

## VIII. REPORT

### OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

We will always dare to criticise and judge another, no less so, than in our understanding of how we ought to sing the Psalms in worship and what is good leading of the Praise, and what is not. We, all of us, in pulpit and pew have our own understanding of what is, or is not good Psalm singing. Many of us would find it well-nigh impossible to put into words what we believe is just that good — singing. However, we know it when we hear it. As believers we are all as individual as our faces, and we seek under God by grace to “grow into the likeness of our Saviour”, we all of us readily acknowledge His loveliness, His beauty, and the kindness of His love in not leaving us to fashion a book of praise to our God. Some of us would dearly love to have heard the singing of the Psalms of that last Passover meal, that introduced the Lord’s Supper, the meal of communion and “of remembering the Lord’s death until He come”. How did our Lord and the disciples sing?: slow measured rhythm, quiet and reverent, emphasising the meaning of the words, with louds and softs, “with praise in their hearts making melody unto the Lord”? However they sang, we can be sure that it was with a sense of awe and wonder, brokenness and fear, yet with hope against hope, and certainly with looking to the Lord, who was there present in their midst. It is somewhat along these lines that we would hope to sing ourselves.

It has been a rather quiet year for the Committee, but there are those who stand out in their labours; our Clerk was busy seeing to another printing of the Staff Psalmody, such has been the demand for it, largely from overseas. Those involved in producing Worthy to be Praised volume 11 have been busy in meeting together to sing. Our recording engineer sees to the recording and then to the editing. It all takes up a great deal of time and effort. Our graphic artist is involved in producing the attractive covers. Then there is the individual printing of over 200 individual cds, and then burning the singing onto them seven at a time, followed by putting all together making a very pleasant volume for those who wish to have them. This project began over eleven years ago to help those who might be encouraged to follow the twelve year Psalmody Test Scheme covering 144 different tunes over the years. God willing, volume 12 remains and work has already begun on that. We commend all who are giving themselves in this area to your prayers and that you would encourage your people, precentors, leaders of family worship, and Sabbath School teachers to buy and to use these quite unique volumes. Nothing would encourage those who have had a part in their production than to hear they are being used. Set the example: buy, listen and commend them to your congregation. Deacons’ Courts might obtain a number to give to your shut-in’s and to local homes for the elderly.

Recently the Committee came across the following from Spurgeon; “When home is ruled according to God’s Word, angels might be asked to stay with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element.” What do they hear? Certainly they do not hear what they experience in glory, but what they do hear from those who are called out of darkness into His marvellous light is their giving of praise with their voices and the making of melody in their hearts to the Lord. No, the angels might stay with us and not be out of their element for the one they render praise to in the heavens, they know to be the one whom is working out his perfect will in our hearts and lives. The angels know that no matter how poor our worship here below, we also worship Him, and seek to show that we love Him who first loved us and who gave Himself for us. That is something the angels desire to look into. Let us praise Him with our longings for that perfect praise in glory when we will gather around the Lamb in the midst of the throne! Psalm 72:17-19

WILLIAM B. SCOTT, *Convener*  
CALLUM MACLEAN, *Vice-convener*

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Special Committee on Psalmody and thank the Committee;
2. The General Assembly give thanks to God for the dedicated Precentors in our Congregations who give diligent, devoted and careful leadership to our worshipping people and encourage Ministers to ensure that they are given a note of the Psalms to be used in worship timeously to enable them to fulfil their duties;
3. The General Assembly encourage the holding of Psalmody Workshops to assist in congregational praise;
4. The General Assembly commend to the Church the latest volume (Volume 11) of the 12-volume series Worthy to be Praised for widespread use by Psalmody classes and for daily edification of all;
5. The General Assembly thank Mrs. Isobel Scott and her team, including Mr. Robb Alcorn, the sound engineer, and Miss Esther Semmens, the graphic designer, for their help in producing the latest Psalm CD;
6. The General Assembly note the Supplementary Report and congratulate all those who took part in the Psalmody Test and thank those who helped them on the way, as well as those who tested them.

## APPENDIX

**19 took part in the 2015 Psalmody Test (23 less than in 2014) and gained awards as shown:**

### **Knock & Point**

Grade 3: Ruaraidh MacLeod (continuation)

Grade 4: Alexander MacLeod (continuation)

### **Shettleston**

Grade 1: Thomas Keddie

Grade 2 (Group Award): David Keddie, Andy Taylor (adult), Dolina Taylor (adult)

Grade 4: Elizabeth Keddie, Matthew Keddie

### **Stornoway**

Grade 4: Sarah Craig,

Grade 5: Thomas Craig,

Grade 6: David Craig (adult, continuation), Emma Craig (continuation), Lily Craig (continuation), Rachel Craig (continuation), Joanna Gillies, Jonathan Gillies

### **Tarbat**

Grade 2: Malcolm MacLeod (adult)

Grade 3: Ethan MacLeod (Group Award)

Grade 6: Murdo MacLeod (continuation), Veda Joy MacLeod (adult, continuation)