



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY



# ANNUAL REPORTS

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Notes:** Business commences at 9.30 a.m. each morning.

Adjourn for lunch at 1.00 p.m. each day.

The figures printed in brackets are page references to the Annual Reports.

References to the Minutes of Assembly are given in full.

#### Tuesday

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Business

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Social Witness

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PWA

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Mission Overseas

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Finance and Personnel

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Communications

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#### Wednesday

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Mission in Ireland

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Youth & Children's

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Hymnal

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General

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#### Thursday

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General

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Education

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Union Commission

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Judicial Commission

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#### Friday

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Trustees

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Trusts

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Studies & Christian Training

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United Appeal

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## NOTES

## MONDAY, JUNE 5

### Within Church House

7.00 p.m.—

Service of Worship  
Constitution of Assembly  
Memorial Roll  
Election of Moderator

## TUESDAY, JUNE 6

9.30 a.m.—

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (100-107).  
Arrangements Committee.
2. Reports of Synods and Presbyteries (91-99).
- (10.00) 3. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.  
**Church of Scotland:** Rt Rev Alan McDonald, Rev Dr Russell Barr, Mrs Alison Twaddle.  
**United Reformed Church:** Rev Dr David Peel, Rev Dr David Cornick.  
**Presbyterian Church of Wales:** Rev Robert Bebb.  
**Church of Ireland:** Rev Canon PF Patterson, Mr JD Johnston.  
**The Methodist Church in Ireland:** Rev Dr W Brian Fletcher, Mrs Joan Parkinson.  
**Irish Council of Churches:** Mrs Gillian Kingston.  
**Presbyterian Church USA:** Rev Doug Baker.  
**Presbyterian Church of Australia:** Rev Bob Thomas.  
**GMIH, Indonesia:** Pdt Leonard Duan, Pdt Mrs. Sartje Papoeling-Puasa, Pdt Marthen Boediman.  
**CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Malawi:** Rt Rev CEJ Msangaambe.  
**Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya:** Rev Eric Njuru.

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES

- (10.30) 4. BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (180-196)  
Adult Services; Family Services; Older People Services; Specialist Ministries.
- (11.40) Intermission
- 12.00 noon** Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- 2.00 p.m.—**
5. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION: Report and Resolution (176-179).
- (2.30) 6. BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS: Report and Resolutions (118-145)  
Asia; Europe and Middle East; Africa; Caribbean and Latin America; World Development.
7. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 61(c); 97(c), 115(1), (2) of the Code (145).
8. Overture anent Par 279(1) of the Code (145).
- (4.00) 9. BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Report and Resolutions (236-270).  
Finance, Legal and IT; Personnel; Assembly Buildings; Pensions and Assessments.
- (5.15) 10. BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS: Report and Resolutions (108-117).  
Communications Administration; Communications Development; Church Architecture.
- Lapsed Business.
- (6.15) Close of Business.

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

**9.30 a.m.—**

11. BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (146-175).  
Education and Promotion; Home and Irish Mission; Congregational Life; Shankill Road Mission.
12. Overtures anent Pars 300(4); 300(5) of the Code (173-174).
13. Memorial of the Interim Kirk Session of Ballysally Church Extension Charge (174-175).
- (11.00) 14. BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (197-207).  
Training; Research and Education; Resources; Ministry Opportunities; Ministry Events.
15. Hymnal Committee: Report and Resolutions (283-284).

**12.15 p.m.—**

Worship.

**2.00 p.m.—**

16. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (1-59).  
Priorities; Doctrine; Moderator's Advisory; Recognised Ministries.
- (3.30) 17. GENERAL BOARD: Report and further Resolutions (1-59).  
Church House, Presbytery Bounds; Manses; Centres' Review; Mission Communication.

Lapsed Business.

(5.30) Close of Business.

**7.45 p.m.—** Evening Rally.

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES



## THURSDAY, JUNE 8

### 9.30 a.m.—

18. GENERAL BOARD: Report and further Resolutions (1-59).

Church and Society; Global Concerns; Church Relations.

Lapsed General Board Business.

19. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 25(1); 30(3); 50(2) of the Code (58-59).

20. Overture anent Par 85(1) of the Code (59).

### 12.15 p.m.—

Worship

### 2.00 p.m.—

21. BOARD OF EDUCATION: Report and Resolutions (208-221).

State Education; University Education.

22. UNION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (66-90).

23. Overture on the Books anent Par 82(4) of the Code (86).

24. Overtures anent Pars 193(4); 194(8); 195(3); 237; 274(2) of the Code (87-88).

25. Memorial of the Kirk Session of Wellington Street, Ballymena (88).

26. Memorial of the East Belfast Presbytery (88-89).

27. Memorial of the Kirk Session of Fortwilliam Park and Macrory Memorial (90).

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES

(3.40) Intermission

**4.00 p.m.**

**In Private**

28. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (60-65).
29. Overture on the Books anent Par 163(2)(b) of the Code (65).

**In Public**

Lapsed Business.

(6.00) Adjournment.

**7.00 p.m.—**

Lapsed Business, if any.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 9**

**9.30 a.m.—**

30. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (278-282).
31. Appointment of New Trustee (282).
32. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (235).
- (10.00) 33. BOARD OF STUDIES AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (222-234).  
Ministerial Studies; College and Magee Management; Resourcing Christians for Ministry; Reception of Ministers and Licentiates.
34. Overtures anent Pars 193(1); 193(2)(b); 200(4); 219(5); 285(4) of the Code (232-233).
35. Memorial of the Presbytery of Armagh (233-234).

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES

36. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (271-277).

**12.15 p.m.—**

Worship.

Late Business, if any.

Lapsed Business.

BUSINESS BOARD, Final Report.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

**7.45 p.m.— YOUTH NIGHT**

*Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.*

## NOTES

## BUSINESS BOARD

### A Guide to Assembly Procedure

1. **Members** of Assembly consist of all ministers in active duty or retired and some elders, *ex officio*, together with a representative elder from each established congregation plus other elders commissioned by Presbyteries to correspond with the number of ministers serving in special appointments. Deaconesses, representatives of the Women's and Youth Movements and some others have now been invited to "sit and deliberate" as associates — i.e., to take part with members freely in debate but without voting. The Assembly quorum is fifty members.

2. While members should bear in mind any opinions or concerns of their Congregations, Kirk Sessions or Presbyteries, neither ministers nor elders attend as "delegates", obliged to vote as instructed by any of these. The Assembly should be a gathering of fully responsible, free Christian men and women, always open to spiritual guidance and information on a Church-wide basis, not a device for counting up decisions already made elsewhere.

3. **The Moderator** is chairman of the Assembly, in charge of proceedings, but he should not take sides in debates. **Former Moderators** may deputise from time to time at his request, should he wish to take part in debate or to withdraw from the House. When the Moderator rises to speak at any point all other members must yield to the Chair. Members should stand when the Moderator enters or leaves at the beginning or end of proceedings. Members may enter or leave at any time during proceedings, but should do so with as little disturbance as possible. It is a courtesy in so doing to give a slight bow to the Chair.

4. With the changing composition of the Assembly the recommended form of address to the House is simply "Moderator" (not "Mr." Moderator, etc.). Speakers should face towards the House and the microphones, not towards the Moderator.

