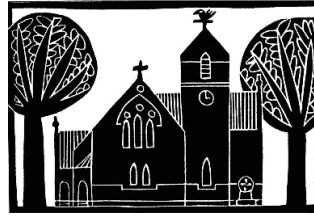




Udny Green



Pitmedden



Methlick



Tarves



Barthol Chapel

Formartine Churches Together

News Brief No 2

Working Group Meeting (Number 1)

Pitmedden Church, Tuesday 12 October 2021, 7:30pm

In the first news brief about the Joint Session Meeting that took place on Sunday 19 September 2021, I opened with this question, “How **can** Tarves and Barthol Chapel, Udny & Pitmedden and Methlick work together?” I am proud to say that I can now answer the following question, “How **are** we working together?”

Since the initial Joint Session Meeting, a working group has been established, with representatives from each of the respective congregations and with the remit of addressing the questions, concerns and suggested priorities raised on the 19 September 2021. A summary document of the day came to seven pages and covered upwards of 15 topics: communication, Covenant Agreement, discipleship/training, fabric, finance, youth, general comments/feelings, ministry/ministers/pastoral care, mission, Presbytery and the General Assembly, relationships and fellowship, structure, technology and vision.

For our first Working Group meeting, we met at Pitmedden Church on Tuesday 12 October 2021, 7:30pm. Rev. Valerie Mitchell opened the time with a devotional looking at Psalm 127. During the first part of the meeting, we started looking at our vision and purpose, that is, what will (should) be the guiding principles of our working together. We then reviewed the Joint Session Meeting Summary Document (19 September 2021), acknowledged the difficult points raised by the fact that there will need to be a further reduction of 4.75 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent Posts) across Gordon Presbytery in the New 5-Year Presbytery Mission Plan and then set out exploring what should be our next steps in our working together. We had a really good, open and honest conversation about the issues affecting us all. There actually was a genuine excitement about what God could do. We looked at the following questions:

- What are the key issues that we need to address first?
- Who should address them?
- How should we address them?
- When should we address them?

It was amazing! We could have been all over the map with these questions, but there was a remarkable consensus on what should be the immediate focus of our attention. It was decided that three things will (should) be the focus of our energies in the lead up to our next Working Group meeting in November 2021:

1. Communication
2. Vision and Purpose
3. Exploration of Ministry Models

Action Points were assigned, and we then spent time praying for our respective churches and communities and then closed with Grace. We finished before midnight too! 😊

The dates of our next meetings will be as follows:

Tuesday 9 November 2021, 7:30pm (Tarves Parish Church)

Tuesday 14 December 2021, 7:30pm (Methlick Parish Church)

We would like to hear from you! We believe communication is really important, but we also believe that communication is a two-way street. While we hope to communicate often and clearly throughout this process, we also want to listen, hear any questions or ideas you might have about the churches working together. Please free to contact your minister or Interim Moderator and we will be happy to feed your thoughts back to the Working Group. The more input we have from church and community the better.

Tarves and Barthol Chapel

Rev. Dr. Alison Swindells - aswindells@churchofscotland.org.uk

Udny & Pitmedden

Rev. Anthony Craig - aacraig@btinternet.com

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Methlick

Rev. Dr. Will Stalder - wstalder@churchofscotland.org.uk

Until we speak again, please pray, and we will do our best to communicate with everybody at each stage in the process. God's richest blessings to you and your church and community!

Rev. Dr. Will Stalder

Minister of Methlick Parish Church

Minister of Formartine Area Churches (w/ Rev. Dr. Alison Swindells)

Thursday 13 October 2021