

Presbytery of Europe

Church of Scotland



www.europepresbytery.net

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND – INTERNATIONAL!

Eighteen churches, in fourteen countries, in three continents – and with ministry and mission links across the globe. That's the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Europe. It's a Presbytery like no other... and it's now being suggested that its true nature should be reflected with a change of name to the International Presbytery...



Heritage...

Ministers and elders gather at the Calvin Auditorio in Geneva for a recent meeting. This congregation meets to worship where Calvin & Knox preached...

Paris... Rome... Malta... Bermuda... Trinidad... Amsterdam... Fuengirola... Lausanne... Geneva... Major tourist attractions, every one – and every one with a Church of Scotland. So the Presbytery of Europe – yes, it stretches across the Atlantic, we're a broad church! – caters for Scots on holiday.

But then there's Bochum... Lisbon... Regensburg... Rotterdam... Brussels... Gibraltar... Budapest... Turin... all at the heart of industrial, political, working Europe. And there's Colombo, in the heart of recently strife-torn Sri Lanka (that broad church again!)... And it becomes clear that this really isn't about providing churches conveniently for Scots on holiday. It never was.

OUR VISION

"Go, then, to all peoples, everywhere... you will be witnesses for me to the ends of the earth."

Jesus of Nazareth, c 30 AD

"We are a living and faithful presence for Jesus Christ through Europe and beyond, witnessing from places of need to corridors of power, and offering a spiritual home to all people."

Presbytery of Europe, 2014 AD

Our ministry and mission reaches refugees, politicians and international business leaders alike, and covers those who live where we serve, those who visit by choice, and those whose choices have been taken from them.

Our congregations are drawn from six continents, and from the widest range of Christian backgrounds. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam, regular worshippers come from over 40 countries... in Bermuda, a recent stewardship campaign brought together people from both extremes of the financial spectrum... in Malta, a recent survey confirmed that six continents are represented in worship... And our mission work stretches into Africa, Asia and the Americas.



*Getting down to business...
The Moderator's view in Bochum, Germany.*

We hope you find this outline interesting. If it provides a prayer focus, we would be grateful. If it stimulates further research into what we do in Christ's service, we would be encouraged. All the weblinks you need are here. And if it gets you personally involved in our work and worship, we look forward to welcoming you.

We are an integral part of the Church of Scotland's ministry and mission to the wider world, and although our history centres round the need for Scots abroad to engage in worship and mission wherever they find themselves, in the 21st century this has given us a mission-oriented vision, and an enabling structure based on the Presbytery model.

Anyone visiting one of our Presbytery meetings will be immediately struck by both familiar sights and significant differences. Familiar? Ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland working together in ministry and mission – committees report, there's a Presbytery Plan, we struggle with the same issues of prioritising resources, and we take decisions in the same way as any other presbytery.

Different? We meet just twice a year – but that meeting moves around the main Europe-based congregations, it lasts for three days, and it will involve working together, eating together, enjoying ourselves together, worshipping together and with the host congregation – and husbands and wives will be there too...



*Worshipping together...
Presbytery Communion service, Amsterdam*

It will also involve other churches. Many of our congregations are in partnership with other denominations – for example, the churches in Brussels, the Netherlands, Budapest and Sri Lanka are associated with denominations within their host country, and the Malta church is a unique partnership with the Methodist Church, with alternating ministers.

We'll have ministers and elders from associated congregations among us, like the Waldensians of Turin, and the Nicosia Community Church in Cyprus. There will also be a minister from the Presbytery of Jerusalem.

And you'll be struck by the emphasis on mission. Every single congregation within our Presbytery is mission-oriented; indeed, the entire Presbytery is. Each year the Presbytery as a whole commits to supporting a particular mission project. And each year thousands are raised.

The 2014 project is "A Place at the Table", seeking to help our partner church in Syria and Lebanon to support refugees within their own country.

Recent projects have also included the Vine Trust's Jubilee Hope floating medical mission to Africa, the Al Ahli hospital in Gaza, and *Out of Africa... Into Malta* – which, after being the Presbytery project in 2011, became a Guild Partner Project, and from a standing start will, by the summer of 2015, have channelled some €250,000 into refugee work among Africans, Syrians and others who have risked everything to start life again...



OUT OF AFRICA... INTO MALTA

And all this is accomplished without using even a penny from Church of Scotland ministry stipend funds. Many of our churches are self-supporting. Those which aren't find sufficient support from both their denominational and mission partners and the Salvesen Trust, which was originally established specifically to help provide ***"...the ordinances of religion to expatriate Scots in any part of the world outside the UK ..."***

Reaching... Engaging... Loving...

MISSION SNAPSHOTS...



THURSDAY...

Rome... 300 lunches lie in St. Andrew's Church, about to be distributed – as they are every week – to refugees. Before the packs are uplifted, there's a prayer...

Geneva... Church members meet to discuss their next exchange visit to Malawi, where the congregation funds the HIV/AIDS centre at Ekwendeni. It ends with prayer...

Paris... A letter is received from a Scots Kirk-supported minister in Sierra Leone, describing how he has been personally paying the salaries of teachers who are educating Freetown's street children – but the money is running out, and the crisis point is approaching. There's a need for prayer...

Malta... The minister visits Lyster Detention Centre, where African refugees are kept behind bars. He's brought a Bible, for a Nigerian who had to sell his – along with everything else – to buy his way out of war-torn Libya. He gives thanks in prayer...

Turin... 3-year old Oreva has arrived from Nigeria with her mother and a nurse for a major heart operation, funded by Heart Aid. Church members – many Ghanaian – greet them and settle them into the flat reserved for their use. They pray together...