5. **Work for which the Assembly** is responsible is generally entrusted to various permanent or temporary (“ad hoc”) committees. These must each present a report to the Assembly. Working Committees concerned with related matters are grouped under a supervising Board. A Commission of Assembly is a committee entrusted with the executive powers of the Assembly, within the terms of its appointment. Members of committees, etc., are appointed by the Assembly on the nomination of various bodies and have a Convener (i.e., executive secretary, in Irish usage) in charge.

6. **Reports.** While the Assembly is obliged to “receive” the report of each committee, etc., it does not “adopt” or accept responsibility for the contents of any report. Reports carry only the authority of the committee concerned and not of the Assembly. If found too unsatisfactory, the report may be received and referred back. Any matter to which the Assembly is to be committed must be stated in a specific resolution. Resolutions should be kept to conclusions, rather than include arguments in support such as are appropriate to speeches. Similarly, speeches in the Assembly carry the authority only of the speaker.

7. Reports, together with any appended resolutions, are first of all “presented”, usually by a Board or Committee Convener. There is then an opportunity for **questions** to be asked. These should quite strictly be asked only for further information or explanation, whether of something in the report or not in the report but for which the Board, etc., carries responsibility; they should not be rhetorical or debating “questions”, to score a point.

8. **Questions**, which should be written out and placed in the box provided in good time, will normally be limited to two per person and ten minutes in all, unless the Moderator judge that a particular subject merits an extension of these limits.

9. After Questions, the presenter of the report formally proposes the appended resolutions in block and another person seconds, with a speech taking up any other aspects requiring treatment.



10. **The Resolutions** are then taken in succession. The first of these is always “that the report be received”. This is the point where members may discuss (not ask questions about) any matters in the report or for which the Board, etc., should bear responsibility, but which do not arise under any subsequent resolution.

11. Unless otherwise arranged, speeches are limited as follows:—

Presenting a group of reports and resolutions 10 minutes

Seconding a group of reports and resolutions 7 minutes

All other speeches 5 minutes

If lapsed business accumulates, the normal abbreviated timings are as follows:—

Proposing a group of Reports – 10 minutes reduced to 7

Seconding a group of Reports – 7 minutes reduced to 5

Other speeches – 5 minutes reduced to 3.

A flickering light is given 1 minute before the end, a steady light at 30 seconds and a buzz when the time is up. Before commencing, speakers should announce their name and congregation, or for Women’s and Youth representatives, their name and Presbytery. Apart from the proposer (or alternatively the seconder) having the right to speak again in closing the debate, no one may speak twice in debating any one resolution or amendment, except to clarify some misunderstanding.

12. Resolutions are called by number. Those wishing to speak should at once come forward, or otherwise indicate their desire to speak.

13. **Amendments** may be moved without prior notice by any member so as to change the terms of a resolution within its general scope but not so as to introduce another subject. Before debating proceeds the amendment should be given in writing to the Clerk’s desk. Any amendments previously received and licensed by the Business Board, however, have precedence. At least one day’s notice must be given of an amendment which would substantially affect the scope of a motion or overture. A plea for the outright rejection of a resolution is not an amendment.

14. An amendment, if seconded, must be dealt with before further debate on the original resolution or consideration of any further amendment. If passed, the

amendment is then put as a substantive motion, when one more amendment may be considered. If the first two amendments are rejected, one more amendment may be considered before reverting to the original resolution.

15. **Additional resolutions**, concerning some matters not covered by an existing resolution, may be submitted by any member or associate as notice of motion for license. Unless there are exceptional circumstances these should be received by the Clerk at least one week before the Assembly. Resolutions rescinding or reversing a previous decision of the Assembly require notice of motion to be first given and accepted at the preceding annual meeting. Those invited to sit and deliberate may “present” resolutions or amendments in the usual way, but these must be formally proposed and seconded by a member of Assembly before being debated.

16. In the **“Alternative” format** each Board is given 35 minutes for a “Presentation”, including not only the proposing and seconding of the Report but the introduction of guests, the showing of videos, etc as may be desired. Outside speakers require the permission of the Business Board. Assembly questions for clarification then follow, and finally the resolutions. The speeches of the proposer and seconder, and any comments from committee conveners, should all be included in the allotted period of time, and these officebearers should not speak again (except on a point of clarification or to close the debate on a resolution) otherwise the report is liable to overrun and cause business to lapse.

17. **Voting** may be by voice, when the Moderator calls for those in favour to say “Aye” and those against to say “No”, or by a standing vote to be counted by tellers; or by ballot, asked for by not fewer than twenty-five members or, at the discretion of the Moderator, by the showing of voting tickets, to be counted by tellers. Proxy voting for an absent member is not allowed. A member may intimate his personal dissent or protest against any decision immediately after it has been pronounced, but does not thereby free himself from obligation loyally to implement the decision taken.

18. An **“Overture”** is a proposal for a change in the “Code”, or law of the Church’s Constitution and Government. Changes in rules, of which notice has been given in the

printed Reports, may be adopted forthwith if approved by a two-thirds majority, or without such notice if approved nem. con. If approved by a lesser majority, it is "placed on the books", to be decided at the following Assembly. This applies also to rules governing the Central Ministry Fund and other Ministry Funds. In the Basic Code, where immediate operation is desirable, the change may be adopted temporarily during the intervening year as an "interim act". If an overture contemplates a constitutional change it must also be sent down to Presbyteries to be voted on during the intervening year.

19. A "**Memorial**" is a petition to the Assembly, usually from some person or body who is not a member of Assembly, such as a subordinate court of the Church, a Church member or group of members, or persons unconnected with the Church. Procedures and forms are laid down by which the circumstances of the Memorial are outlined and a definite request or "prayer" is stated. A Memorial is also the procedure by which someone, whether member of the Assembly or not, asks for exemption from some Church rule on the plea of special circumstances.

## NOTES

# REPORTS: JUNE, 2006

## BELFAST

### GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The reports of the General Board this year show great variety and depth in its work. This is to be expected of the central co-ordinating Board of the General Assembly, but at times the sheer volume of work has caused concern, not least to ensure that all important aspects are adequately dealt with. The Business Committee is considering if there are more appropriate ways for the work to be distributed.

2. The Board continues to encourage ways to co-ordinate the work of all the Boards. A monthly meeting of Board Secretaries is now a feature of Church House administration, as well as meetings of Board Conveners and Clerks of Presbytery. Other members of Church House staff also meet on a regular basis and the Board encourages other cross-Board discussions.

3. Last year the General Assembly received notice of the intention of the Rev Prof WP Addley to retire from the Chair of Practical Theology in Union College. The Board of Studies and Christian Training was charged with drawing up a Job Description for the post, while the General Board was instructed to bring a name for appointment to this year's General Assembly. This is the first time the Interview Panel has been used, as agreed in the Review of the Nomination Board (Reports, 2004, pp 121-123). As well as the Moderator and Clerk, four members were appointed from the Board of Studies and Christian Training and four by the General Board from the wider Church. The Panel was pleased that it was able to come to a strong consensus around one name. The Rev Andrew Gibson is recommended and an appropriate resolution is appended. A summary of his application is included as Appendix A.

4. In 2003 the Assembly resolved in principle to abolish Synods (Minutes 2003, p 49, res 4). Since then consideration has been given to the outstanding issues, including appointments to the Education Board of the Synod of Belfast. While the future shape of the Belfast Presbyteries has still to be finalised it is possible for the existing Presbyteries to nominate to the Education Board. A method of nomination to the Judicial Commission is also being considered. There is therefore no reason to maintain the five Synods and appropriate overtures will be brought in the Daily Minutes.

