

5 YEAR PLAN 2021-2026



Helping people of all ages to become disciples of Jesus
and be part of a loving Christian community.

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the “5 year plan” for Pulteneytown & Thrumster Church. It will set the agenda for our work together over the next 5 years. Each year, the Kirk Session will review the plan, and may amend it considering the circumstances of the day. In this, we want to show a diligence to plan and work with the resources and opportunities that God has given us, but with a humility and dependence on God.

Whenever we look ahead to the future, we must remember that a new five-year plan isn't “a blank sheet”. No one ever begins “from scratch”. The builder has to plan a new house according to the size, shape and location of the plot. The painter paints a fixed subject or idea and draws on the history of art that has come before them. In the same way, our planning for the next 5 years isn't in a vacuum. It's according to the church we are, in the place God has put us, seeking to be who God has called in this time and place. This document is best understood in conjunction with our vision document which sets out more of our understanding of our history, theological convictions and context, as well as the principles we believe will help us to faithfully serve God together.

We also recognise that following God's leading is always more important than completing our plans and so while we have sought God all the way through the planning process in prayer and in searching the scriptures, we set out this plan in humility and seeking for God's will to be done among us in the next 5 years. This is in keeping with our mission statement:

Helping people of all ages become disciples of Jesus and to be part of a loving Christian community.

The Kirk Session wants to reaffirm this statement as our understanding of our God-given mission in our parish. Our sincere hope is that any work or actions undertaken because of this plan will lead to the fulfilling of this mission.

At the core of this statement is an understanding that we are all disciples, or learners of Jesus Christ. Just as the first disciples dramatically and radically sought to follow Jesus when they heard His call in the Gospel of His Kingdom, so we want to be led and lead others in this.

We are all apprentices of Jesus our Lord and Saviour, Master and King: We submit to Him according to his revealed will in the Scriptures.

We are all recipients of the Father's love and grace. We commit to extend that love to all in our congregation, parish and beyond.

We know that this is not always comfortable, but we know it is right and best. By the Spirit's leading and empowering, we want to follow Christ faithfully.

In the next 5 years, we want to be transformed to be more like Him as individuals and we want our congregation to be a people where the radical love, costly grace and deep compassion of Jesus is displayed clearly to all we know.

The rest of this document sets out actions in 3 areas: Ministry, Mission and Administration. We have arranged action points under each heading for ease of reference in this document, but we recognise that not all actions fit neatly into one of these areas.

MINISTRY

Worship

- Continue to provide weekly worship for the congregation of Pulteneytown and Thrumster, including praise, prayer and bible-based teaching.
- Re-establish pattern of weekly gathered worship of praise, prayer, preaching and sacraments
- Establish a wider team of service leaders and others who are willing to contribute to services
- Establish a team of regular preachers, who have received training and are growing in preaching
- Review the practice of Communion
- Investigate the formation of a music group or choir to lead praise

Discipleship

- Prioritise growing the shared prayer life of the church
- Promote ways for the congregation to grow in individual prayer
- Provide opportunities for bible study and discipleship beyond Sunday worship
- Provide opportunities for regular fellowship
- Help the congregation better understand the historical and theological roots of our church
- In line with the plans for Mission, equip the congregation in evangelism and in engaging with cultural issues
- Provide training for the congregation in bible handling, as a step towards sharing the teaching ministry in different settings.
- Encourage the whole congregation to take their place in the ministry, mission and administration of the church using their time, talents and money
- Help those who come into the church through outreach work to integrate into the fellowship of the church and grow in their faith

Pastoral Care

- Review the congregation's approach to pastoral care, learning from past mistakes and look to provide an effective model that accommodates the needs of the whole congregation

Ecumenical

- Share training opportunities with other churches in the county
- Link with other churches locally to provide ministry

MISSION

Outreach to our Parish

- **Outreach Team to continue to support the Mission Development Worker in formulating and executing plans**
- **Mission worker to work with members of the congregation in Thrumster to develop Thrumster specific events and opportunities**
- **Continue to provide a spine of “stepping stone events” throughout the year**
- **Build relationships with those who participate in “stepping stone events” and provide space for further investigation of the Christian faith**
- **Devise plans to expand outreach work, according to the opportunities and resources we have**
- **Devise plans to make better use of the Pulteneytown building for outreach work**
- **Regularly provide opportunities for those who show an interest to investigate the Christian faith in a formal way**
- **Continue to develop links with local schools**
- **Intentionally seek opportunities to work with other local churches**
- **Investigate working with local organisations to contribute to the life of the local community**

Wider Mission

- **Work to promote existing links with local mission partners across all of church life: Food Bank, Blythwood, SU, HTC**
- **Work to promote existing links with world mission partners across all of church life: IVM, FEBA, Tearfund**
- **Look to develop new links with local and international mission partners**

ADMINISTRATION

Oversight

- **Appoint new elders**
- **Share the load of administrative work across the congregation to avoid stagnation and burnout**
- **Investigate unitary constitution or other structural changes to make our administration fit for purpose**
- **Maintain good communication to the whole congregation**

Publicity

- **Continue to develop the website**
- **Continue to develop use of social media platforms**

Buildings

- **Investigate a new venue for worship in Thrumster**
- **Develop the facilities at Pulteneytown in line with Ministry and Mission actions:**
 - **Improve and extend the Pulteneytown Café**
 - **Consider changes to improve the layout of the sanctuary**
 - **Encourage other organisations to use the buildings**
 - **Improve accessibility for those less able**
- **Continue to work with the Caithness Presbytery or new Highland Presbytery to establish the future of the buildings**