University of Edinburgh

School of Divinity

MTh by Research

Shorter Dissertation

Converging Conversations:
The Necessity of Intentional Dialogue Around Fresh Expressions of the Kirk

by

John Kenneth Orr

0566803

August 2010

14730 Words

Contents

1 Methodology and sources

This work draws mainly on reports presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. These reports are to be found as a bound collection in the annual 'Blue Book' or, in the case of reports since 2006, archived on the Church of Scotland website.[1] Using these documents, this dissertation aims to show the progression and development of a number of apparently disparate strands of investigation which have been reported to the General Assembly. More recent reports begin to show a degree of convergence of some of these strands and it is into this locus that this dissertation seeks to insert itself. By highlighting some of the common themes and offering some thoughts on future areas of discussion, it is hoped that this work will present a useful overview of what, I would argue, ought to be a common trajectory of the thinking within the Church.

This dissertation does so by stressing some of the key 'conversations' in these reports and shows how they have an impact on other, apparently unconnected, discussions. I say 'apparently unconnected' as the reports are often the subject of a different part of the organisation and seem to draw from different sources. The dissertation begins with an overview of the state of the Church which seemed to prompt investigation into ways of revitalising congregations. Following a path through the *Church Without Walls* initiative it also looks at the criticisms of this work, the broader questions being asked of the purposes of the Church, then moves into the recent conversation on *Emerging Church* which has joined the overall discussion. Drawing from these different conversations I highlight what I consider to be one of the crucial, underpinning conversations that needs to happen in a particular way and for a particular context.

This dissertation does not draw too heavily from wider literature on *Emerging Church*. Much has been written about this movement but tends to apply to contexts beyond those in which the Church of Scotland finds itself, or perhaps even cares to venture into. This is not to suggest that such a body of work is entirely irrelevant but primarily has its place beyond the scope of this particular dissertation.

---

[1] http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/extranet/xga/index.htm, accessed 16th August 2010

2 Introduction

The Church of Scotland is Reformed in its theology and Presbyterian in its polity. The roots of the church *in* Scotland go back around 1500 years. The roots of the Church of Scotland are traced back to the Scottish Reformation, the 450th anniversary of which was celebrated in 2010. The Church of today has, undoubtedly, changed significantly from that of four hundred and fifty years ago. This is only to be expected as it keeps pace with a changing society. Education, working practices, technological change, health, personal mobility, family sizes and much more besides are all factors which challenge the church to respond in new ways. Of course, for the church, the gospel message continues to be at the heart of all that it does (or should do). What changes is how that message is delivered and how individuals and groups are engaged with it.

The Church of Scotland has always engaged positively with the Reformation axiom of '*ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*' – "a church reformed, always being reformed". This oft-cited translation[2] misses an important aspect of the Latin phrase. The Reformed church is not simply always being reformed, but always in need of reformation – an imperative that is often overlooked. This has, arguably, never been truer than in recent years as the Church of Scotland's membership numbers continue to drop, its expenditure outstrips its income and the number of new entrants into ministry lags behind the numbers leaving. Over the years, many initiatives have been tried to reverse these trends. One such initiative, or movement, which is occupying the thoughts of many within the Church of Scotland is *Emerging Church*. Its loose and evolving nature make it very difficult to define or, indeed, use as any sort of 'model' for change and growth. However, while it may not be possible to take specific examples, its overall 'ethos' and methodologies force the established church to examine its own practices and determine whether fruitful lessons may be learned from this movement.

---

[2] See, for example, the Church of Scotland's 2010 annual review – available to download at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/organisation/organnrevindex.htm, accessed 6th Aug 2010.

This paper will examine some of the background issues which have encouraged the Church of Scotland to engage with the *Emerging Church* movement. It will also assess how other recent initiatives, such as *Church Without Walls*, have contributed to or hindered the move to address the challenges faced by the Church. Finally, it will consider how some of the investigative work being done by some of the councils, panels and committees of the Church may best be used to engage more effectively with the *Emerging Church* movement.

3 What crisis?

In 2002, Harry Reid's book *Outside Verdict* was published. It was commissioned by the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Very Reverend Andrew McLellan during his moderatorial year of 2000. His purpose was to "invite some shrewd analyst"[3] to put the Church of Scotland, its hopes, ambitions and its practices, to "exacting examination."[4] What had prompted such a commission? As the introduction to the book suggested, the Church of Scotland was a church in crisis. "It is haemorrhaging members; it has lost 700,000 in the past forty years, and the loss is accelerating... Even more worrying is the loss of ministers, the men and women who are the lifeblood of the Kirk."[5] The book is, of course, commenting on figures now nearly ten years in the past. However, the intervening years have not given great cause for optimism. Membership figures are still on a downward trend. The figure in 2009 shows a further decline to just over 464,000.[6] The figure for the number of serving ministers shows a similar continuing downward trend. These issues are compounded by the ongoing "stark reality of a £5.7M deficit"[7] which is, of course, unsustainable.

Reid's book acknowledges the many positive aspects of the Church of Scotland and commends its members and workers. It also offers significant criticism of many of its practices and procedures. Its controversial observations and recommendations ultimately seem to have had little impact on the church. Although it was recognised that there was a growing displacement of the Kirk in the culture and mindset of the Scottish people, few of the recommendations have been adopted.

This is not to suggest that nothing has been done within the Kirk. Even before the call for such an analysis, the General Assembly of 1999 created a 'Special Commission anent Review and Reform'. Its purpose was "to re-examine in depth the primary purposes of the Church and the shape of the Church of Scotland as we enter into the next Millennium; to formulate proposals for a

---

[3] Harry Reid, *Outside Verdict: An Old Kirk in a New Scotland* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2002), VII.
[4] Reid, *Outside Verdict*, VII.
[5] Reid, *Outside Verdict*, XXIX.
[6] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly Order of Proceedings - Legal Questions Committee Statistical Returns Appendix IV* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2010).
[7] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2010* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2010), 3/25.

process of continuing reform; to consult on such matters with other Scottish Churches; and to report to the General Assembly of 2001."[8]

The special commission took, as its starting point, the purpose of the church. In its deliverances[9] to the General Assembly, this is how it such purpose was expressed:

> Reaffirm as primary purposes of the Church the calls to the Church:
>
> 1. to follow Jesus Christ as Lord.
>
> 2. to share in Christ's mission in the world.
>
> 3. to turn back to God and neighbour.[10]

These three purposes affect individuals and also the church as a corporate body. Each demands particular commitments as well as affecting how we, as individuals and as a corporate body, organise our life and priorities. It is, perhaps unsurprisingly, the area of corporate organisation which has created the biggest debate, as witnessed by the various reports presented to subsequent General Assembly gatherings. What is also clear from other such reports is that many congregations have risen to the challenges posed in the 2001 report. Many new initiatives have been started and it is, arguably, the shift in mindset occasioned by the report that has laid the foundations for the Kirk's[11] venture into the challenges and opportunities presented by the *Emerging Church* movement. This is not to suggest that the encouragements of the report naturally lead to an *Emerging Church*. The *Emerging Church* movement is very much external to the Church of Scotland. What I am suggesting is that the responses to the 2001 report opened up paths to reform, one possibility of which is the *Emerging Church* movement. Given this foundational report and the subsequent support and critique it has engendered, this dissertation will now provide an overview of

---

[8] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls* (The Church of Scotland, 2001).

[9] A 'deliverance' is an outline statement listed at the beginning of a report to which the submitting group seek approval from the General Assembly. Deliverances can be amended or deleted during the course of the debate at the General Assembly. New deliverances can also be proposed and debated.

[10] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*.

[11] The Church of Scotland is colloquially known as the Kirk. Where the word appears in this dissertation it is a reference to the Church of Scotland. At times, depending on context the word 'Church' (capitalised 'C') is also used to refer to the Church of Scotland. Where 'church' (lower case 'c') occurs it is typically a reference to the broader Christian church.

what became known as *Church Without Walls*. Not all aspects of *Church Without Walls* (hereafter referred to as *CWW*) can be covered and so precedence shall be given to those areas which have greatest relevance to our considerations of the Kirk's engagement with the *Emerging Church* movement.

4 Church Without Walls

4.1 The vision

As has been mentioned, the *Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform* takes as its starting point the purposes of the church. It says that the sum and substance of the Commission could have been reported in just two words from Jesus, "Follow me."[12] As has also been mentioned, this call to 'follow' has its outworkings in three distinct ways:

1. to follow Jesus Christ as Lord.

2. to share in Christ's mission in the world.

3. to turn back to God and neighbour.[13]

Of the first of these, the report notes particular characteristics which define the call to follow Jesus as Lord. These, it suggests, are: personal, local, relational, sacrificial, radical, global, eschatological and doxological.[14] None of these is entirely contentious; although theological interpretations of them may well differ considerably. Each characteristic can, and should, be interpreted in both personal and corporate dimensions.