5. Last year the Assembly again resolved that Licentiates should be approved as officiants to celebrate marriage. This requires an amendment to Code Par 85(1) and an overture is now appended.

6. In response to the resolution of the General Assembly (2005, p 275, res 2), the General Board has appointed Conveners – Revs Colin Morrison and David Montgomery – to research the possibility of a further special Assembly.

7. It was with considerable regret that the Church and Society Committee heard of the intention of the Rev David Moore to resign as Co-Convenor of the Committee. He had taken on the role and responsibilities with enthusiasm, giving insightful and well prepared reports on the issues of concern in the Republic. He had also offered wide guidance on the whole scope of the Committee's work. While respecting his decision, the Board is aware of the considerable loss which it brings. A recommendation for a new Co-Convenor will be brought to the General Assembly.

8. As one looks at the enormous amount of work being carried out under the umbrella of the General Board it is clear that the Church owes a great debt of gratitude to many committed people, including the Conveners. However, much practical everyday work is carried out in the General Secretary's Office under the supervision of Mrs Joyce Anderson. To her, with her colleagues – Jenny, Liz, Michelle and Ellery – we record again our thanks.

## APPENDIX A

### FORM OF APPLICATION

#### *For Chair of Practical Theology*

Full Name: Andrew Gibson  
 Address 46 Bryansglen Park, Bangor, BT20 3RS  
 Telephone 028 9127 3178

#### **Employment Record**

Jan 2004 – present	Associate Minister, Bloomfield
Sept 1993 – Jan 2004	Lecturer, Belfast Bible College
Sept 1986 – Aug 1993	Missionary to Kenya, PCI Overseas Board
Mar 1983 – Sept 1986	Assistant Minister, Hamilton Road, Bangor
Jul 1979 – Mar 1983	Assistant Minister, Dundonald

#### **Education**

Sept 1966 – June 1973	Sullivan Upper School, Holywood
Sept 1973 – June 1977	Queen's University, Belfast (Physics)
Sept 1977 – June 1980	Queen's University, Belfast (Theology)
Sept 1983 – June 1987	Queen's University, Belfast (Part-time MTh)
Sept 1997 – June 2006	Queen's University, Belfast (Part-time PhD)

#### **Degrees with Title and Date of any major Theses**

BSc	1977	Physics	
BD	1980		
MTh	1987		“The Charismatic Movement in Northern Ireland in its Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Context.”

PhD        2006        “The Relevance of some Themes from Gustavo Gutierrez to the Theology and Life of the Church in Contemporary Northern Ireland.”

### **Additional Information**

My understanding of Practical Theology (echoing Pattison and Woodward) is: Practical Theology is a place where Christian belief, tradition and practice meet contemporary experiences, questions and actions and conduct a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical and practically transforming. Such a definition indicates that Practical Theology has at least nine points of reference and is a highly complex endeavour that cannot be carried out in isolation from the church, the academy or the local community. I believe that it is beyond the ability of one person to make the links between the main stakeholders and the points of reference, for either prospective ministers or the church as a whole. Therefore, I make my application on the understanding that, if successful, I would be joining a team that includes not only UTC academic staff but officers of related agencies of PCI and a wide range of others within PCI and beyond.

I have always preferred teamwork to isolated endeavour and almost all of my work experience has been in this context. As a consequence, I highly value good working relationships and welcome peer criticism and support. I have always endeavoured to support colleagues without any sense of competition or ‘empire building’ and have enjoyed working in institutions in which worship, study, personal spiritual development and practical equipping form an integrated whole.

I believe that mentoring and modelling form an important part of the role of the theological teacher so that the teacher has an important pastoral role to play in the life of the student. I have been involved in such pastoral care regularly throughout my teaching.

I have been engaged in academic research for the past eight years, including work towards my PhD and have published regularly. However, consistent with my understanding of the nature of theology, I have more often published for a mid-range and popular readership than for purely academic consumption.

I have been a member of the General Assembly’s Doctrine Committee for the past two years and have co-chaired a group investigating issues of ordination, with special references to the role of elders, the position of Additional Pastoral Personnel and potential developments in patterns of pastoral ministry in PCI.

According to the college’s figures, the majority of students at Union College are not candidates for the Presbyterian ministry. This means that most students will need to be equipped for life and witness in the world outside the church. This resonates well with my commitment to the equipping of all church members for life and witness. However, I believe that the training of ministers has an importance far beyond its mathematical proportion and, if we are to build a church that can be faithful to God in Ireland in the 21st century, we need to develop visionary ministers whose work is rooted in a robust understanding of both Scripture and contemporary culture.

### References

- (a) Name Rev Dr Graham Cheesman  
 Address Belfast Bible College  
 Glenburn House, Glenburn Road South,  
 Dunmurry, BT17 9JP.  
 Position Former Principal, Belfast Bible College
- (b) Name Mr Douglas Cowan  
 Address 16 Ferndene Gardens  
 Dundonald, BT16 2EP.  
 Position Clerk of East Belfast Presbytery & Elder in Bloomfield  
 Presbyterian Church
- (c) Name Very Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop  
 Address 3 Demesne Grove  
 Holywood, BT18 9NQ.  
 Position Colleague and friend

## PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

1. The Priorities Committee met during the year to develop the thinking of the 2005 Report, especially the aspirations and key ideas identified as central to shaping the witness and mission of our Church. Attention was also given to previous Reports received by the General Assembly, especially those of the Strategy for Mission Committee, 1989-1998 and the ad-hoc Priorities Committee, 2002-2004.

### 2. GENERAL COMMENT

- If the priorities we set as a Church are to have an impact on society they must demonstrate the difference which being with Jesus makes in daily living.
- In identifying priorities for its mission and witness, the Church needs to be radical and far reaching. It must recognise there will probably be issues of importance which are not on the present agenda of any Board. There may also be work currently being done which has outlived its usefulness.
- In setting priorities the Church needs to set a time frame in order to assess the effectiveness of the process. This should be a 3 to 5 year period to allow a lead in time for the Boards to develop new directions and emphases. While it is for the General Assembly to set priorities, the Boards must then develop specific programmes of work to meet the objectives identified by these priorities.
- Identifying priorities and fresh ways to focus on the Church's mission will almost certainly lead to a reassessment of the structures in place to carry out the Church's work and the funding available to individual projects. The order of decision making should be priorities – structure – funding.



- While the remit of this Committee is to look at priorities it may be more accurate to talk about the focus of our mission.

### **3. PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED OBJECTIVES**

In considering the Strategy for Mission Reports (especially 1994, 1998); and the reports of the previous Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities, several emphases were detected which need further work and thought.

#### **(i) In Service Training and Sabbaticals**

When the Strategy for Mission Committee suggested sabbaticals and in service training it was envisaged that the Presbytery would have a greater role in giving direction to ministers within its bounds as to what training might be beneficial for their work and development. Each Presbytery was to set up Pastoral Advisors for this purpose. It was also agreed that in-service training would be written into the terms of Call at an appropriate time. While the present way in which post-ordination development is being delivered is useful, the Committee notes: firstly the uptake is low and secondly the system is voluntary.

