirkbride as Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of the College respectively
- 2 To re-elect Mr Douglas Hay and the Revd Craig Jesson as members of the College committee for a further period of three years
- 3 To authorise the College committee to make any further appointments to the committee, in vacancies occurring before the next annual meeting

**Myra Rose, Chairperson  
Jean MacLellan, Secretary  
Mark Kirkbride, Treasurer  
John McNeil Scott, Principal**