The second call begins to open up some more troublesome aspects of the report. Here, the Commission draws on the constitutional underpinning of the Church of Scotland, citing the Third Declaratory Article of 1921[15]:

> As a National Church, representative of the Christian Faith of the Scottish people, it
>
> acknowledges its distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people
>
> in every parish of Scotland through a territorial ministry.[16]

---

[12] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 1.

[13] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*.

[14] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 1.

[15] The Declaratory Articles of the Church of Scotland are its constitutional statements, detailing such areas as its structure and governance. They may be viewed on the Church of Scotland website: http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/extranet/xchurchlaw/xchurchlawarticles.htm (Accessed 14th August 2010).

[16] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 2.

The Commission highlights a number of potential problems with parts of this Article and question some of the underlying assumptions it makes. It may be worth noting, although there is insufficient space to deal with it more fully here, that this particular Declaratory Article has come under more recent scrutiny. In 2008 another Special Commission was established to look at the Third Article and assess its place and relevance to the Church of Scotland today. The report was presented to the General Assembly of May 2010. Of the deliverances it made, the crucial one was, arguably, 2(1):

> The Church of Scotland reaffirms the principles enshrined in the third Article Declaratory
>
> and declares anew its commitment to be a national church with a distinctive evangelical
>
> and pastoral concern for the people and nation of Scotland.[17]

In reaffirming the principles of the Third Declaratory Article, the Kirk remains committed to its territorial ministry covering the whole of Scotland. This is an increasingly onerous task, especially, as has been noted, in the light of ongoing financial pressures and a shrinking ministry resource. This situation was acknowledged in the other deliverances included in the report. These act, in a sense, as caveats to the full affirmation of support to the Third Declaratory Article. For example, in deliverance 2(3) the report tacitly acknowledges the need for working with ecumenical partners to ensure that this commitment may be met:

> The Church of Scotland remains committed to the ecumenical vision set out in the
>
> seventh Article Declaratory and, in pursuit of that vision, stands eager to share with other
>
> churches in Christian mission and service to the people of Scotland.[18]

The overall reaffirmation of the third Article does, however, mean that the assumptions[19] found in the *CWW* report remain valid today. It is here too that the concerns of the Commission begin to

---

[17] Church of Scotland, *Special Commission Anent the Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual* (The Church of Scotland, 2010).

[18] Church of Scotland, *Special Commission Anent the Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual*, Proposed Deliverance.

[19] The report makes six assumptions about the constitutional calling of the Church. These are: The Christian Faith is the "Christian Faith *of* the Scottish people"; The Church was held to be "representative of" that majority faith; The "ordinances of religion" were to be offered on a supply and demand basis; The "territorial ministry" is taken as a norm assuming social stability and cohesion; The basic assumption is that the people are Christians and we offer a national

have a bearing on the Kirk's exploration of the *Emerging Church* movement. It is unnecessary, for the purposes of this dissertation, to examine each of the six assumptions highlighted by the report in great detail. Nevertheless, picking out some of the key worries helps to set the scene for some of the issues which drive the *Emerging Church* movement. As will be discussed later in this dissertation, many of the concerns which *CWW* seeks to address are just as applicable to explorations of *Emerging Church*. However, I would like to suggest, at this stage, that the way in which *CWW* and *Emerging Church* seek to tackle some of these issues often seems to be quite different. The significance of these differences will be explored later in this dissertation. For example, the fourth assumption in the report takes its lead from the words 'territorial ministry'. The report points out that "[s]ociety is such that everybody lives in a parish, but nobody lives in a parish. People belong to networks of friendship, work and leisure pursuits, or associate with the "flow cultures" of transient groups of people."[20] This is an understanding of society which is crucial to the approach of *Emerging Church* where friendships and relationships matter much more than a gathering in a church building as a congregation. Indeed, one might go so far as to suggest, as Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger do, that some *Emerging Churches* "[a]bhor the idea of church as a meeting, a place, a routine. Clearly, for these communities, church is a people, a community, a rhythm, a way of life, a way of connectedness with other Christ followers in the world."[21] This significant shift in emphasis from a geographically-oriented 'church' to one which is more 'group-oriented', should the Kirk wish to move in such a direction, places strains on the organisational structures which are geared towards geographical areas. Furthermore, the duties and responsibilities of a parish minister are also geared towards a more territorially-oriented organisation. Indeed Church law prevents a minister overstepping their parish boundary other than in particular circumstances.[22] Issues of territorially restrictive practice will also be picked up later in the dissertation.

---

spiritual health service on demand; If the Church of Scotland defines itself as a National Church only by statute, it will have at its heart a legalistic flaw.

[20] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 2.

[21] Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Communities in Postmodern Cultures* (SPCK Publishing, 2006), 115.

[22] See Act II, 2000. Consolidating Act anent Ministy, para. 18. "A minister's field of ministerial work and responsibility lies within and does not extend beyond his or her own charge.   A minister shall not be at liberty to overstep the bounds of that charge and enter that of another to perform ministerial functions without the previous consent of its minister,

Finally, the third call considered in the *CWW* report, the call to turn to God and neighbour, contains some of the most contentious proposals of all. Where the first was largely a matter of theological agreement within a spectrum and the second reflected an unquestionably changed social culture, the third call hits at the organisational heart of the Kirk itself. The Special Commission reads this call to be one of placing the focus on individuals and on God. All aspects of church organisation and governance should be aimed at supporting this call. The report claims that the Kirk's "structure is perceived by most people to be overly centralized" with the result that there exists a "culture of inhibition that limits initiative for all except the boldest."[23] The suggested radical step is that the "church needs to be turned upside down: to affirm local responsibility, offer regional support and supervision and release the central administration to offer its skills in servicing the system."[24]

It is also in this call that we find echoes of what is beginning to occur in *Emerging Church* movements.[25] The report notes signs of what it calls a "spiritual reorientation of God's people" and in particular "the increasing shift from membership to discipleship"[26] This chimes with my earlier observation that the *Emerging Church* movement is more concerned with relationships than being part of a particular gathering in a particular place.

---

unless he or she is acting under special commission or order of the Presbytery of the bounds, or of the General Assembly."

[23] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 3.

[24] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 3.

[25] Steven Croft, in *Mission-shaped Questions* (Church House Publishing, 2008), notes that "in the middle of the 1990s this new movement [Emerging Church] had begun to be noticed and studied." (p2) The Church of England, in collaboration with the Methodist Church, produced a report, *Mission-shaped Church*, in 2004 which engaged with what was happening in the Emerging Church movement. Gibbs and Bolger trace the movement also to the early 1990s, seeing it as an extension, or emergence from 'Gen-X' churches, a United States-based movement which began around 1986 and was "characterized by loud, passionate worship music directed towards God and the believer (not the seeker); David Letterman-style irreverent banter; raw narrative preaching; *Friends* (the popular TV series) type relationships; and later, candles and the arts." *Emerging Churches*, p30.

[26] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Section 1, 3.

4.2 The response

As has been mentioned, *CWW* was not, and is not, without its critics. Given the breadth and depth of change being proposed by the *CWW* report, it was not unreasonable, nor unexpected, for the General Assembly of 2001 to wish for further study of the issues raised in the Special Commission's report. This was anticipated and one of the deliverances of the report requested the General Assembly to "instruct the Panel on Doctrine to undertake a study on the theology of power"[27] and bring their findings to a future General Assembly. The purpose behind this particular emphasis seems to have been associated with the proposals to devolve much of the perceived central power to presbyteries and congregations (in the context, mentioned previously, of the 'inhibiting' perception of the centralised administration). This devolved power included both financial and decision-making powers. The scope of the panel's work was widened during the General Assembly debate and it was also asked to study "the implications for the theology of the Church of the Report's proposals, in the context of the social and cultural circumstances of contemporary Scotland."[28] This was done and the Panel on Doctrine report came before the General Assembly of 2005.

The Panel's report on the issue of power emphasised that all power ought to be wielded in the service of the church: "Power properly exercised issues in Christian service. Power in the church is diaconal."[29] The report goes on to admit that even though this is the aim of the Kirk's 'power' structure, this is not how it is perceived:

> Problems with power may arise because experience does not bear this out and a measure of oppression is felt. The perception of CWW in respect of our own Church is that its structures tend towards inflexibility when facing new situations, that they stifle rather than release the gifts of the people of God.[30]

---

[27] Church of Scotland, *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*, Deliverance 37 (as original numbering).
[28] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2005), 13/1, Section 1.1.
[29] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/6, Section 1.5.
[30] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/6, Section 1.5.