#### **(ii) Ministry Opportunities**

Various opportunities for additional ministry have been mentioned in the Strategy for Mission Reports, but no real structure has yet been established to encourage their development and recognition. The Committee sees various ways in which the gifts of all members may be encouraged to be used at Congregational level. There may also be opportunity for a greater sharing of leadership abilities within the Presbytery. For some, the development of non-stipendiary ministry may be an appropriate outlet for their particular gifts.

#### **(iii) Central Training Unit**

The idea of a Central Training Unit was suggested in the 1994 Reports. It seems eminently sensible that training should be co-ordinated and yet this overall co-ordination, bringing together the needs of Congregations and Boards, has not really been established.

#### **(iv) Presbytery Nominees to Boards**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities emphasised on a number of occasions the importance of getting the right people with their gifts and expertise onto Boards and Committees of Assembly. While this has been attempted by Presbyteries new ways need to be found to give encouragement to people to share their experience and enthusiasm on Boards and Committees.

#### **(v) Co-ordination in the Work of Boards**

It was recognised in the previous Priorities Reports that if the work of Boards is to be effective then it must also be co-ordinated. This work has begun with the establishment of co-ordinating meetings for Board Secretaries, Conveners and Clerks of Presbytery, but the Committee believes it must be continually encouraged.

#### 4. DEVELOPING ASPIRATIONS

In last year's report the Committee identified six characteristics to which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should aspire if it is to bear strong witness in the context of our time. This led to the identification of five key themes for mission. The Committee further examined these ideas to consider how the focus of work might change to allow them to become reality within our Church.

- (a) *A prophetic voice, confidently proclaiming where it stands and who it stands beside, in a society which is increasingly secular and often opposed to Christian values and lifestyle.*

The prophetic voice offers a critique of life today and comments on where life appears to be going. It is a reflective voice which invites a response, an alternative voice which is critical of the status quo and a stimulating voice which challenges complacency. It is also an authentic voice where word is reflected in lifestyle.

In the history of the Church there are many examples of prophetic voices where individuals or the Church as a body have brought 'a word in season'. Sometimes the voice has been accompanied by action and other times the action has embodied the word.

Having a voice is essentially about communication. There is a need for a co-ordinated strategy in which the Church is prepared to set the agenda rather than respond to it. Church leadership must also be prepared to listen and to be challenged by a prophetic critique of what we are offering the world.

However important it is to speak with a prophetic voice at a denominational level, it is equally important that the prophetic voice be heard at the local level. This has important implications for the training of our students for the ministry and for the ongoing equipping of our ministers and others who declare God's Word. It also means thinking strategically about how we use the local media and the extent of our direct engagement with the society and cultures in which we live.

- (b) *A caring fellowship, welcoming the stranger and learning from one another, valuing the gifts of each individual, while offering prayer and pastoral support to all in need.*

It is recognised that our Congregations are not always as welcoming and caring as they should be. This is especially relevant at a time when visitors and strangers both from within Irish culture and beyond are coming to live and worship in our communities. There is a need to re-examine the ways in which we include outsiders and become enriched by them.

In the congregational family, while the role of the minister is pivotal, pastoral care should not be seen to be the responsibility of one person alone. The leadership should be jointly responsible, not least for its own fellowship and support. Pastoral care teams need to be developed, recognising the varied gifting of Church members who need to be trained and recognised.

The Committee also notes the weakness which can often arise in the particular care of a minister and manse family at times of stress or illness. The role of the Presbytery, as well as the Kirk Session, needs to be more clearly understood so that appropriate help may be given. It is also recognised that at times help from outside is appropriate and necessary.

- (c) *A platform for service and outreach, with each Congregation seeking to identify the needs of the community where it is placed and encouraging its members to act as Christ's representatives in the place where they live and work.*

In previous generations, in many localities, the Church was embedded in the community and acted as a Community Centre. Ministers had a high profile in the community. Attending Church was a norm that required no justification. Today the local Church is largely marginalised and is widely considered to be at best an irrelevance and at worst a negative influence, keeping alive old enmities, highlighting division and contributing to community strife. This intensifies the temptation for the local Church to become primarily a place of shelter for the faithful, an oasis of comforting certainties and fellowship. Yielding to this temptation will inevitably lead to the local Church's demise and death, since its membership will grow older, dwindle and depart.

A few local Churches have devoted considerable time and effort to considering how best to reach out to their communities, encouraging members to be involved outside the structures of the Church rather than trapped within. Many have yet to analyse their context and consider how best to serve local needs and discern opportunities for presenting the gospel. Some have yet to look beyond their current nominal membership, absorbed by trying to stem the haemorrhage of young people. Centrally, our Church through 'Strategy for Mission' and 'Engaging with the Community' (Board of Social Witness, 2001) provided helpful and challenging material. It is vital that we avoid these critical considerations becoming another addition to the paper mountain.

- (d) *A place of transformation, where people do not leave as they have entered but are challenged and changed, having encountered the living God present in the worship and the lives of his people.*

If Congregations are going to be places of transformation they must provide training, support and encouragement for members to make a difference in society. The challenge is not only to bring people to faith but to disciple them for work and service in today's world. Too many Congregations adopt a "convert and retain" policy rather than a "train and release" policy.

For this attitude to change, new thinking needs to take place on the role and leadership function of Kirk Session. This may involve issues such as the length of service of elders and their pastoral/district responsibilities. The role and training of those involved in Sunday Schools and Christian Education also needs to be re-examined.

- (e) *A community of global concern, learning from and sharing with our brothers and sisters in the world Church, while recognising with them those issues of concern for our stewardship of the world's resources where together we must challenge injustice, poverty and oppression in Jesus' name.*

Much has been said in recent years about globalisation and the fact that we live in a Global Village. There is now much greater ease in communication and travel worldwide for those in the west. Not only can we travel the world, but the world is coming to us. More than ever we are coming to see that we are very much part of the global community, and do not need to leave the shores of

Ireland to engage with a broad range of people from cultural backgrounds quite different from our own.

As we find ourselves living in an increasingly multicultural community, we find that as far as mission is concerned, 'geography is history'. The emphasis on a home and overseas distinction is diminishing, and instead of talking of mission as being local or global, we might entertain a new word that has crept into mission vocabulary, glocal. The implications of this for future inter-board discussions and for structural adjustment needs to be recognised.

Our concern for global issues must result in engagement, not only in terms of stewardship but of mission in the broadest sense. We must balance the economic, social, and political with the spiritual and environmental, taking a holistic approach. There must be emphasis on the need for the gospel to be lived out relationally and incarnationally in the world today, both at home and overseas. The Church must become a community which is globally engaged.

When speaking of community we need to think of the Church at every level – congregational, presbyterial, and in its central structures. The latter has the role of facilitating this sense of community, as well as participating in it. When it comes to building a community of global concern, it is important to have visionary leaders within central structures who are committed to working closely together. Central structures must seek to be increasingly versatile in serving Congregations and Presbyteries, meeting them at their point on the journey of Global engagement, building on and enthusing about the current interests already being expressed.

A practical outworking of this may be the sharing in training and information events, shared resource materials and publicity so that together we emphasise the unity of our Church's mission, and avoid over compartmentalisation. Key to being a community of global concern and to our progressing confidently, is our aspiration to be secure in our missionary Christian identity above and beyond all other identities, be they national or cultural.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The Committee therefore identifies five areas of focus for the mission and ministry of our Church for the next five year period. These, of course, will not be static but reviewed each year and new priorities recognised as appropriate. It is also intended that assessment should be made of progress in these areas. Presbyteries, in particular, need to give this urgent attention.

