

The Theological Education and Leadership Training Consultation

Background

Council of Assembly appointed a group to review Theological Education and Leadership Training in our Church (TELT). We are Simon McLeay, Erin Pendreigh, Caren Rangi, Rob McIntosh and Sharon Searle.

We want to look at the training provided for leadership in the Presbyterian Church and ask what is working well, what might need to be improved, what needs to change and are there things we are not doing that we should be doing?

Over the next three months we are asking for your input, as a presbytery, session or parish council or as an individual. We will be consulting directly with some colleagues overseas and with colleagues in other denominations as well.

There are three main ways that you can respond to us:

1. We are planning on visiting each of the presbyteries or presbytery councils please check with your Presbytery for updated details.
2. We have designed a survey that we hope will make it easy for you to respond to us with some open questions and some specific questions.
3. You might also like to write a submission, as a session or parish council or individual, and email that to us at: simon@stpeters.org.nz

Our consultation is focused around these five main questions:

1. What do we discern about the changing shape of Church and ministry into the future? (Nationally ordained ministers (NOM), locally ordained ministers (LOM), local ministry teams, amorangi, children and families workers, youth workers, other recognised ministries, pastoral workers, musical directors, bi-vocational ministers, part-time ministry, missional leadership, eldership and other.)
2. What has been our experience of internship and our training model? (What has worked well? Where is there more work needed? Is this the model for the future?)
3. What other needs do we have for leadership training across the Church? (What are we *not* doing that is important?)
4. What is the ongoing place of Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML)? Have we got its purpose clear and its governance right? (Are we doing the right things, and have we got the right structure?)
5. How best can we use our Hewitson Library and Presbyterian Archives to serve the Church? (What resources have we got and how can we best deploy them?)

Over the next few pages I will introduce you to each of these areas.

The electronic survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9S69TGB> The survey will be available to complete until 25 October 2019.

As we progress, you can read updates here: <https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/update-from-the-theological-education-and-leadership-training-telt-review-group>

Scope

The sections of this paper outline how different parts of the Church contribute to the theological education and training of leaders within the Presbyterian Church. Please use this background information about the changing nature of our Church to share your views on how leadership training could be delivered, staffing and services at Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Hewitson Library and Presbyterian Archives.

Outcomes

The workgroup will consider the feedback gathered through this consultation process alongside expert advice from a range of sources within and outside our Church, including those who specialise in the delivery of theological education.

Following prayerful consideration and discernment of the key themes and issues raised through the consultation process, the workgroup anticipates making recommendations to the Council of Assembly and to General Assembly 2020 on how best to deliver theological education and leadership training to meet the current and future needs of the Church.

What do we discern about the changing shape of Church and Ministry into the future?

Our churches are changing as we face an increasingly secularised community. The call to make disciples of Jesus will require us to remain faithful and become adaptive. As part of this, we Presbyterians have always valued educating our leaders; and so as we look into a changing future for the Church we also need to reflect on the demands that are coming upon our leaders and the sort of training they require. What sort of leaders do we need and have we got the right forms of leadership for the Church of today and tomorrow?

Our leadership model begins with the ordained elder, these men and women are the basic building blocks of any Presbyterian leadership. How best can we resource our elders in their key leadership roles?

We also have four ways that we provide “ministry”:

- Nationally ordained minister of word and sacrament (NOM). We are seeing fewer candidates for what has been the mainstay of our ministry for generations. We are reflecting on why that might be. NOMs are intended to be able to work in any congregation across our Church, but is this expectation keeping up with the multicultural and diverse nature of our Church?
- Locally ordained minister of word and sacrament (LOM). These are people trained in a different way with the intention that they will usually spend their ministry life in one context. We are seeing more people present as candidates for LOM than ever before and we are reflecting on why that might be. Is this the way of the future? Are we giving these candidates sufficient training? Should we be developing a pathway to NOM for them?

- Local ministry teams (LMT), who are a group of people fulfilling the ministry role. How well is this working and do we need to adapt this model as we go forward?
- Amorangi is a non-stipended minister within Te Aka Puaho (TAP). We are asking TAP whether they believe this model is serving them well.