However, the Panel goes on to suggest that although power is intended to be diaconal, this does not imply that it cannot be held centrally. Devolving power to local congregations is not the historical precedent of the church where from "the earliest days... it has been reckoned that authority and decision-making must be organised to reflect this broader picture [unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity], which in practice involves delegation by the many to the one or the few."[31] Indeed, the Panel highlights that the dangers inherent in centralised structures may be just as prevalent in locally devolved ones. "Power games can be played as readily by small, local factions as within our existing system,"[32] claims the Panel and urges that the Kirk should not be naive in its view of structural reform. Furthermore, the Panel notes that "with the particular system of interlocking councils it is more difficult to identify where power actually lies... [and that] The solution thus may not be in changing, abandoning, or setting up a bypass to the structure but what is brought to it."[33] Although this may come across as sounding as though there is no desire or imperative to change the structures of the Kirk, the Panel makes the legitimate point that the Kirk's organisational structure is not "a democratic system in which members elect their rulers and therefore retain sovereignty, but a Presbyterian system... which is built 'from the bottom up'."[34] However, this does not entirely put an end to a call for restructuring and to suggest that the indefinable power of interlocking councils is somehow part and parcel of Presbyterianism seems a little disingenuous. Exploring alternative structures is beyond the scope of this work. The issue is raised here as part of the background which must be kept in mind when we look at how the Church might engage more effectively with *CWW* and the *Emerging Church* movement.

In its consideration of power, the Panel also looked at leadership in the church. This is particularly relevant to the purposes of *CWW* and *Emerging Church* as will become apparent later. The Church of Scotland has a well-defined leadership structure. Each congregation is led by a ruling body of elders, drawn from the congregation and known as the Kirk Session. The Kirk Session is responsible for the spiritual guidance and leading of the congregation. The minister of

---

[31] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/6-13/7, Section 1.5.
[32] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/7, Section 1.5.
[33] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/7, Section 1.5.
[34] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/7-13/8, Section 1.5.

that congregation sits as its moderator. Each congregation is represented on Presbytery by their minister and one of the elders. Presbytery may also appoint additional elders to positions required to ensure the efficient and fair distribution of its tasks. A proportion of these presbytery members (based on congregational representation) attend the General Assembly each year. In this respect the Panel can rightly claim that the church structures are built from the bottom up. However, the comments in the Panel's report also reveal that the primary focus of power lies with a smaller group – ordained ministry. The lessons on church governance from Scripture and the early church indicate that "order and discipline, particularly in respect of the sacraments and also through developments in the conduct of public worship, came into the hands of those set apart to be leaders in the local community."[35] The reference to the sacraments seems to indicate that this is primarily intended to mean ordained ministry as opposed to the more inclusive leadership of the elders. Indeed, the Panel notes that "ordination may and should be seen as conferring a very significant allocation of power, power connected with the notion of call which, in our practice, must be both personally acknowledged and publicly affirmed."[36] Once again, this will be of particular interest when we begin to look later in this work at some of the challenges facing *Emerging Church* projects.

In section 2 of the report, the Panel turns its attention to the *CWW* report more directly as it follows the second part of its remit to consider the theological implications of the *CWW* recommendations. As a number of its criticisms have a direct bearing on the following parts of this paper, I will highlight some of the crucial ones now so that the background is in place.

The Panel on Doctrine takes the *CWW* report to task for its emphasis on "relational rather than institutional."[37] As this relational model also seems to be the basis for expressions of *Emerging Church*, it too is open to the same criticisms. The Panel wonders whether the report's "language of 'friendship' [is] sufficiently strong to capture the connectedness that we aspire to."[38] 'Connectedness' is a reference to the concept, encouraged by the World Council of Churches, of

---

[35] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/8, Section 1.6.
[36] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13.
[37] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/10.
[38] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/10, Section 2.2.

koinonia.[39] This is not an unfair criticism if 'friendship' is the only aim of *CWW*. Perhaps though, it is a necessary starting point for many congregations. This is especially true if feelings of suspicion and self-protection come to the surface when issues of cost-cutting and rationalisation of ministry posts is considered.[40] The Panel also makes a link between a 'relational' model and the call for greater local autonomy. It urges a need for a balanced approach giving a "strong sense of the mutual responsibilities of congregations within Scotland and [the Church's] vision for a coverage of the whole nation and for the life and mission of the Church beyond our national boundaries."[41] The Panel goes further still, suggesting that "in CWW we have rather hints of a shift towards a theology merely of the local congregation."[42] Again, this is perhaps not an entirely unfair criticism, but the call from *CWW* is to redress the perceived imbalance which is seen to be biased towards a central administration. Emphasis on the 'local' is also necessary when considering expressions of *Emerging Church*. These are, on a whole, smaller groups still and yet wish to retain a degree of autonomy and self-identity. The Panel on Doctrine seems to be suggesting that localisation will inevitably lead to fragmentation and is a road which, if followed, "re-envisions Presbyterianism almost to the point of paving the way for its collapse."[43] This begs the question though, "Is the mission of the Church to maintain Presbyterianism?"

I ask this as only a semi-serious question. However, the Panel does turn its attention to the mission of the Church as this is the context into which the *CWW* report has been delivered. The Panel sees two scenarios into which the mission of the Church is projected. The first assumes that Scottish society is unchanged or at least changing only very slowly. The Church, therefore, may continue in the way that it has done, maintaining and affirming "the core activities of ministry,

---

[39] See, for example, http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/vi-church-and-world-unity-and-the-life-of-the-church-in-the-world/ecclesiology-and-ethics/costly-unity.html#c10646, accessed 16th August 2010. This document from the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission, defines *koinonia* as, "the term proposed as a description for that unity sought by Faith and Order and the conciliar process of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. It entered ecumenical usage in the bilateral dialogues, where its Greek form proved useful in some contexts as a broadening of the Latin *communio*. Koinonia is used in some bilaterals to describe the goal of "communion" without organic union following the removal of possible doctrinal obstacles."
[40] The 2010 General Assembly report of the Ministries Council proposed that the Church could afford "1000 ministries", a reduction of approximately 11% of the current total. See Sections 1.4.3 – 1.4.5, pp3/25-3/26.
[41] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/10, Section 2.2.
[42] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/11 Section 2.2.
[43] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/12, Section 2.3.

word, sacrament and pastoral care, which 'properly understood, are instruments of mission, outreach and evangelism'."[44] The second scenario assumes significant changes, with deep and widespread social and cultural upheaval. The Panel notes that "the relational is often precisely what is at issue – the fragmentation of relations with the surrounding community, the decline of voluntary help, changing patterns of commitment and the accompanying dissolution of those social values which upheld the sense of common obligation that once tied communities together."[45] The mission of the Church then, in this scenario and according to the Panel, seems to be to express "legitimate pastoral concern for the way in which the life of the church is being affected."[46] *CWW* is criticised for not giving sufficient attention to the communities bearing the burden of this decline: "There is little in the Report to encompass the witness of the church in circumstances of vulnerability, decline or even death."[47] It may be argued, of course that the *CWW* report is simply arguing for a re-arrangement of the deckchairs while refusing to acknowledge that the ship is sinking. The Panel's report does not advocate an overwhelming acceptance of terminal decline. As followers of the crucified and risen Christ, the Church's future hope lies in there being new life after death, by God's power. The Panel does not suggest an alternative course of action. It is simply pointing out a perceived deficiency in the *CWW* report. There is, of course, a place for lamenting (and perhaps even hastening) the decline and fall of cultural, societal and even ecclesial structures whose time has passed. Walter Brueggemann, in *The Prophetic Imagination*, makes this very point. The Church, as a prophetic voice, "brings to public expression the dread of endings, the collapse of our selfmadeness, the barriers and pecking orders that secure us at each other's expense."[48] Such a role is, undoubtedly, an important one as it challenges the structures which cling to a past no longer fit for the future. Such a voice should never be the end point though. As the Panel points out, the Church is witness to death and resurrection and must therefore also provide a model for what that resurrection life may look like, however imperfectly manifest, in the world today. In this scenario, *CWW* plays an important role in moving forward into a changing and changed future.

---

[44] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/12, Section 2.4.
[45] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/12-13/13, Section 2.4.
[46] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/13, Section 2.4.
[47] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/13, Section 2.4.
[48] Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 46.

The final criticism of the *CWW* report concerns not how things may be organised in the future, but how the past has been neglected: "the CWW Report has largely neglected the historical continuities of the Reformed tradition, its theology and polity."[49] It is difficult to see the point the Panel is making here as it seeks to pull together two different strands of thought. The first is, as already mentioned, the Reformed tradition which gave rise to the Church of Scotland. The second it interweaves this with is the overall history and understanding of the Christian church: "The beauty of the historic tradition lies in the appreciation of the catholicity or universality of the church, its unity as the Body of Christ, and the life-creating, community-shaping (Spirit-)power of word and sacrament."[50] It seems to me though, that close-coupling historical polity with the understanding of the 'being' of the church is neither necessary nor desirable. Church polity, however important it may be, is always secondary to the nature of the church as the Body of Christ. Even the Reformer, John Calvin, recognised the need for change (albeit done sensitively) when commenting on church law and practice:

> Lastly, as he has not delivered any express command, because things of this nature are
> not necessary to salvation, and, for the edification of the Church, should be
> accommodated to the varying circumstances of each age and nation, it will be proper, as
> the interest of the Church may require, to change and abrogate the old, as well as to
> introduce new forms. I confess, indeed, that we are not to innovate rashly or incessantly,
> or for trivial causes. Charity is the best judge of what tends to hurt or to edify: if we allow
> her to be guide, all things will be safe.[51]

---

[49] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/14, Section 2.5.
[50] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/14, Section 2.5.
[51] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), IV, x, 30.