### **(i) Developing centres of pastoral care and fellowship**

Congregations need to be aware of their existence as open and welcoming communities of faith where genuine care is offered and fellowship enjoyed. Pastoral care must be seen as a responsibility of all, led by the Kirk Session. Particular attention needs to be given to the care of manse families both by the Kirk Session and Presbytery.

**(ii) Discipling and training for all-member ministry**

The development of the gifts of all believers must be a vital element of congregational life. The Committee is aware of the on-going work of the Doctrine Committee and would refer to its Report. It will mean centrally the recognition of new types of ministry, both full-time and part-time. It will also mean continuing ministerial development and the development of leadership in all aspects of congregational life. A co-ordinated approach to training and ministry is essential so the Committee welcomes the setting up of a Panel of the General Board to consider the needs and delivery of training throughout our Church.

**(iii) Prophetic community involvement**

Congregations must be encouraged to engage realistically and prophetically with the communities in which they are set. The Congregation itself must be a living witness to the transforming grace of God, but the gospel must also be lived outside the confines of the Congregation. The Church should not only act prophetically but also speak to challenge society in ways which will be heard and understood.

**(iv) Global engagement**

In mission the distinction between “home” and “overseas” is becoming increasingly irrelevant. The Church must act and think both locally and globally, learning from our partnerships with those of different cultures and traditions while offering expertise when it is requested. Issues of the global economy must be allowed to challenge our lifestyles.

**(v) The servant-courts of the Church**

Thought needs to be given as to how the courts of the Church may more adequately service the needs of Congregations in mission. The leadership role of the courts should be recognised, while acknowledging also the important fellowship and support roles which they should fulfil. This theme has also been discussed by the Panel on Presbytery Bounds and in the Board of Mission in Ireland report presented this year.

The Committee is aware that it too must prioritise in order to focus the mind of the Church on key areas for development at this time. It recognises that there is other important work going on, but brings resolutions to help focus the mind of the Church at this time.

DONALD J WATTS, Convener

## **DOCTRINE COMMITTEE**

Three areas are under consideration at present:

**1. Guidelines for Multi-Faith Events**

Comments have been received from 18 Presbyteries. These expressed a range of views across a wide spectrum of opinion and have raised a variety of

related issues. The Committee will need time to study these responses in depth and we therefore propose to bring a revised paper to the 2007 General Assembly.

## **2. Ordination**

The Committee have prepared a paper on some relevant aspects of "Ordination" for consideration by the General Assembly. This is produced below as an appendix to the report. The paper does not seek to be an exhaustive treatise on the subject but to address specific issues that seem relevant at this juncture in the life and work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI). In particular, the paper seeks to suggest new approaches to ministry and eldership that seem not to be inconsistent with our doctrine and tradition and which might fruitfully be explored by the relevant Boards and agencies of the Church.

## **3. Board of Youth and Children's Ministry**

The Committee was asked by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry to comment on a *summary* which that Board had made of the Doctrine Committee's previously published guidelines on the differences between Presbyterianism and Roman Catholicism. A sub-committee met and gave appropriate advice to the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

# **APPENDIX**

## **Paper on Ordination**

This paper falls into five sections:

1. General points on leadership in the New Testament
2. Recent PCI thinking on ordination
3. Specific issue (i) The teaching eldership
4. Specific issue (ii) Additional Pastoral Personnel
5. Specific issue (iii) The role and function of the elder

### **1. General points on leadership in the New Testament Church**

There seem to be six clear Biblical principles. First the Church ought to have consistency but not necessarily uniformity. What is acceptable in one part ought not to be in conflict with what happens throughout the community as a whole (note the variety in terms for leaders in the Church: elder, overseer, deacon; note also Paul's concern for consistency in 1Corinthians, eg 7:17).

Second, there ought to be flexibility within structures. What is useful and helpful in one situation may not be so in another. Therefore there must be freedom to contextualise the universal to meet the needs of the local (note that there is no formal leadership structure mentioned in the Corinthian letters but such a formal structure clearly exists in the Pastorals). There will always be some tension between these first two principles.

Third, any structure must enable rather than constrict the use of the gifts given by God to his whole people for ministry. It is equally important that a

structure should also provide constraints on the abuse of God's gifts (this is the most practical concern of 1Corinthians, especially 12-14).

Fourth, while the ministry of word and sacrament is unique, requiring a particular focus, there is no biblical reason to restrict this ministry to full-time, paid personnel.

Fifth, there seems to be no Biblical reason to maintain that the 'General Practitioner' approach to either teaching or ruling eldership is the only approach. In the Bible people were set apart for and commissioned to more or less restricted fields of service as the need required and God called.

Sixth, any development of 'official Church workers' should not restrict the ministry of the whole people of God. The widening of the concept of ministry from a single individual in a Congregation to a small team of a few people is of only limited value. Ministry is a work of the whole body: 'professionals' (for want of a better word) should be enablers as well as doers.

## 2. Recent PCI thinking on ordination

### (a) What has PCI said so far?

Following are the main reports presented to the General Assembly relating to the subject of ordination and relevant to our present discussion.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Reference</b>	<b>Year</b>
Ordering of Sacraments	Page 34ff	1985
Ards Memorial <i>re Deacons</i>	Page 40	1992
Ad Hoc Committee <i>re Ards Memorial on Deacons</i>	Page 350ff	1993
Ad Hoc Committee <i>re Ards Memorial on Deacons</i>	Page 300ff	1994
Doctrine Committee	Page 18	1994
Ad Hoc Committee <i>re Ards Memorial on Deacons</i>	Page 286	1995
Doctrine Committee	Page 25	1997
Doctrine Committee		
<i>Theological Foundations for Ministry</i>	Page 21ff	2000
General Board <i>Elders (Retired)</i>	Page 6ff	2000
Board of Mission In Ireland		
<i>Status of Deaconesses in Courts of the Church</i>	Page 174ff	2001
Board of Mission In Ireland		
<i>Status of Deaconesses in Courts of the Church</i>	Page 173ff	2002
Doctrine Committee		
<i>Report on Ministry</i>	Page 18ff	2002
Doctrine Committee		
<i>Theological Foundations for Ministry</i>	Page 27ff	2004

The PCI's recent thinking on ordination, as reflected in the above reports, allows us to make two sets of observations:-

**From the point of view of the Church:**

Ordination is a formal recognition of certain spiritual gifts in the person ordained. These gifts have special value for teaching and leading. Ordination is a formal recognition of a specific calling by God to the person ordained to use these gifts and of the personal sanctity of the person ordained.

Ordination is a formal commissioning by the Church, on behalf of God, to the specific ministries associated with teaching and leading the Church and is a formal commitment by the Church to support the person ordained in the ministry to which that person has been ordained.

**From the point of view of the person ordained:**

Ordination is a formal commitment by the individual to a life of service to the Church. It is also a formal commitment by the individual to submission to the courts of the Church.

**3. Teaching elders**

Ordination of teaching elders is the recognition of certain gifts of ministry. At ordination the Church publicly acknowledges that the individual's call to the teaching eldership is valid. The objective Call from a Congregation is the final confirmation of the subjective call from God.

