

VIII. REPORT

OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

The work of the Psalmody Committee arises from the commitment of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) to the use of inspired materials of praise only, sung unaccompanied, on the basis of our conviction that this is a Biblically-sustainable position.

In 2000, with the division in the Free Church of Scotland which brought into separate existence the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), it seemed like a dream that the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) would ever be able to publish our own edition of *The Scottish Psalmody*, yet in 2013 that dream became a reality when the staff edition was published under our imprint.

That publication was both expensive and ambitious but has proved successful to the extent that the entire original print run and a further supplementary print run have now been sold out and a new reprint has been necessary.

Whilst the printing process for such a volume is straightforward, the binding of a split-leaf psalter is one which is technically difficult, time-consuming, and one for which the skills are not readily found. The Committee are extremely grateful for the expertise, help and co-operation received from Messrs. Riley, Dunn and Wilson, specialist bookbinders, in seeing this reprint through to completion.

The Psalmody Committee is in an unusual position among the Standing and Special Committees of the Church in that it normally brings in from sales more than the Committee expends. Under current financial arrangements, all receipts from sales go into the Central Funds of the denomination; that being so, the Committee had no funds of their own to finance the reprint. The Committee are therefore grateful to the Finance & Sustentation Committee for making available initial finance to print and bind this further print run. It is anticipated that the full costs will be recovered from sales of the new printing. Efforts are also being made to ensure that it will be available to and through third-party sellers.

The *Psalmody Test* consists of a planned programme of instruction in Psalmody, taking absolute beginners through, over a number of years, to a stage where they have a confident knowledge of some sixty-three tunes. Initially the programme was of six years' duration with twelve tunes each year (though beginners would do only six the first year and nine the second year). It was later expanded to a twelve-year programme, again with concessions for those just beginning.

The tunes specified for the *Psalmody Test* have been selected to cover a number of metres, different historical origins, different geographical origins, different musical styles (different in the musical challenges they present, some very commonly used and known), others less well known, but all drawn from the current printing of our edition of *The Scottish Psalmody*.

The *Psalmody Test* has also been designed both to teach those participating to read the music they are singing and to sing in four-part harmony.

Clearly the *Psalmody Test* programme is ambitious for individuals or small groups, not all of whom have ready access to qualified tuition. This has been overcome by the production of an instruction and demonstration CD relating to the tunes specified for each year of the programme. We have now reached the stage where the production of such CDs has been completed and an instruction/demonstration CD is available for each year of the twelve-year rotation of tunes. Furthermore, to mark the completion of the cycle, a compilation CD entitled *Praise the Lord* has now been produced and is available priced £9.50.

The Psalms on this single CD have been compiled from recordings found on volumes 1 to 12 of the *Worthy to be Praised* CD series, produced by the Psalmody Committee of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). The CD insert contains the words of the Psalms found on the disk.

The CD contains 30 selections and is available at the Sing the Psalms website along with the *Worthy to be Praised* volumes 1 to 12 and can be obtained from www.sing-the-psalms.webs.com/apps/webstore/

The Committee are extremely grateful to Rev. William Scott and Mrs. Isobel Scott and their team of singers and production experts for spearheading the *Worthy to be Praised* project and the Compilation Disk production and bringing these to a successful conclusion.

Though not directly under the auspices of the Psalmody Committee, it should be noted that from within the denomination has come, through the labours of Rev. Jorge Ruiz Ortiz, a complete metrical translation of the Psalms in Spanish, a link to which exists at <http://sing-the-psalms.webs.com/apps/links/>.

The Committee pray that all these labours will further encourage God's people in their use of the great songbook which God Himself has given to the Church in the form of the Book of Psalms, the ultimate manual of praise.

John MacLeod, *Convener*
Calum MacLeod, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Special Committee on Psalmody and thank the Committee, especially the Clerk;
2. The General Assembly note with gratitude the reprint of the staff version of *The Scottish Psalmody*;
3. The General Assembly note with gratitude the completion of the programme of *Worthy to be Praised* instruction CDs and the *Praise the Lord* compilation CD. The General Assembly express their grateful thanks to Rev. William Scott and Mrs. Isobel Scott and their team of singers and production experts for spearheading the *Worthy to be Praised* project and the Compilation Disk production, and bringing these to a successful conclusion;
4. The General Assembly note the Supplementary Report and congratulate all those who took part in the Psalmody Test and thank all who helped them as well as those who tested them.

APPENDIX

20 took part in the 2018 Psalmody Test (7 less than in 2017) and gained awards as shown:

Cross

Grade 1: Kenneth Iain MacLeod (duly performed)

Grade 3: Heidi MacLeod, (continuation), Felicity MacLeod (continuation)

Knock & Point

Grade 1: Norman A. MacLeod (duly performed)

Grade 3: Christina MacLeod

Grade 5: Alexander MacLeod

Stornoway

Grade 1: George Kenneth MacDonald (duly performed), Peter MacDonald,
Katie MacKenzie

Grade 2: Calvin MacKenzie (duly performed)

Grade 3: John MacDonald

Grade 4: Lydia MacDonald

Grade 5: Susanna MacDonald

Grade 6: David Craig (adult, continuation), Emma Craig (continuation), Lily Craig (continuation),
Sarah Craig, Thomas Craig (continuation)

Tarbat

Grade 3: Malcolm S. MacLeod (adult, continuation)

Grade 6: Veda Joy MacLeod (adult, continuation)