Rotterdam... Following the weekly bible study, discussion develops on how the Scots International Church can best assist the city's migrant population, because the economic downturn has hit so hard that many can no longer find any money at all for a church offering. They're hurting, but praying...

SUNDAY...

Amsterdam... the congregation, as usual, is invited to recite the Lord's Prayer in their own way. Over a dozen different languages can clearly be heard...

Bermuda... today's prayers include thanksgiving for the successful progress of two overseas mission trips – one, to Argentina, rerouted because of swine flu, and the other, to Honduras, now rerouted to El Salvador because of political unrest...

Colombo... Three new arrivals are surprised to discover just how enjoyable joining in all-age worship can be. What a contrast to when their homes, and all they owned, were torn from them – first by the Tsunami, and then a second time, by militia action...

Turin... 3-year old Oreva's heart operation has been successful, and she's recovering in hospital. Her mother and her nurse join in worship, and the congregation gives thanks in prayer...

Tugwashanye, Zambia... Sister Catherine Farrugia leads prayers of thanksgiving for the parcels of warm clothing, dispatched from a summer-hot St. Andrew's Scots Church, Malta, to a wintering Zambia for her HIV/AIDS mothers and children...

Ekwendeni, Malawi... A group of teenagers from Scotland join in worship with hundreds of local children; prayers of thanks are offered for Christians who have made all this possible. In the heart of Africa, thanks are given for Scots churches in Amsterdam, Geneva, and in Paris...

“A PRESBYTERY WHICH CARES FOR THE WORLD”

Rev Aaron Stevens, from Budapest, is the Presbytery’s 2014 Moderator – and, following his appointment in Gibraltar, looked back over his years as a minister in Europe. It’s given him an interesting perspective: “After being inducted, my first meeting of Presbytery was in Gibraltar seven years ago. Since then, we’ve added charges from Bermuda, Sri Lanka and Trinidad, and our university chaplain in Regensburg gained official employment status within the church in Bavaria. We’ve also established Youth Presbytery as a regular programme.

“It was a joy for me, therefore, to return to Gibraltar and moderate a meeting in which the ministers from Bermuda and Regensburg reported as conveners of committees, as did the elder from Sri Lanka, and the Youth Rep reported on the fourth EYP (*European Youth Presbytery* – see below). Perhaps the most moving moment was when our corresponding member from the Presbytery of Jerusalem spoke about the situation in the Middle East.

"It is clear that ours is a Presbytery which cares for the world and is forward-thinking in its missional approach. As with other Presbyteries, we are facing tough questions, but I am sure that with openness and honesty we can discern the most effective way for us to be the Church of Scotland in our international context today."

EUROPEAN YOUTH PRESBYTERY...

Four years ago, the Presbytery broke entirely new ground for the Church of Scotland, by setting up a Youth Presbytery (EYP). Young people from our congregations aged between 18 and 25 are invited to attend. One of the original leaders, Michael Mair, is now the church’s youngest serving minister – he was inducted to St. David’s Broomhouse in January 2014, at the age of 25.



EYP in session...



EYP feeds into the work of the Presbytery, and, like the Youth Assembly, sends representatives to the Presbytery meetings.

Innovation... Encouragement... Involvement...

CONNECTED... AND COMMITTED...



**Cynthia Gunn speaking at Presbytery...
...committed to peace in Palestine...**

That's how we can best describe our approach to ministry and mission. Presbytery mission projects are a way of uniting churches and causes in Christ. Individuals are encouraged to "think mission" – like Lausanne elder Cynthia Gunn's commitment to the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme at the Separation Barrier between Israel and Palestine... and Rev Doug McRoberts in Malta developing the refugee mission *Out of Africa... into Malta*.

COMMITTED... a recent Presbytery meeting at Malta...

...worshipping...



...in St. Andrew's Scots Church

...working...



...Education & Training Committee

...and learning...



...at Marsa Refugee Centre



**CONNECTED...
visiting the World Council of Churches centre...**



**CONNECTED...
European Youth Presbytery, reported on Hungarian Reform Church web...**

Partnerships with UK congregations – some formal twinning arrangements, some more informal – give further impetus to our work. If you, or perhaps your church, would like to know more, please get in touch. All the links you need are on the next page. We look forward to hearing from you, to sharing in prayer with you, and to working together in Christ. Thank you – in advance!

WEBLINKS: www.europepresbytery.net



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CARING FOR THE WORLD

"It's clear this is a presbytery which cares for the world, and is missional in its approach..." New moderator Rev Aaron Stevens, speaking after the recent presbytery meeting in Budapest, which discussed our mission, our relationships to the wider world and to our parent church...

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Church of Scotland Congregations:

- Amsterdam – www.ercadam.nl
- Bermuda – www.christchurch.bm
- Brussels – www.churchofscotland.be
- Budapest – www.scotskirkhungary.com
- Colombo – www.internationalchurchcolombo.info
- Fuengirola – www.churchofscotlandcostadelsol.eu
- Geneva – www.churchofscotlandgeneva.com
- Gibraltar – www.scotskirkqibraltar.com
- Lausanne – www.scotskirklausanne.ch
- Lisbon – www.standrewslisbon.com
- Malta – www.saintandrewsmalta.com
- Paris – www.scotskirkparis.com
- Rome – www.presbyterianchurchrome.org
- Rotterdam – www.scotsintchurch.com
- Trinidad – www.trinidadandtobagofamilyhistory.org/churchofscotland.html

Associated Churches and ministries:

- Bochum – www.ecc-bochum.de (*Church of Scotland minister*)
- Regensburg – www.elc-regensburg.de (*Church of Scotland minister*)
- Presbytery of Jerusalem – www.churchofscotland.org.il/english/
- Nicosia Community Church – www.ncc-church.com
- Turin – www.torinovaldese.org/esc

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