Many other denominations make use of people who make a part-time or unpaid commitment to formal ministry (as we do already with retired Ministers). These can be divided into a number of categories:

1. Non-stipendiary, full time clergy.
2. Non-stipendiary, part time clergy.
3. Paid part time clergy.
4. Lay pastoral workers.

It seems appropriate that we investigate some of these models and seek to develop patterns of ministry that will meet the needs of PCI in the coming decades.

The New Testament Church developed a range of ministry roles, some formal with 'governmental responsibility', others specific and possibly short term. This range was always present in Scripture as God raised up people for certain specific tasks. Through the General Assembly, we should officially recognise that there is a range of specialist ministries for which ordination as a teaching elder may be appropriate. Obviously there is a lot of work to be done on how these roles are to be defined.

At present we operate a 'General Practitioner' model but there would be much merit in ordaining people to particular or 'specialist' ministries such as Church planting, chaplaincy, youth ministry or cross cultural mission. Ordination for these people could be restricted in role so that, for example, they might be 'ordained and commissioned to the ministry of Church planting' or 'ordained and commissioned to the ministry of hospital chaplaincy'. The ordination aspect would be a recognition of spiritual maturity and gifting and a call to leadership in general and the commissioning aspect would be a recognition of specific gifts and setting apart to use those gifts to fulfil a



particular role. It should be remembered that we already ordain within limits of ministry in our distinction between ruling and teaching elders.

**Recommendation:** That PCI explore the value of (i) ‘specialist’ teaching elders, (ii) part-time teaching elders and (iii) non-stipendiary teaching elders.

#### **4. Non-ordained personnel/Additional Pastoral Personnel (APP)**

The Union Commission ‘through its Additional Appointments Committee processed and approved 13 APP’s’ (Reports, 2005). There are about 120 APP’s at the moment. The 1997 Guidelines are still the ‘touch stone’ for procedure re selection and appointment (page 57, Reports, 1997). Therefore a structure has been established within which we appoint APP’s. A job description and personnel specification is drawn up by the Kirk Session in consultation with Peninsula Business Services Ltd. These are agreed by Kirk Session and submitted to Presbytery and Union Commission (Additional Appointments Committee) for approval. Without such approval no appointment can be made. The Presbytery ensures that the person to be appointed is in sympathy with the doctrines and practices of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, gives assent to the post, and must approve the person before appointment. However, no formal mechanism exists to ensure that APP’s understand their work in the context of the broader life and witness of the PCI. In addition there is no standard formula for appointment or pattern for a service of ‘induction’. The Ballymena Presbytery Model is a possible way forward re appointment and ‘induction’.

**Recommendation:** That, in order to achieve consistency across the Church, PCI should develop an in-service training programme for all APP’s and draw up guidelines for a service of induction for APP’s.

#### **5. The ruling eldership**

There is no biblical reason why eldership in the local Congregation should follow a ‘General Practitioner’ model similar to that of the teaching elder. There also seems to be no reason to identify the leaders within the local Congregation with the primary pastoral-care givers, as we do at present. Could we conceive of ordination of elders to leadership in general, but within this, commissioning of individuals to particular leadership or pastoral roles? This would mean that a Kirk Session could be constituted of some who are gifted for and commissioned to pastoral care, others to strategic planning or administration or mission. This would give considerable flexibility and allow elders to fulfil the roles for which God has gifted them without worrying about having to be capable in all areas of leadership. This could be done within the framework of our current understanding of ordination.

The Committee on Resourcing Christians for Ministry is to be commended for its work on training of new elders and encouraging and facilitating ‘every member ministry’. The Committee should be encouraged and resourced to develop this training to include a programme of leadership development which would guide the Church concerning the ministry of eldership in the contemporary Church, paying special attention to the nature of Christian leadership and pastoral care.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee on Resourcing Christians for Ministry be encouraged to develop its work on Christian leadership and pastoral care and that the Church at large be encouraged to refine its thinking and practice in this area.

JP TAYLOR, Convener

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMITTEE

1. By the time the General Assembly meets the Church and Society Committee will have met on 8 occasions and held numerous other meetings. The report includes appendices and it is likely that there will be a supplementary report and additional resolutions in the Daily Minutes, since this report is being written at the beginning of March.

2. The work of the Committee makes a significant demand on the time and energy of both members and conveners and there is continuing concern that not every opportunity for engagement with Civil Society can be availed of.

3. The Committee continues to respond to invitations to meet with interested groups and to create opportunities for engagement. As the Moderator agreed to take on the task of meeting with victims of the 'Troubles' in the Presbyteries of Tyrone, Armagh and Newry, dealing with the past has become the dominant theme for the Committee during this year. (Appendix 2, par 8; resolution 4).

4. This theme is echoed in the concern about the new Policing Board and its membership and regarding the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill which, at the time of writing, has been withdrawn. (Appendix 2, pars 4-7). As a society we are constantly confronted by the demand to move forward but find ourselves tied to the past. To what degree the Church can enable and embody the kind of lifestyle and vision that liberates from the past remains a matter for debate but we, as the Church, are challenged to contribute towards a society that creates the space for human flourishing.

5. To what extent we are able to move forward as a society is dependent on how we deal with the past. We are not God and cannot, therefore, forgive all things, even in the face of repentance. Those who have committed terrorist atrocities, or who have been involved in terrorist activity, despite having 'served their time' remain a threat to society's stability, both in real and emotional terms. Whether or not they should be permitted to serve on the Policing Board is a question which cannot be considered without reference to the sense of threat experienced within wider society.

6. The threat of terrorism is real, not only in Northern Ireland, but across the world. Alongside ethnic terrorism we experience the threat and reality of religious-based terrorism. The formation of government by Hamas, in the Palestinian territories, signals more uncertainty and mistrust. The outcome of the threat of terrorism is division, suspicion and hatred, which sometimes issues in violence and murder, but always destabilises society by undermining trust and common vision.

7. The Church is challenged to articulate and embody a vision which flows from the gospel. It is a vision for human flourishing through which human

relationships are built out of the experience of grace and forgiveness which belongs to those who are in Christ. In society, it is the task of the Church to find where the vision is articulated, if only in part, and to seek to share in and build a common vision. In so doing the Church contributes to creating the space for human flourishing, enabling the past to be dealt with and helping to shape a common vision for the future.

8. The Committee believes that it can contribute to the creation of a societal context in which it is possible for people to flourish. The perfect relationships of Eden were broken at the Fall and humanity continues to experience sinful brokenness. The mission of the Church is, therefore, to share in God's mission of reconciling people with God, people with one another, and people with the environment.

9. In seeking to make its contribution the Committee has adopted some guiding principles: non-violent encounter and engagement; mediation, engagement and dialogue as for a non-violent encounter; sustainability and stewardship; restoring relationships.

10. In the work of assisting in the creation of a context for human flourishing the Committee understands the necessity of working towards a truly shared future. We, as everyone, have responsibilities for action and inaction. Inaction often leaves us complicit with division, separation and conflict. Action needs to bend towards the values of the Kingdom and the creation of God's shalom. We cannot expect this from others if we do not expect it from ourselves. Shalom, as peace, harmony and restored relationships, requires the Church to become a builder of trust and an establisher of hope, thus contributing to the creation of a context for human flourishing.

### **Victims**

11. Representatives of the Committee met with Mrs Bertha McDougall, Interim Victims Commissioner. Her interest in raising the profile of victims needs was encouraged by the Committee and we were particularly impressed by her concern for victims as they age and their needs change.