Alongside these established models we have a series of “lay appointments” in children’s and families ministry, youth worker, musical director and pastoral worker positions. Do you believe that these positions are sufficiently recognised? What sort of training might be helpful for people in these roles?

We also have a different dimension to add here...should we be expecting our ministers (“lay” or ordained) to be bi-vocational or part-time workers; some may be in innovative new or “missional” appointments outside the usual parish context. How should we be equipping and recognising these changes?

Our research suggests that even if we continue to see an ongoing decline in membership, we may still be looking for 12-15 new full-time equivalent ministers per year over the next few years. How are we going to meet this need?

There are many changes in traditional ministry; while we may continue to hope that all our ministers are theologically trained, biblically literate, pastorally sensitive, missionally aware and spiritually well formed; the wider question is what will be the essential characteristics of a “wise leader” for the 21st century Church?

What has been our experience of internship and our training model?

The internship is the current model for training NOMs. It is a two-year formation program after a candidate has completed an initial theological degree. It involves a placement in a ministry settlement – usually a parish, but sometimes a new mission seedling, or another context. There are a series of courses and assignments throughout the year along with seven block courses. The intern is also supported by a field-work coordinator, a mentoring minister, a supervisor and a ministry reflection group. The internship model has been in place for 12 years since 2007. Feedback suggests that this has been a brilliant training model for many, it also presents some barriers for others. What do you think is working well, and what is not working so well?

The Church has started conversations about using parts of the internship model with LOMs. Should we do more of this?

Perhaps we should be asking new arrivals from overseas or other denominations to enter some form of internship, using some of the strengths we have discovered to support their transition into the Presbyterian ministry within our Church?

What other needs do we have for leadership training across the Church?

We are concerned that even if we are doing a good job with the leadership training we are providing, are there other areas of training that should also be given priority? What ongoing training is needed for those who are ordained ministers as they continue to grow in their

ministry or for the many lay leaders who play a significant and varied role in the life of the Church?

What is the ongoing place of KCML? Have we got its purpose clear and its governance right?

The Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership is our primary training centre, located in Dunedin. It trains NOMs and has input into the training of LOMs and, as its name suggests, it is also tasked with providing training for other leaders. KCML provides training across the country through the internship scheme and has a dean based in Auckland. Over the last few years, KCML has taken on a special focus in training “missional leaders” through partnerships with presbyteries in providing “new mission seedlings” and through “The Lighthouse” leadership incubator and web-based training. Given the changing nature and realities of the Church, are there further changes we should be exploring with how, and what types of training, KCML delivers?

KCML has a staff of four full-time lecturers and one part-time administrator, as well as several adjunct teachers. We understand that KCML has an advisory board (currently inactive) and the principal reports to the AES and sits on the Leadership Sub-committee with formal governance exercised by the Council of Assembly. If you are or have been involved in these groups, we would be interested in your reflections on how well this is working.

How best can we use our library and Presbyterian Archives to serve the Church?

The Presbyterian Church has its own library called the Hewitson Library; it has theological books and other resources. It is intended to support ministers, elders, parishioners and church councils with resources. We would like to know how well it is used and how it could serve us better into the future. The library itself is a great spot for study leave located beside Knox College in Dunedin. The library also sends books anywhere in the country which users discover using the online catalogue. Those on Hewitson’s mailing list also receive the contents page of a number of journals, from which electronic copies of articles can be requested and sent. There are also a growing number of online resources:

<https://hewitson.mykoha.co.nz/>

We also have our Presbyterian Archives based in Dunedin where precious parish historic records are catalogued and safely stored. You can access a treasure trove of information about many parishes through the Archives, some physically and some electronically. About 120,000 historic photos have been scanned in the library and before the end of the year it is hoped to make low resolution copies of these available through the Archives website, you would be able to order higher resolution options. One of the things we are exploring with Archives is how to tell your parish story; how to understand how your history makes you who you are, and how they might electronically store your current records for the future:

<http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/archives/>