

Presbytery of Hamilton - Local Church Review

Name of congregation: Wishaw : South Wishaw

LCR team: Janette Rennie (Leader); Ian Jaques

Main meeting: 17th January, 2017

Section 1 – Looking at the present

1.1 Brief overview

We were given a warm welcome by the Session Clerk and the Minister. The Session Clerk introduced us to office bearers present.

1.2 What innovations, celebrations and learning is the congregation experiencing?

They have overcome what was to them a traumatic union of two congregations, and are now working well together. Their present Minister was Minister to a congregation in London before coming back North to Wishaw, and he has ideas from that experience some of which he has already put into practice. They have a “Meet the Minister and other leaders over tea and coffee” on the last Sunday of each month, which is aimed specifically at new members, visitors and enquirers, and is held after the morning service.

1.3 What good practice is there to share with others?

Their main aim is to be a community Church, with the premises open at some time of the day every day of the week. They have introduced a mid-week service, which is designed to attract those who find it difficult, for whatever reason, to attend the normal Sunday worship. This is followed by a lunch and then by “WEDNESDAY WELCOME” where each week, those attending have an opportunity of participating in a range of different activities ending with tea and a “thought for the day”, the latter given either by the Minister or a member of the Wednesday Welcome Team. A Sunday afternoon service called “NOW CHURCH” has been launched and this is a Contemporary Worship Service. They are very forward thinking; and heavily involved in reaching out to their community.

1.4 Are there any significant challenges facing this congregation and how are they working to overcome them?

Their main challenge is to bring in new members, particularly younger members. They are introducing new events, such as “Saturday Night Live” and are also introducing new ways of worship, e.g. the Minister uses a “free range style of worship” and the pulpit is used only on formal occasions or as deemed necessary. Younger people are involved in Sunday Youth Groups; Holiday Clubs; and Messy Church. They are trying to have different types of worship to suit all members, and, hopefully, to attract others.

1.5 Are there any issues around compliance with Acts of the General Assembly and/or Safeguarding

NO

Section 2 – Looking forward

2.1 What key area(s) does this church wish to move forward with in the next 5 years?

They would like to have a larger membership, particularly including younger members

2.2 How do they look to achieve this?

The Minister intends to follow the God and Science question i.e. “Grasping the Nettle”, as well as using “Christianity explored” material and Alpha courses.

2.3 Which of the nine principles of mission are most visible in the congregation?
Buildings; Community; Financial Responsibility; Ecumenical

2.4 How does the Presbytery Plan fit with these action points?
It seems to fit very well

Section 3 - Visiting Team - recommendations and advice

Make use of the services of Jen Robertson, Presbytery's Youth Worker; and take part in courses she organises.

Section 4 - Congregation comment