### **Parades, disturbance and the search for accommodation**

12. Following disturbances at the Whiterock Parade in September 2005 the Moderator issued statements, (Appendix 1, par 5), followed by a statement from the General Board (Appendix 1, par 7).

13. During the year the Committee welcomed the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Orange Order, the Royal Black Institution and the Independent Orange Order to discuss their proposed submission to government regarding the Parades Commission. Believing that all attempts to reach arrangements which will provide for peaceful parading and protesting are to be encouraged, the Committee commends the work being done.

14. The Committee has been invited to make a submission to the Parades Commission regarding its statutory documents, Guidelines, Procedural Rules and Code of Conduct procedures. The response is not available at the time of writing and will be contained in the Daily Minutes.

**Informers, government agents and paramilitary organisations**

15. The revelations regarding informers and government agents have left many in our society wondering who can be trusted. The impacts inside paramilitary organisations can only be guessed at as this is not a subject which is open for discussion. Many who have engaged with paramilitaries, politicians and government representatives have been left with the impression that their contributions have been anything but valuable, asking themselves if they were simply wasting their time. However, the courage of those who took risks of engagement should not be underestimated and they, in their turn, should be encouraged by remembering that 'nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.' (Hebrews 4:13)

16. The International Monitoring Commission (IMC) has made reports following the July announcements of final decommissioning by the Provisional IRA (PIRA) and its standing down. (Appendix 1, par 8f) These reports continue to affirm the significance of acts of decommissioning and the solid commitment of PIRA to peaceful means.

17. The IMC reports also indicate concerns about continuing criminality and the activities of loyalist paramilitaries. As a matter of urgency the Loyalist paramilitaries need to respond to the changed situation and every effort needs to be made to move society beyond criminality. While things are moving in the right direction we cannot content ourselves with a society which exchanges one set of problems for another.

**Political parties, representation and local government**

18. The May elections of last year saw 68% of the vote being divided between the DUP and SF; 33.7% to the DUP and 24.3% to SF. This polarisation of the vote while, on the one hand, causing concern about the deepening entrenchment and division in society, on the other hand perhaps paints a more realistic picture of where political aspirations and worries sit.

19. Despite political entrenchment the Committee believes that political agreements, however short of the ideal, are possible. In our engagements with political parties and other groups we have continued to urge for accommodation and expressed a commitment to the value of local governance through the devolution of power to the Stormont Assembly.

20. The Committee has some concerns about the devolution of justice and policing powers. (Appendix 2, par 7)

**Civil Partnerships**

21. The matter of civil partnerships exercised the minds of the wider Church and the Committee. A full report is included at Appendix 2, pars 12-18, and resolutions 6 and 7. An additional paragraph and resolution can be found in the Daily Minutes.

**Human Rights**

22. The Committee took the opportunity to meet with Ms Monica McWilliams, Chief Commissioner, Human Rights Commission. A response to the Human Rights Strategic Plan for 2006-2009 is included at Appendix 3.

23. The matter of Civil Partnerships has also been of concern in the Republic.

### **Asbestos Dumping**

24. The Committee appreciates and values initiatives taken locally. While the matter of asbestos dumping is far from local, in the sense that its impacts will be felt on a considerably wider scale, nevertheless it is the local Presbytery of Templepatrick which knows the issues best. The Committee is grateful to the Presbytery for taking initiatives and for keeping the Committee informed.

### **The Republic**

25. Over the year the Committee met with representatives of the political parties in the Republic (Appendix 1, pars 15-20). The relationship between the British and Irish Governments was an important item on the agenda for discussion.

26. Dealing with the past is a challenge in the Republic also, particularly given the anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising. The challenges of remembering the past while moving into the future have proven to be of concern across the whole Island of Ireland.

27. The Committee on the Constitution has published its report recommending that there will be no change to the traditional definition of the family for the present.

28. The small and specific group of people known as ‘aged-out minors’ remains a matter of concern and at the time of writing the issues have not been resolved. Aged-out minors are those who came to Ireland as children. However, the processing of their application for asylum has taken so long they are now treated as adults and are under threat of deportation.

### **Europe**

29. Rev Matthew Ross continues his work in Europe with the Church and Society Commission. He offers an invaluable link into the structures of Europe and gives helpful “early warning” on impending legislation. A resolution to continue his support for a further three years is appended.

### **Invoking the past: hope and memory**

30. The memory of things past impacts society’s reaction to every proposal for a way forward. From membership of the Policing Board, to the work of the Human Rights Commission, from the work of the Victims Commissioner to the devolution of power, the past and its memory shape the future we choose.

31. For the Church, hope is stronger than memory. We invoke the past, specifically the memory of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in so doing we invoke the memory of the one who is the hope of salvation, the hope of the world. It is, therefore, Christian hope which sustains us as God’s pilgrim people in a world disabled by memory and we subvert disabling memory with the radical memory of Jesus Christ through whom there is salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and the eschatological hope of the life to come. As

Christians we respond to our memories with the memory of Christ and the hope it brings when we experience salvation and take our place in the world as citizens of heaven. Thus, for the Church, hope is stronger than memory.

32. It is with the memory of Christ and the strong hope which comes through salvation that the Church and Society Committee carries out its work. We continue in hope, seeking a society which enables human flourishing. We are also keenly aware that this is, in the words of the poet Edwin Muir, 'a difficult country, and our home.'

L E CARROLL, D T MOORE, Co-Conveners

## APPENDIX 1:

### CHURCH AND SOCIETY REPORT AND RESOLUTIONS TO THE GENERAL BOARD, OCTOBER 2005

1. On July 28, 2005 the Republican Movement declared its intention to stand down its membership and engage in final acts of decommissioning. A statement was issued in the name of Rev Lesley Carroll, co-convenor: "In the context of the biblical injunction to 'live in harmony with one another' the Rev Lesley Carroll, convenor of the Presbyterian Church and Society Committee welcomes today's statement from the IRA. The Committee has always encouraged actions that would enable our society to move forward in the process of building peace with one another and today's statement is a significant move in that direction. The Committee will meet as soon as possible to fully consider the statement and make further response to it."

2. The Committee met with representatives of Sinn Fein who sought to describe for them the 'historic' nature of the IRA statement, its unprecedented nature and the political conditions which now exist for peacefully engaging with one another. They emphasised that the armed struggle is over.

3. The Committee expressed a number of concerns to the Sinn Fein representatives, specifically when things would move on, how decommissioning would be verified and the need to consider what value systems should underpin the new situation political situation.

4. Following this meeting the Committee met with Rev Mervyn Gibson to seek some insight on loyalist responses to the IRA statement and to engage in conversation regarding the upcoming contentious parade at Whiterock.

5. On September 9 the Moderator issued the following statement: "I am disappointed that the genuine dialogue engaged in by those involved in the Whiterock parade has been unsuccessful in satisfying both sides. The Presbyterian Church has encouraged communities to make every effort to come to local agreement over disputed parades. I understand that there are many concerns and worries about freedom to express culture, to achieve justice and equality and about human rights. However the General Assembly has recognised that if local agreement cannot be reached, the Parades Commission have no alternative but to issue a lawful determination by which those who parade and those who protest must abide. I call on all involved to express their views to one another and the authorities using only peaceful and lawful methods in order to create a climate in which meaningful dialogue should recommence." On

September 11 the Moderator issued a further statement: "I am appalled by the widespread rioting that has spread across Belfast and beyond and shocked by its violence and ferocity. Anyone with influence should use it to diffuse tension and do all they can to return calm to our communities. All involved should use only peaceful and lawful methods to create a climate in which the many concerns and worries about freedom to express culture, to achieve justice and equality and about human rights can be dealt with constructively." The Moderator also visited on the Shankill Road and at schools in the Ballymena area which had been affected by disturbances.