5 Mission Matters

In the previous section we have considered the challenges facing the Kirk and looked briefly at how *CWW* was intended to address some of these issues. We also looked at how these proposals were received and at the critique of the Panel on Doctrine. There is an underlying issue with which the Kirk is attempting to grapple: how does the Kirk 'do' mission in a changed and changing society when also faced with financial pressures and falling membership? *CWW* is one possible proposal to this question as is the *Emerging Church* movement. Before moving on to consider the challenges of using *CWW* and *Emerging Church* as models for the Kirk to follow, I intend to spend some time looking at what the Kirk understands by 'mission'.

The 2001 *CWW* report managed to stir up interest and debate beyond the Panel on Doctrine. The 2005 General Assembly also saw the presentation of a report from the Panel on Review and Reform. The Panel's remit is:

> To listen to the voices of congregations, presbyteries, agencies, and those beyond the Church of Scotland.
>
> To present a vision of what a Church in need of continual renewal might become and to offer paths by which congregations, presbyteries and agencies might travel towards that vision.
>
> To consider the changing needs, challenges and responsibilities of the Church.
>
> To make recommendations to the Council of Assembly, and, through the report of that Council, to report to the General Assembly.
>
> To have particular regard to the gospel imperative of priority for the poor, needy and marginalised.[52]

Part of their report in 2005 looked at the challenges of being a 'mission-shaped Church' and how *CWW* contributed to that. This report also saw the beginning of engagement with the *Emerging Church* movement. It may seem odd that such a report would come out *after* the *CWW* proposals as,

---

[52] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/2-11/3, Section 3.1.

surely, an understanding of the Church's purpose ought to come first before change is proposed. It must, therefore, be pointed out that these reports are, in a sense, a series of 'leapfrogging' contributions to a much greater conversation going on within the Church of Scotland. For example, in 2002 a report from the Panel on Doctrine was put to the General Assembly on "The Nature and Purpose of the Church."[53] The report is much wider reaching than the topic of mission alone and is an initial response to the World Council of Churches' *Faith and Order* paper. It is also a reflection on a number of projects established under the Board of National Mission's Priority Areas Fund. These community-based projects enable the Church to engage with the people around them and in ways which meet a perceived need in that community. Space does not permit a fuller analysis of this report and is mentioned merely to highlight that 'mission', and what it is to be church, is an ongoing conversation within the Church.

Returning to the 2005 report from the Panel on Review and Reform, the report builds upon a strong affirmation of the "underlying principles of "Church Without Walls""[54] at the 2004 General Assembly. The key work behind this report was a survey of Kirk congregations, assessing their reaction to the *CWW* initiative. What the survey found was that *CWW* "*is* changing the Church – not in every corner and not always fundamentally – but its ideas and priorities are filtering into the thinking of a church already receptive to the idea of change."[55] It goes on to say that "the biggest impact of CWW may well be the impetus it has given to planning the Church's future direction."[56] This section of the report ends with a question: "How to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the people of Scotland in this secular age?"[57] Although it may be debatable whether this is a truly 'secular' age or not, the main thrust of the question is towards mission and it is how to be "mission-shaped" which exercises the Panel in the next section of their report.

---

[53] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2002* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2002).
[54] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/2, Section 2.1.
[55] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/4, Section 4.2.2.
[56] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/5, Section 4.2.4.
[57] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/6, Section 4.3.3.

The purpose of this part of the report is laid out in the opening section, defining what 'mission shaped church' is all about:

> Mission-shaped Church addresses the question of missionary engagement within a
> rapidly changing society, where people are less interested in the institutional church. The
> Church, therefore, needs to reform itself into an appropriate mission entity, recognising
> that God calls His people into an evolving and deepening relationship with him.[58]

It may be worth noting here that the problem of people losing interest in the institutional church is not necessarily the same as Scotland being in a 'secular age'. Perhaps a better 'label' would be post-Christendom. Stuart Murray has this to say on the issue.

> Post-Christendom does not mean secular. During the second half of the twentieth century
> the demise of Christendom in Western culture was generally assumed to be a cause or
> consequence of secularisation... However... confident assertions in the 1960s and 1970s
> about the emergence of a secular culture now seem strangely dated Secularisation has
> continued apace... But the expectation that religious beliefs would wither has proved
> false. Spirituality and religious beliefs, in remarkably diverse forms, have flourished and
> we can now identify a counter-process of desecularisation challenging secular
> assumptions... [Growing interest in other forms of spirituality] suggests human beings are
> incurably religious and that secularism is an inadequate basis for any society.[59]

This is a very important point for the Church's mission endeavours. It is one thing attempting to engage with those who have no interest in religion and quite another to seek to guide an existing spirituality. It also affects the aims of 'mission'. The Panel's report has this to say about "grassroots initiatives": "Presbyteries, national committees and support staff have a strategic role to play in thinking creatively about how to focus resources to encourage these innovative expressions of church life and how to ensure they will work within the laws and practices of the Church."[60] Before we consider this point, it is necessary to jump forward a little in the report the section on *Emerging*

---

[58] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/6, Section 5.1.
[59] Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World* (Authentic Media, 2004), 10-12.
[60] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/6-11/7, Section 5.3.

Church. This is really the first sign of engagement with the *Emerging Church* movement. The report is very brief but encourages the Church to begin thinking about some of these other expressions of church. It notes that:

> Being part of a new expression of Church life might not suit everybody but what is important is that there is a willingness to give permission for these kinds of activities to happen within the Church of Scotland. The role of "permission-giver" is an essential one in unlocking the potential of many within the Church who feel unable to contribute meaningfully to the life of the Church as it now stands, but who would be willing to explore being church at a different time, in a different culture and in novel ways.[61]

The implication here, when both parts of the report are considered, is that 'novel ways' of being church are to be encouraged, but only in so far as they remain within the bounds of Church law and practice. Here, arguably, is the fundamental difference between *CWW* and *Emerging Church*. *CWW* attempts to move the institutional church beyond its four walls and its Sunday service structure. Ultimately, though, it is still about moving the institutional church (with its associated laws and practices) into society. *Emerging Church* begins with the establishment of relationships in 'secular' space and attempts to sacralise those relationships, moving them towards a more spiritual understanding. This does not imply a movement towards the institutional. The aim is not to move people from their small relationship huddles into 'church'. This is not to suggest that the two approaches cannot work together. *CWW*'s concern for reforming church practice is also a concern for *Emerging Church*, as we shall see. In a sense, *CWW* has paved the way for *Emerging Church* expressions within the Kirk. Without that impetus for change and without the 'permission-giving' encouragement from *CWW*[62], *Emerging Church* could not have even been considered.

---

[61] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/8, Section 6.2.
[62] The Panel on Review and Reform's CWW survey notes that "one hundred and forty-seven churches, almost a third, said that CWW 'has given us permission to change'. In addition, this response varied least across all types of church." Page 11/10, Section 2.2.1.

Before moving on to consider some of the challenges which *CWW* and *Emerging Church* innovations face in common, it is worth spending a short while looking at some of the mission aims of the *Emerging Church* movement and how they begin to overlap with, or at least complement those of *CWW*.

5.1 Missional models

The missional aims of *Emerging Church* are no less difficult to define than *Emerging Church* itself. Nevertheless, *Emerging Church* can be seen to have particular characteristics and from these it may be possible to ascertain certain missional aims. The seminal work in defining, or, rather, characterising, the *Emerging Church* movement is *Emerging Churches* by Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger. They offer the following characteristics as being common to most expressions of *Emerging Church*:

> Emerging churches (1) identify with the life of Jesus, (2) transform the secular realm, and
> (3) live highly communal lives. Because of these three activities, they (4) welcome the
> stranger, (5) serve with generosity, (6) participate as producers, (7) create as created
> beings, (8) lead as a body, and (9) take part in spiritual activities.[63]

Not all expressions of *Emerging Church* do all of these things in equal measure but they may be taken as representative of the general characteristics of most *Emerging Churches*. From the list of characteristics it can be seen that there are a number of places where there is common purpose with mission-shaped work such as is proposed by *CWW*. Welcoming strangers, service, and worship are certainly common factors with which all may agree (even if not the particular method through which one participates in such activities). Others may appear to have some commonality but will be open to interpretation of meaning. For instance, 'transforming the secular realm' may, from a *CWW* perspective, mean active support through community projects. Drawing from the 2002 Panel on Doctrine report referenced earlier, the five projects mentioned there are very much in this mould. For example, the Colston Milton Drama Project, through various youth church-based organisations, established a dance and drama club which "both helped build confidence and identify talent in the

---

[63] Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 45.

participants, one of whom now works through drama with disadvantaged children, as well as to raise the profile of the churches."[64] An *Emerging Church* expression may take a somewhat different understanding. For example, the use of secular music, film and literature in worship[65] breaks down the secular/sacred divide which is seen as artificial. Both expressions of church engage with the 'secular' world, but in very different ways. These are not contradictory, but may be seen as complementary.

