

# **OBE for chaplain to the King**

**The former Principal Clerk of the Church of Scotland has been awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday honours.**

Rev Dr George Whyte, who is also a parish minister, and who retired last year after 41 years serving the Church of Scotland was given the honour in recognition of his "service to faith communities".

In January of this year he received a papal knighthood from Pope Francis for work in improving relationships between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church.

Dr Whyte said: "As Principal Clerk I had the privilege of working with a team of people supporting the life of our Church and building relationships with other people of faith in challenging times.

"This honour reflects our collaborative work."

Originally from Barrhead in East Renfrewshire, Dr Whyte was ordained as minister of Kilchrenan and Dalvich with Muckairn in Argyll in 1981.

He then went to Langside Parish Church in Glasgow before moving to Colinton Parish Church in Edinburgh and later taking on the role of Clerk of the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 2008.

Dr Whyte served as the Depute Clerk to the General Assembly between 2010-2017 and was convener of the Board of Ministry between 1996 and 2000.

He became the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly in 2017

and retired in 2022 having supported the Church of Scotland through the challenges of a global pandemic whilst facilitating presbytery reform.

Rev Dr John McPake, the Church of Scotland's ecumenical officer, said: "The award of an OBE is a fitting recognition of the contribution that George has made to the life of the Church of Scotland and to the wider life of the church.

"In particular, the leadership that he offered during the Covid-19 pandemic better enabled the church in Scotland, and faith groups in general, to respond to the most difficult challenge that we have faced as a society in living memory.

"The award follows on from the recent conferring of a Papal knighthood by Pope Francis earlier in the year in recognition of his ecumenical contribution as reflected in the Saint Margaret Declaration agreed by the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Bishops' Conference in 2022."

Very Rev Prof David Fergusson, Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland, said: "I'm delighted to learn of the award from the King to Rev Dr George Whyte. This is well-deserved recognition of his years of service to church and society. In particular, George's leading role in interpreting government pandemic guidelines to faith communities across Scotland was widely appreciated."



Church of Scotland General Assembly 2020. Saturday the 3rd of October 2020. The Church of Scotland held a socially distanced General Assembly over two days in Edinburgh. Moderator Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair oversaw the proceedings at The Mound. Principal Clerk Rev George Whyte (red cloak) with church members during a break in the Black and White Corridor