



MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS  
OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

*1680 - 2016*





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of the  
Reformed Presbyterian  
Church of Scotland

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*A fasti*

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Reformed Presbyterian Church emerged from a movement that had never any intention of starting another church. The Society people belonged to the true Church of Scotland and longed for the day when the troubles would be over and they would be back within her fold.

After King Charles 2nd had outlawed Presbyterianism and ejected her best ministers, the people, deprived of ordinances, flocked to conventicles to hear the Word of God. They met illegally in houses, farm out-buildings and, more usually, because of the vast numbers attending, in the open air.

These conventicles were branded as “*rendezvous of rebellion*” and fierce harsh measures were put in place to suppress them. Acts were passed forbidding ordinary people from helping the Covenanter cause in any way. These Acts made it unlawful to clothe or feed, shelter, or even speak to a Covenanter whether he be your husband, wife, father or child.

Hundreds of men wandered the hills and glens, cut off from society, living in caves and holes in the earth, in all kinds of weather, summer and winter. Added to the cruelty of these laws were the imprisonments, banishments, and horrible deaths that hundreds of faithful Covenanters suffered during what was known as ‘*the killing times*’.

The ministers, the spreaders of ‘*sedition*’, were especially hounded and many of them were imprisoned or executed. Field preaching became much rarer as the furnace of persecution became





## CONGREGATIONS OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

### AIRDRIE

Though they formed themselves into a congregation in 1807 and a call was made to several ministers, it was not until 1824 that their first minister was settled.<sup>8</sup>

**Thomas Halliday** 1824-1827 was ordained here but died after a short but fruitful ministry in 1827.

**John Carslaw** 1829-1847. It was during his ministry that the present church was built in 1838, at 48 North Bridge Street. In 1847 membership was 180 with attendance at around 400.

**John Kay** 1850-1859, left for Castle Douglas.

**David Henderson** 1860-1871 when he retired.

During Henderson's ministry the congregation favoured the stricter view concerning the electoral franchise and in 1862 had

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<sup>8</sup> It is interesting to note that Dr James Begg of the Free Church, often visited the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie. His father, also James, was the local parish minister. His Grandparents were staunch Reformed Presbyterians, members of the Riggside congregation, and when visiting their son, always attended Airdrie R. P. church. Indeed, Begg's grandparents never heard his father preach.



petitioned the synod against the overture in its favour. Henderson, with others, helped establish the Minority Synod. He and his followers retained the building. Some twenty members left to continue elsewhere.

**Peter Carmichael 2nd** 1872-1884.

**John McDonald** 1885-1920.

**William Moffett** 1921-1949.

**J. T. Moffett Blair** 1949-1970.

**A. S. Horne** 1970-1975 [interim moderator]

**Raymond Morton** 1975-1989.

**Andrew Quigley** 1994- present.

### **AIRDRIE Majority Synod Church.**

At a meeting of presbytery, held in Grahamstown School, a dissident group from Airdrie congregation were told that they were still recognised by the Majority Presbytery as the Airdrie Congregation in 1865.

**James Paton** 1865-1873 was appointed as their minister.

The congregation met in the Music Hall until a church was erected for them in 1868. [Became Graham Street United Free Church.] Paton resigned in 1873 and joined the Church of Scotland. About 250 members left with him leaving about 75 members. There was no other minister till the union in 1876.



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In 1868 membership had stood at 240 and in 1877, after the union, at 78. (Paton ministered in Flowerhill Chapel until 1879).

### AYR

Ayr was originally part of the Kilmarnock congregation. At first they were few in number and had a temporary place of worship at the foot of Contest Street, Wallacetown, and in 1832 they built a church there. In 1838 the membership stood at 300 with occasional attendances of 500.

**Joseph Henderson** 1830-1844 was their first minister.

**John Graham** 1846-58 [translated to Liverpool]

**David Taylor** 1859-1861 [translated to the 2nd charge at Greenock]. Taylor's call was signed by 85 members.

**Thomas Lang** 1861-1876. Joined the Free Church in 1876.

In 1904 the congregation united with St John's United Free congregation.

### CARNOUSTIE

The Congregation was founded in 1809 and had originally belonged to the Constitutional Presbytery. A church had been built in 1810. In 1852 the majority joined with the Free Church. After the death of their minister the congregation joined the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1862. and settled its first minister.

**Walter White** 1863-1873 resigned.



In 1875 the 27 remaining members united with the Original Secession.

### CASTLE DOUGLAS

Their original Church was bought in 1820 from the Relief Church. In 1859 membership stood at 210. In 1860 the congregation added a hall, and in 1870 a spire, to the church.

**John Osborne** 1818-1831

**Malcolm McLachlan** 1832-1845

**Wm. Symington D. D.** [2] 1846-1859 translated to Great Hamilton Street

**John Kay** 1859-1871 called to Coatbridge.

**George Lawrie** 1872- Joined the Free Church in 1876.

### CHIRNSIDE

Covenanting groups were in existence here for many decades before the Societies of Merse and Teviotdale sought the presbytery for a disjunction which was granted in 1775.

Reid was elected their first minister, the call being signed by 110 members and 31 adherents. A church was erected at Chirnside around 1780, with seating for 500, and a better more permanent building erected 1897.

**John Reid** 1783-1801

**James Phillips** 1807-1812. His health was not good and he resigned.

Meanwhile he seems to have deserted his congregation.

**Peter McIndoe** 1819-1838. In 1819, the first year of McIndoe's ministry Chirnside and Kelso were at last disjoined. McIndoe's ministry was well received but had an unhappy end. Rumours had been circulating about him and his relationship with his people became so strained that in 1838 he had to resign and was translated to Kilmarnock.

**Thomas Marshall** 1839-1842, died after a short ministry.

**David Henderson** 1843-1860 translated to Airdrie.

**Robert Naismith** 1861- Joined the Free Church in 1876.

## COATBRIDGE

This church began as a mission station under the care of the Airdrie congregation. The first missionary was,

**Walter R. Paton** 1870-1871 who resigned through ill health.

**John Kay** 1871-1878 Joined the Free Church in 1876. Under Kay's ministry the church grew numerically, in 1875 reaching over 470 members plus adherents making it the 2nd largest congregation in the denomination. A church and manse were also built which, at the Union, became East United Free.

## COLMONELL

In 1812 the vacant congregation of Colmonell and Girvan, which had been established around 1793, called their first minister, John West.