This is not to suggest that *Emerging Church* can be embraced wholeheartedly in the same way *CWW* seems to have been. Much of what falls within the general terms of *Emerging Church* would not sit comfortably within the Kirk's understanding of church and worship, especially from a Reformed perspective. Limited space here prohibits a greater exploration of this but it is worth noting that the Kirk has, over recent years, been more fully engaged in the *Emerging Church* conversation, shaping some of its lessons for the Kirk's own use and establishing the appropriate boundaries. Perhaps one of the most useful pointers *Emerging Church* gives to the Kirk is the necessity of engaging members of the community in ways which are relevant to them. Where *CWW* seems to be about taking the 'church' into the community, meeting needs and providing a Christian witness, *Emerging Church* seems to be more about growing faith from within groups. It might be argued that each model draws from two very early pictures of the early church found in the Bible. In the early chapters of Acts we see a picture of a church growing and forming; worshipping together; witnessing in the community through healings and charitable works. This, in a sense, represents the *CWW* model where the church is active and visible within the community it exists in. *Emerging Church* might be seen to be more like Paul's ministry. In particular, when Paul comes to Athens (Acts 17), his starting points for evangelism are the expressions of spirituality already found within that culture. In explaining about the 'unknown god' (Acts 17:23), he takes contextually relevant ideas and then proceeds to reshape them within a Christian understanding. Whenever Paul establishes a new worshipping community, he equips them with the teaching they will need but, ultimately, allows them to achieve their own autonomy, albeit with support. Groups and

---

[64] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2002*, 13/4, Section 2.4.
[65] Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 67.

congregations cannot easily exist without the support and understanding that they are part of a larger entity.

As expressions of *Emerging Church* mature from trial projects and as *CWW* projects branch further out into the community, each face barriers to progress. Many of these barriers are not 'deliberate', but are simply the effect of Church law and practice which has never accounted for some of the novel ways in which church finds its 'being' in contemporary society. *CWW* and *Emerging Church* projects may well hit entirely different barriers, but I would like to suggest that there are some very fundamental ones which, if addressed sooner rather than later, would enable a more confident growth and a richer witness through mission. These barriers, I would suggest, are tightly interlinked and may indeed have one core issue at their heart. It is to this I now turn.

6 Kirk Governance and Organisation

The Church of Scotland is Reformed in its theology and Presbyterian its organisational structures. A brief overview of Presbyterian structures and organisation was given earlier in the dissertation and will not be repeated here, other than to remind us that the locus of 'power' at congregation level is generally the minister who has responsibility for the conduct of worship, in whatever style or setting it is done, in that congregation. A minister within the Church of Scotland is 'ordained' into that post. Furthermore, only an ordained minister may preside over the sacraments observed by the Church of Scotland – baptism and communion. Baptism and communion, for the Kirk, are also closely linked to the issue of membership. It is here that we begin to see one of the key difficulties facing, in particular, expressions of *Emerging Church* which grow within the Church of Scotland. This is not to suggest that *CWW* projects do not have the same problem, but it is, I would suggest, more acute in *Emerging Church* projects. To understand why this is the case, it is worth taking time to describe recent developments in the Kirk's engagement with *Emerging Church*.

The Panel on Review and Reform report given in 2005 contained the deliverance, "Encourage the Panel in consultation with the Mission and Discipleship Council to engage with the issues of emerging patterns of church and investigate how these may be adapted for Scotland."[66] In 2008, the Mission and Discipleship Council provided a supplementary report to the General Assembly. It stated that "in September 2007 The Mission and Discipleship Council set up internally an Emerging Church Study Group... [which] sought to explore what relevance the 2004 Church of England report, *Mission-Shaped Church*, might have in a Scottish context."[67] One of the recommendations was that a joint working party be established to "consider further the theological and practical implications of "Emerging Church" for ministry and mission."[68] In parallel with this report, the Ministries Council, in its submission to the General Assembly, affirmed "the concept of a 'mixed economy church' within the Church of Scotland, where both existing expressions and fresh

---

[66] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 11/1, Deliverance 4.
[67] Church of Scotland, *Supplementary Report of the Mission and Discipleship Council 2008* (Edinburgh, 2008), Section 1.1.
[68] Church of Scotland, *Supplementary Report of the Mission and Discipleship Council 2008*, Deliverance 3.

expressions of church co-exist."[69] This draws on the language of the Church of England report which encourages this 'mixed' model of being church, using both traditional and new approaches.

The General Assembly of 2009 received the Joint Report of the Ministries and Mission and Discipleship Councils on the Emerging Church.[70] I have assessed this report in an earlier research essay[71] and so will not repeat the findings here other than to mark this report as a significant step in grappling with *Emerging Church* and how the Church of Scotland might engage effectively with it. However, as I noted in the essay, it still represented an engagement which was still, to a degree, at arm's length from the practicalities. In the same year though, the Ministries Council report contained details of a number of projects established under an Emerging Ministries Fund.[72] One of those projects, The Ark (Actively Reaching Kids), perhaps represents an intention closest to that of *Emerging Church* as has been outlined previously. The purpose of the project "has been to establish a core worshipping community on a Tuesday night... The thing that sets it apart is its intentionality. Right from the beginning it has been the intention to build an ecclesial community which would see the children being the catalysts for change in their community."[73] The key element in this project is its intention to be an 'ecclesial community'.[74] It is this intention which causes significant problems for such a project as it hits limitations embedded in the practices and law of the Church. This leads us into our consideration of some of the barriers to establishing such 'ecclesial communities'.

6.1 Being church

The Church of Scotland acknowledges and affirms the classic marks of the church – one, holy catholic and apostolic. In keeping with the Kirk's Reformed heritage it also affirms the church is where the Word is preached, the sacraments are celebrated and discipline is exercised. Generally

---

[69] Church of Scotland, *Ministries Council 2008* (Edinburgh, 2008), Deliverance 1.

[70] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2009* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2009).

[71] John Orr, "Tentative steps towards an Emerging Kirk," 2010.

[72] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2009*, 3/51-3/53, Section 5.12.

[73] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2009*, 3/52, Section 5.12.4.

[74] The report does not contain any further explanation of the phrase 'ecclesial community'. I take it to mean that The Ark intends to 'be church' to the fullest extent possible – to be a worshipping, praying and sharing gathering who meet regularly to study the Bible and share fellowship together. Their Volunteers' Handbook provides an overview of their work, including schools involvement, community outreach and the care and nurture of young people. Also from the handbook: "We look to Jesus as the perfect example of humanity and model our practise on Him and on what we read of His actions in the Gospels... Our philosophy is to show by what we say and what we do, the unconditional love of God to all those we meet."

speaking the four creedal marks do not present a problem, even with more 'innovative' *Emerging Church* projects. However, for an *Emerging Church* project, the Reformers' marks are potentially more of a problem, assuming the project intends to be an ecclesial community in the fullest sense. Having the word preached is a straightforward enough activity to engage in. Selecting project leaders with adequate training in handling scripture and teaching it to others can be part of the job specification for the project. Discipline can also be addressed through adequate supervision by a sponsoring congregation or presbytery. Such supervision can cover all aspects of correct practice and procedure, from sound accounting practices to legal requirements such as Disclosure and criminal record checks. The 'mark' which presents the greatest challenge to an *Emerging Church* project's desire to be an ecclesial community is the celebration of the sacraments.

6.1.1 Communion

If an *Emerging Church* project is to be its own 'ecclesial community' it must be able to celebrate the sacraments and, most especially, communion. Communion is a dominical command; a shared meal which, amongst, other things, emphasises the shared and sharing community in Christ into which the Christian is called. It is an important activity for any budding community, especially one which seeks to establish itself as a Christian community. In this sense, projects such as The Ark distinguish themselves from being 'merely' another youth club. I do not denigrate youth clubs, only seek to highlight the essential differences here. It must be noted here that although The Ark is a youth project aimed at the 5-14years age group, the Kirk has permissive legislation enabling children to participate in communion:

> 15. Notwithstanding the terms of Section 13 and recognising the free discretion of the
>
> Kirk Session in this matter, where a Kirk Session is satisfied that baptised children are
>
> being nurtured within the life and worship of the Church and love the Lord and respond in
>
> faith to the invitation "take, eat", it may admit such children to the Lord's Table, after
>
> pastorally overseeing the response of faith of such children to see when it is right for
>
> them to come to the Lord's Table.   The names of such children shall be admitted to the

> Communion Roll of the congregation when they have made public profession of their faith.[75]

This permissive legislation is still hedged round with caveats and practice varies from congregation to congregation; some encouraging full participation, others following the line of communicant membership first.

There are, however, restrictions about who is allowed to 'administer' the sacrament and this may well be a problem for *Emerging Church* projects. Church law allows only an ordained minister to administer communion:

> 1. The Sacraments of the Church may be administered only by the following persons:–
>
> (1)   a person who has the status of a minister of the Church of Scotland and who (a) has been ordained by a Presbytery of the Church of Scotland; or (b) has been inducted to a charge of the Church of Scotland; or (c) has been admitted by the General Assembly as a minister of the Church of Scotland.[76]

This poses a problem for *Emerging Church* projects as they are often not led by an ordained minister, very often having a presbytery project worker, or, indeed, volunteers from a congregation, as leaders. This does not imply that these leaders are necessarily unqualified, either in terms of the work they are undertaking or in the broader sense of theological education but that they are not ordained ministers in the Church of Scotland and so not allowed, by Church law, to officiate at a sacramental service.

It would, of course, be feasible to draft in an ordained minister whenever the *Emerging Church* group wished to celebrate communion. However, I am not convinced that it is always desirable to do so. Nor is this without potential problems as will be noted shortly. I suggest that it is not desirable for a number of reasons. The first is that it would seem to undermine the autonomy of the *Emerging Church* project. Although the project must be 'answerable' to some part of the Church

---

[75] Church of Scotland, *Act V. Consolidating Act anent the Sacraments*, 2000, para. 15.

[76] Church of Scotland, *Act V. Consolidating Act anent the Sacraments*, para. 1. Additional sub-clauses enable ministers from other denominations to administer communion in the Church of Scotland. However, all must be recognized as ordained within their denomination.

governance structure, as it must meet the requirements for 'discipline' as has already been noted, having to bring in an 'outsider', I would suggest, undermines the validity of the project being a true expression of an 'ecclesial community'. It also undermines the authority of the project leaders. If a leader is 'unqualified' to administer communion, it must surely raise questions of their qualifications and authority in other aspects of the work. Such a situation also denies the 'maturity' of a project, essentially suggesting that the group needs either outside help or can't be trusted to conduct sacramental services on their own.

Secondly, drafting in an 'outsider', even if that outsider is the local parish minister, can create territorial difficulties. This, of course, is not simply an issue of who presides at communion, but also impacts on the 'catchment area' of the project. The Church of Scotland operates a territorial ministry using a parish system. Neighbouring parishes are not obliged to co-operate and may be theologically distinctive, creating tensions when cross-parish working is desired. *Emerging Church* projects can be 'boundary-blind', drawing participants from a broad area. This is not, in itself, an unusual picture as many congregations, through unions and linkages or simply through geography, can themselves be a 'gathered' congregation, even attracting those beyond the parish boundaries. This is especially true in these days of increased personal mobility. However, *Emerging Church* projects are not necessarily set up with parish boundaries in mind, particularly if the project has been instigated at presbytery level or even from the Church's central administration. Such a setup can often be viewed as 'poaching' people from the surrounding parishes. Whilst one parish church may be sympathetic to the project, another may not be so welcoming and if the meeting place falls within the boundaries of the unsympathetic congregation, getting another minister to cross a parish boundary in order to be the ordained leader at appropriate times may breach Church law:

> A minister's field of ministerial work and responsibility lies within and does not extend
>
> beyond his or her own charge.   A minister shall not be at liberty to overstep the bounds
>
> of that charge and enter that of another to perform ministerial functions without the
>
> previous consent of its minister, unless he or she is acting under special commission or
>
> order of the Presbytery of the bounds, or of the General Assembly; provided always that
>
> a minister may enter the bounds of a parish of another minister for the purpose of

ministering to members and adherents of his or her own congregation, or to officiate at a marriage or funeral by private invitation.[77]

Of course, the simplest solution to cross-boundary working is to rely on good working relationships between ministers and congregations. While it is easy to suggest that this rosy picture of perfect co-operation should be expected, in reality, theological differences and personalities mean that these working relationships are not always as cooperative as they could be. What is more, these relationships change as ministers move to other charges and members of congregations come and go. It would seem, therefore, to be an area which would benefit from some direction from Church law.

Thirdly, and this is related to the first reason, is that it implies a reliance on the established church structure. One of the motives behind the *Emerging Church* movement is a desire to move beyond what are seen as the restrictive practices and procedures of the established church. In a critique of the Church of England's *Fresh Expressions* initiative, Pete Rollins says, "Yet the fact remains that the framework that the institutional church affirms is one that cannot be embraced by many of these emerging groups without them losing something substantive about their message (primarily its universal scope)."[78] If the desire of an *Emerging Church* project is to distance itself in this way from the institutional church, then this is almost certainly the point where there must be a parting of ways. Such a desire must be established from the very inception of a project.

There is also a closely related issue concerning communion and its institutionalisation. As has been mentioned, one of the aims or characteristics of *Emerging Church* is to sacralise the secular. Describing the practices of an *Emerging Church* community in Seattle, one of the members states that, "We learned how to sacramentalize all of life. We turned meals into communion. Even times of coffee turned into worship and to a centering on Christ."[79] In many respects this may sound like a complete anathema to the Kirk, but it nevertheless challenges the Kirk to consider its liturgies and

---

[77] Church of Scotland, *Act II. Consolidating Act anent Ministry*, 2000, para. 18.
[78] Peter Rollins, "Biting the hand that feeds," in *Evaluating Fresh Expressions: explorations in emerging church*, ed. Martyn Percy and Louise Nelstrop (Canterbury Press Norwich, 2008), 75.
[79] Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 232.

settings for communion. Rediscovering a greater informality may well open up an awareness of deeper meaning within the sacrament as well as providing greater encouragement for future activities. The 2009 report of the Mission and Discipleship Council contained an appendix devoted to the issue of communion as a vital part of church renewal. It had this to say:

> Breaking bread and pouring out wine and seeing Christ in the midst opens up the fullness of life. At the event of the meal, there is and should be (as there has been so often through church history) care for the poorest and the least. And though we are all of us vulnerable, still we go out from the assembly we may be strong.[80]

In similar vein, Peter Donald says, "The place of the Lord's Supper is that it is infinitely more than a religious ritual. It focuses an intimate belonging both to Christ and to one another."[81] Although most likely assuming communion in its 'conventional' setting, Donald's comment highlights the importance of communion within any Christian gathering or ecclesial community, regardless of its size or setting.

If we discount the third problem and note it as the natural boundary to the support which can be given to *Emerging Church* projects, we are left with the issue of 'ministers'. The underlying problem here is that of ordination. This is not to discount the parish-boundary issue, but there are mechanisms in place, such as Presbytery projects, which, with a bit of imaginative tinkering, can be reshaped to enable and support cross-boundary working. However, the fundamental problem remains that only an ordained minister may administer the sacraments. As has been noted, this is a possible restriction on the practices of an *Emerging Church* project. However, before discussing issues of ordination, I wish to discuss baptism, the other sacrament celebrated by the Church of Scotland. It raises similar issues but also adds some others which need to be dealt with.

---

[80] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2009*, 4/51, Section 4.9.
[81] Peter Donald, "Holy Communion in the Church of Scotland: Patterns and Prospects," in *Worship and Liturgy in Context*, ed. Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay (London: SCM Press, 2009), 183.

6.1.2 Baptism

If communion presents one of the main problems which need to be overcome, baptism presents another. Although celebrated less frequently, many of the same issues arise as were seen with the celebration of communion. Furthermore, there is a strong connection to be found between the two which, by way of church membership, present further difficulties for the support of *Emerging Church* projects. As with communion, only an ordained minister may officiate at such a service. The issues for this situation have been highlighted in the previous section and need no further explanation here. It is, however, worth noting why baptism is such a potential problem and how it impacts on communion beyond the issue of who can officiate.

It has been the practice of the Church of Scotland to perform infant baptism. This dissertation is not concerned with the theological support of this practice other than to note the strong covenantal theology which undergirds this position.[82] In years past, when the Church of Scotland had a significantly larger membership than now, it was rare for a new baby in a community not to be baptised. Generally speaking only members of other faiths or denominations and those who were committed atheists would decline to 'have the wean done'[83]. Baptism of an infant was one of the great social rituals of Scottish society. When analysed, it has to be said that there was often very little Christian understanding and perhaps even less Protestant understanding of why the ceremony was 'necessary'. Whether through the simple acceptance of social convention or some misplaced superstition, or indeed a genuine Christian commitment, baptism of infants was the societal norm. That, however, cannot be said of recent generations and where, at one time, there would be an expectation of infant baptism, it is now the exception rather than the rule.

---

[82] For a relatively recent engagement in the issue of baptism in the Church of Scotland, see the Panel on Doctrine's reports to the 2002 and 2003 General Assemblies. The 2002 report offers a useful survey of the historical position and development in the theological understanding of infant baptism. It also notes an apparent 'shift' in practice towards offering services of blessing/dedication/thanksgiving for infants, opening the way for later 'believer's baptism'.
[83] A Scottish dialect phrase meaning 'having the child done' – a reference to the common practice of taking one's child for baptism.

Baptism is also the assumed 'qualification' for anyone who would take communion (as it is for membership too):

> 12.   The Lord's Table is open to any baptised person who loves the Lord and responds
> in faith to the invitation "Take, eat".[84]

Even the permissive legislation to enable children to participate assumes baptism (see the section of Church law previously cited with respect to children participating in communion). This was never much of a problem in the past when, in all likelihood, a church member would have been baptised as an infant. Now that this is no longer the case, such an assumption cannot be made and so revision is required to either allow greater flexibility over who can take communion or to make baptism more accessible. In practice, those who attend a communion service are not 'vetted' in any way.

This then leaves a conundrum for *Emerging Church* projects. Given the emphasis on baptism as the 'conventional' entry point into the church as an infant, it must, in a sense, find itself out of step with Church law. It seems unlikely that a project such as The Ark will follow a line of baptising all those who wish to join and have not been baptised as infants. This line of approach would further muddy the waters surrounding baptism, communion and membership. More likely, it will simply follow the course that seems to be becoming the normal situation in many congregations where "in many worship gatherings nowadays, almost all present will fully participate, including children and others who have not been formally admitted (by the kirk session still!) to formal membership of the Church."[85]

Furthermore, if the Kirk's missional strategy, through *CWW* and *Emerging Church*, is successful then it will, almost certainly, see a greater number of adult, or believer's, baptisms (the Kirk does not re-baptise those baptised as infants). This, in itself, does not create any particular problems for the Kirk. However, it will be interesting to see whether there is a shift towards adult baptism becoming the rule rather than the exception. This may happen as those who are baptised as

---

[84] Church of Scotland, *Act V. Consolidating Act anent the Sacraments*, para. 12.
[85] Donald, "Holy Communion in the Church of Scotland: Patterns and Prospects," 181.

adults note its significance for themselves and so wish to allow their own children to make that same decision at an appropriate stage in their own life. If this does become the case then the church's attitude to involving children in communion will also need to be reconsidered as it is still, as has been noted, geared towards an assumption of infant baptism. This conclusion is supported by Doug Gay who suggests that with any shift towards credo-baptism it "seems inevitable that it will also lead to new liturgical developments and to a changed perception of the place and significance of baptism within worship in coming years."[86]

Simply updating church law to reflect common practice would, of course, be one approach. However, the necessity of revisiting the whole area of baptism, communion and, quite probably, church membership offers an opportunity to have a more sweeping update of these areas, allowing changes to accommodate the needs of *CWW* and *Emerging Church* projects. Sympathetic legislation would make such work easier and, arguably, more effective, perhaps even encouraging greater participation. It is not possible, in the limited space available here, to consider all of the areas affected by such wide-reaching change. Even legislating for something as simple as allowing for non-baptised participants at communion (should it be desirable to legislate in this way rather than reducing the restrictions) has wider implications, as has already been suggested. However, there is a common thread to the previous discussions about the sacraments and that is 'ordination'. As has been shown, ordination presents, in a sense, a barrier to certain types of projects becoming more 'self-sufficient'. As previously discussed, self-sufficiency is a desirable aim in certain circumstances and is to be encouraged. It also contains an inherent risk which we should note here before moving on. We have already stated that certain expressions of *Emerging Church* have no desire to be part of the institutional church structures and so mark a limit to the Kirk's involvement with them other than providing prayerful blessing. However, even assuming that a project starts out intending to remain under the umbrella of the Kirk, there may come a time when it finds its path heading in a direction where it needs greater freedom than can be found within the Church's structure. It must never be the aim of such mission work to guarantee some sort of return for the

---

[86] Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay, eds., *Worship and Liturgy in Context: Studies and Case Studies in theology and practice* (London: SCM Press, 2009), 291.

Church of Scotland as such. There can never be a guarantee of 'pay-off', either in membership growth or financial support. Rather, such work must always have the good of the wider church, the 'church catholic', in mind. This is not always an easy consideration when financial resources are already stretched.

6.2 Ordination

Whether we trace a path to reform through *CWW* or through explorations in *Emerging Church*, I would like to suggest that the issue of ordination will become an increasingly more relevant issue. On the one hand, dwindling financial resources limit the number of paid ministry posts which can be funded. On the other, the general trend for numbers in ministry is still downwards as the number of ministers retiring or demitting their charge continues to outstrip the intake of trainees. Bringing *CWW* and *Emerging Church* projects into this mix exacerbates the problem. With more, smaller projects, many intent on being more fully 'church' in whichever context they find themselves, there is, potentially, a greater and greater demand for the services of ordained ministers.

The increased workload on an already busy group of people could be ameliorated in a number of ways. For example, one option would be relax the law on who can preside at the sacraments. Including, say, *CWW* or *Emerging Church* project workers, would remove a demand that has already been identified. Alternatively, such project workers could go through a process of ordination. Neither option is, I think, likely to be taken up wholeheartedly and without opposition and this is understandable. However, I suspect some sort of compromise of the two positions may become the way forward. Indeed, there are some moves in that direction at the moment as the Church contemplates the possibility of Ordained Local Ministry as an adjunct to its current ordination process. This will be examined shortly.

Over the years, a number of reports on the subjects of ordination and ministry have appeared before the General Assembly. One of the more recent, and comprehensive, studies was done by the Panel on Doctrine and spanned three reports over three years beginning in 1999. It is clear that the theology and understanding of ordination is a vast subject. Unfortunately this takes it beyond the

realistic scope of this dissertation. Nevertheless, there are a number of points worth highlighting which feed into the overall theme of what has been discussed in this dissertation so far.

The first point which needs to be mentioned is the Church's understanding of 'ordination'. In its 2000 report, the Panel on Doctrine acknowledged the universal imperative for all Christians to bear witness to their faith, and so, in that sense, all are to be ministers, that is, workers for the church. It also points out though that "the point about ordination is that it has to do with the *ordering* of the Church's serving... Scripture and experience support the need for some to bear responsibility for calling the Church to be true to its nature, to attend to God's purpose for it."[87] In other words, ordination has to do with the call of an individual into a particular role. The Panel on Doctrine does not intend this to be a restrictive call insofar as the scope of the duties in a role is concerned. The Panel sets out four criteria for what it understands to be ordained ministry. These are summarised below:

1. Ordained ministries should be those which are concerned not just for one part of the Church's life and activity, but for the Church as such, for its character as the Church. They are ministries whose concern is to keep the Church faithful to its nature and calling.

2. The fact that such ministries are concerned with the Church's fidelity to its nature and calling means that they are answerable to the Church – the whole Church...

3. Such ministries, being answerable to the wider Church, are recognised and authorised by the wider Church. Ordination is therefore consequent upon the testing of vocation by the wider Church.

4. Since the Church is one throughout history, and not simply throughout the world, this also implies that ordained ministries are enduring, and not temporary expedients...[88]

There are some important points to note from these four criteria. Ordained ministers have a duty to the whole church and, as such, are answerable to it for discipline and, indeed selection and

---

[87] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2000* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2000), 13/6, Section 2.2.
[88] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2000*, 13/22, Section 4.12.

preparation. Furthermore, it is not spatially or temporally restricted. These points are very pertinent to any proposals for enabling a sacramental ministry in a *CWW* or *Emerging Church* project.

Of course, none of these criteria specifically mentions the sacraments and we must turn to the 2001 report for the Panel on Doctrine's thoughts on this matter. The report mentioned two closely-related ministry 'offices' – ministry of Word and ministry of Word and Sacrament – and clarifies the distinction "that one is principally a preaching ministry, while the other adds a sacramental ministry."[89] Presently, the Church of Scotland has three ministries of the Word: Readers, Auxiliaries and Minister of Word and Sacrament.[90] Of these three, only Auxiliaries and Ministers of Word and Sacrament are ordained into a position which allows them to perform sacramental duties. Readers are not ordained and are not entitled to a place on a Presbytery court. They therefore remain outwith the first of the criteria previously mentioned – effectively Church oversight. The Panel on Doctrine "stresses the connection between ordination and oversight"[91] but questions whether there should be a greater connection made between Word and Sacrament. The Panel leaves open the "possibility of wider authorisation of sacramental ministry"[92] in the future.

Fundamental to all of these ministries, and to the many which have not been listed here, is the understanding of 'call'. The 2005 report from the Panel on Doctrine, as well as its critique of *CWW*, contained an investigation into the Church's understanding of the "Call to Ministry."[93] The report underlines, in effect, much of what is to be found in the Panel on Doctrine's earlier series of reports. In looking at the Kirk immediately following the Scottish Reformation it notes the fastidiousness of the Kirk in its selection of minsters. "Appointments were only to be made following a rigorous procedure that tested an applicant's call, abilities and competence."[94] That testing of a call was a threefold procedure involving a person's congregation, the national Church's superintendants and Commissioners and, finally, a parish church confirming a call to service. Although the details may

---

[89] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2001* (Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2001), 13/15, Section 5.4.3.
[90] Readers and Auxiliaries are non-stipendiary appointments.
[91] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2001*, 13/15, Section 5.4.3.
[92] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2001*, 13/16, Section 5.4.3.
[93] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/15ff, Section 3.
[94] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/19, Section 3.2.1.

have changed somewhat in intervening years, the general process is still the one which is followed by the Church today.

However, the Scotland of today is not the Scotland of the Reformation period and some of the challenges to the Kirk and to its ministry have already been discussed. As the Panel on Doctrine's 2005 report puts it, "What remains in question is the adaptability and creativity of the church and in particular our own Church of Scotland, to match the forms of ministry required to meet the spiritual needs of the nation with an imaginative assessment of the financial and human resources available."[95] In part answer to that challenge, the Ministries Council presented a report to the 2007 General Assembly containing their thoughts on a 'Vision for Ministries in the 21st Century'. Perhaps most pertinent for *CWW* and *Emerging Church* is the proposal to create 'Local Ordained Ministry'.[96] The functions of such a ministry would be "focussed on conducting worship, a preaching ministry, and administration of the sacraments."[97] By the 2010 General Assembly the proposal had developed some more and the suggestion now is that Ordained Local Ministry sits alongside Ordained National Ministry[98] (in effect, the current Minister of Word and Sacrament position). It is a flexible position and can be full-time or part-time, paid or voluntary. The principal purpose behind such a proposal is so that localised ministry needs may be met through a flexible sacramental ministry resource.

---

[95] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2005*, 13/25, Section 3.3.2.
[96] Church of Scotland, *Ministries Council 2007* (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland, 2007), sec. 1.3.3. In later reports this became Ordained Local Ministry, presumably to reflect first, its function and second, its nature.
[97] Church of Scotland, *Ministries Council 2007*, sec. 1.3.3.3.
[98] Church of Scotland, *General Assembly 2010*, 3/29, Section 1.4.6.6.

It seems to me that such a move could be of considerable benefit to *CWW* and *Emerging Church* projects, assuming, of course, that the needs and circumstances of these are taken into account as the proposal develops. As I have mentioned, the issue of sacramental ministry is one of the most significant barriers to allowing *CWW* or *Emerging Church* projects achieving that degree of autonomy they often seek and need. This is also why I would like to suggest that discussion of a flexible sacramental ministry is one of the fundamental conversations that must happen with *CWW* and *Emerging Church* firmly in mind to ensure the future success of these other areas of church reform.

7 Converging conversations

Church Without Walls and the *Emerging Church* movement appear to be two sides of the same coin – that 'coin' being the mission of the church. Each seeks to provide a means towards reaching out to communities and individuals. *CWW* appears to address 'method', *Emerging Church* appears to address relevance. My impression is that they operate from different directions. *CWW* seems to be about taking the 'church' and moving it outward into the community; at the very least it is about ensuring the church has an outward-looking aspect and does not simply become inward-looking and self-obsessed. *Emerging Church* seems to want to start at the opposite end, building upon relationships which already exist in society and culture and 'sacrilising' them.

Neither approach is right or wrong; neither usurps the need for more traditional expressions of church. Perhaps the greatest challenge is to ensure that all may co-exist, acknowledging and respecting the differences and value in each. However, before that can happen, I believe that both *CWW* and *Emerging Church* need to be recognised as valid expressions of church and to be allowed to provide the 'services' of more traditional expressions of church. *CWW* is perhaps in a better position to do this as it has its base within the established church. That said, many of the organisational and structural changes it is calling for would be of benefit to *Emerging Church* expressions as well. Similarly, some of the changes needed to enable fuller expressions of *Emerging Church* within the auspices of the Kirk would, ultimately, benefit *CWW* as well.

The current difficulties faced by *Emerging Church* projects within the Church of Scotland can, I believe, be overcome and I have highlighted some of the key discussions which need to be moved forward to enable this. More importantly though, I believe I have also shown that it is both desirable and necessary to accommodate a variety of church expressions – what is generally referred to as a 'mixed-economy church'.[99] If I were pressed to give an opinion on the various reports, projects and initiatives, I would have to say that, currently, there seems to be a lack of 'joined-up thinking'. Issues of finance, mission, doctrine, structural change, ministerial selection, training, and so on, all

---

[99] From *Evaluating Fresh Expressions*: "The term 'mixed economy' was developed by Rowan Williams as Bishop of Monmouth to describe the truth that no single form of church life is adequate on its own in the development of mission to our diverse culture.", 5.

seem to be reactionary. More recent reports and guidance from the General Assembly appear to recognise that many, if not all, of these issues are intimately interlinked.

Emerging Church styles itself as an ongoing 'conversation'. It is always in dialogue with itself, the culture around it and with other faith communities. More importantly, it considers itself to be in conversation with the church of early Christian history as it seeks to find an authentic expression of what following the way of Jesus Christ really means. Its conversations are 'intentional'. When the various reports of the councils and panels and committees of the Church of Scotland are presented to the General Assembly, it is possible to see a degree of common purpose, but often it seems the reports are reactive; a response to an new challenge or the request for further analysis. What should be clear from the preceding work is that there appears to be a clear trajectory, not just within the Church of Scotland, but the worldwide church, towards newer, more contextually relevant, expressions of 'being church'. Many of the conversations that seem to be happening around the reports are aware of this but there doesn't seem to be an intentional engagement with it across all of them. Obviously other issues continue to challenge the Church and investigating these fresh expressions and all the implications cannot utilise all of the available resources. I would like to suggest though that there is a need for many of these conversations to be more 'intentional'.

In 2010 the Church of Scotland celebrated the 450th anniversary of the Scottish Reformation. The Scottish Reformation had a huge impact, not only on the church, but also on society. It seems that in 2010 it is society which is changing but there is little sign of an impact on the church beyond tentative projects and exploratory investigations. The church should never be driven by society and culture. However, it must never remain so detached from it that is ceases to be relevant within it. Many strands of reformation within church circles seem to be converging as society and culture undergo change. Perhaps this is an opportunity for the Church of Scotland to be driven by its *semper reformanda* cry and to bring about further radical reform which will once again see the Kirk as an important and relevant part of the Scottish community and culture.

8 Bibliography

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. 2nd ed. Augsburg Fortress, 2001.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.

Church of Scotland. *Act II. Consolidating Act anent Ministry*, 2000.

———. *Act V. Consolidating Act anent the Sacraments*, 2000.

———. *General Assembly 2000*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2000.

———. *General Assembly 2001*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2001.

———. *General Assembly 2002*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2002.

———. *General Assembly 2005*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2005.

———. *General Assembly 2009*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2009.

———. *General Assembly 2010*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2010.

———. *General Assembly Order of Proceedings - Legal Questions Committee Statistical Returns Appendix IV*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Church of Scotland by Blackwood, 2010.

———. *Ministries Council 2007*. Edinburgh: Church of Scotland, 2007.

———. *Ministries Council 2008*. Edinburgh, 2008.

———. *Special Commission Anent the Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual*. The Church of Scotland, 2010.

———. *Supplementary Report of the Mission and Discipleship Council 2008*. Edinburgh, 2008.

———. *The Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform - Church Without Walls*. The Church of Scotland, 2001.

Croft, Steven J.L., ed. *Mission-shaped Questions: Defining Issues for Today's Church*. Church House Publishing, 2008.

Donald, Peter. "Holy Communion in the Church of Scotland: Patterns and Prospects." In *Worship and Liturgy in Context*, edited by Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay. London: SCM Press, 2009.

Forrester, Duncan B., and Doug Gay, eds. *Worship and Liturgy in Context: Studies and Case Studies in theology and practice*. London: SCM Press, 2009.

Gibbs, Eddie, and Ryan Bolger. *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Communities in Postmodern Cultures*. SPCK Publishing, 2006.

Murray, Stuart. *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World*. Authentic Media, 2004.

"Organisation." http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/organisation/organnrevindex.htm.

Orr, John. "Tentative steps towards an Emerging Kirk," 2010.

Reid, Harry. *Outside Verdict: An Old Kirk in a New Scotland*. Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2002.

Rollins, Peter. "Biting the hand that feeds." In *Evaluating Fresh Expressions: explorations in emerging church*, edited by Martyn Percy and Louise Nelstrop. Canterbury Press Norwich, 2008.