6. Over the time of the Whiterock disturbances the co-convener, Lesley Carroll, met with Duncan McCausland, ACC for Belfast; Desmond Rea, Chairman of the Policing Board; Peter Hain, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and a number of political and community representatives. Concern was expressed regarding the role of government and its commitment to a holistic peace process, policing and policing policy, and representation was made regarding the expressed concerns of the loyalist community. However, the co-convener was again struck by the need to develop a position which is clearly Christian and informed by gospel principles. The Committee is in the process of agreeing a number of principles to inform and sustain its thinking, engagement with others and public statements.

7. At a special meeting of the General Board, September 13 2005, the Board requested that a statement be issued on their behalf which would express the concern of the Church and invite the Church to prayer. The following statement was issued: "At its meeting today, Tuesday 13 September, in Belfast, the General Board of the Presbyterian Church expressed its concern at the present situation. We are aware that there are many issues of concern for members of the unionist and loyalist community. However, we, as many others in our country, have been distressed to see injury and the threat of injury; activity which has made many fearful and curtailed freedom of movement; the level of destruction to property and the continuing unrest. It is our view that such unrest and disorder does not assist in making a credible case. Violence does not pay. We therefore urge, as the Moderator has done, that views be expressed in ways which are peaceful and lawful. We invite the Churches to make time to pray specifically for peace and for ways in which people separated from one another may become reconciled to one another. We encourage all, brothers and sisters, to not be weary in doing what is right. (2 Thes. 3v13)"

8. To the Committee, as to many people, the time between the declaration of the IRA's intent to decommission and the announcement that final acts of decommissioning had taken place, seemed very long. Yet, these acts have significance for the whole of Northern Irish society.

9. Since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has both urged and prayed for the decommissioning of paramilitary weaponry. We have accepted the IICD as the body to oversee decommissioning and taken the position that everything that could be done, should be done, to make the process of decommissioning credible to as wide a spectrum of people as possible. We have argued that decommissioning would be significant not only as a symbolic, confidence building measure, but as an integral part of building peace among divided people in Northern Ireland,

removing the threat of violence and enabling trusting relationships. It is, therefore, in light of our deeply held conviction that the removal of threat and the development of trust enable new relationships that we welcome the act of decommissioning by the IRA.

10. It is clear that the act of decommissioning is viewed, by the Republican Community, as a momentous act. We hear the message that this is an act of courage, which took strategic and committed leadership and which has transformed the Republican cause into a fully political expression of its goals and aspirations. We see this from the outside, hear the concerns of the Unionist community regarding credibility and acknowledge the sense of this act coming very late in the day. However, while it is our conviction that no one can know if all the weaponry has been given up, we recognise that the amount is very significant, as indeed is the act of decommissioning itself.

11. The Church of Jesus Christ is concerned with peace and love, and with seeking the transformation of individuals, communities and societies towards good neighbourliness, justice, honesty and trusting relationships. It is our responsibility, as the Church of Jesus Christ, to recognise transformation when it happens and to welcome it, particularly when it enables others to move in the direction of their own transformation.

12. We seek momentous changes in society arising from the engagement of government, civil society (including the Churches) and local communities. We continue to urge and pray for the decommissioning of all paramilitary weaponry, for loyalist paramilitary organisations to engage purposefully with the IICD on the issue of decommissioning, and for the will to make peace which is somewhat different and more urgent than the desire for peace. The attacks at Carnmoney Cemetery, the threat of further attacks, and the murder of Jim Gray are to be deplored and are evidence of the changes that need to be made in our society.

13. The majority of people desire peace; we pray that the majority of people may develop and express their will to make peace, thus transforming relationships at every level of society in Northern Ireland. The enduring challenge for all is to heal our society and to that end we must steadily bend our energies and deploy our faith in God, who loved us before we loved him.

14. We believe that it is the time for politicians, members of civil society and every person in Northern Ireland to give attention to issues which affect our common humanity. In so doing we seek the creation of a context which enables human flourishing. Education, poverty, health care, provision for the needs of older persons, attention to youth concerns, security of individuals and communities, freedom to trade without interference from criminal gangs, respectful relationships, the development of the human person to their full potential, justice and equality are matters which impact everyone beyond the boundaries of sectarian or racial division. When these matters are addressed collectively we believe a context for human flourishing will be created and the hope of society renewed. The Churches, as members of civil society, can play their part alongside politicians and leaders. We do so in the belief that God intends that we keep our tongues from evil, and our lips from speaking deceit; that we depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. (Psalm 34 vv13-14)



15. On October 5 the Committee travelled to Dublin. The day began with a meeting at the Department of the Taoiseach in Government Buildings with Mr Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General of the Department, and a number of his senior staff in the Northern Ireland Division. An open and helpful discussion was held on the current state of the Peace Process in the immediate aftermath of the IRA decommissioning.

16. Also present at the meeting were representatives of the Department of Justice whose particular responsibility lies with Immigration. The specific issue of “aged-out minors” was raised. This small and specific group of people came to Ireland as children, but the processing of their application for asylum has taken so long they are now treated as adults and under threat of deportation. It is hoped that the Department will treat those involved with compassion and generosity.

17. In the afternoon the Church and Society Committee had separate with representatives of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, the two main political parties in the Republic. Mr Enda Kenny TD, leader of Fine Gael, hosted the latter meeting.

18. In both meetings the Committee felt its concerns were heard with interest and received encouragement to continue regular meetings with these parties. It is also hoped to engage with other parties who wish to meet us.

19. As yet no report has been issued by the All Party Committee on the Constitution in relation to the Family, to whom we made a submission earlier this year. Such a report is expected soon.

20. The Committee has an increasing workload and will have to take decisions about what issues to prioritise. The Committee would, therefore, value the prayers of the Board as it makes choices and engages in further meetings and discussions with other members of civil society.

## **BOARD RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the report be received.
2. That paragraphs 8-14, as amended, be issued as a public statement on behalf of the Board.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **CHURCH AND SOCIETY REPORT AND RESOLUTIONS TO THE GENERAL BOARD, MARCH 2006**

1. The Church and Society Committee has met on three occasions since the last meeting of the General Board. Meetings have also taken place with Ms Monica McWilliams, Chief Commissioner NIHRC, 3 representatives of Sinn Féin and 6 representatives of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, Royal Black Institution and the Independent Loyal Orange Institution.

2. At the request of the Board the co-convenor has tried to secure a meeting between the Moderator and Fr Alex Reid but it has not been possible to arrange this meeting.

3. The Committee has continued to support the work of Presbyteries, advising the Templepatrick Presbytery as they proceed to challenge the matter of dumping asbestos in the Crumlin area.

### **DEALING WITH THE PAST**

4. The Moderator, Dr Watts and Rev Lesley Carroll met with the minister, Mr David Hanson MP to receive information about the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill and how it was progressing through the parliamentary stages. Concern was expressed by representatives of all the Churches who had been invited, particularly regarding the position in which victims could be left both not knowing who had committed an offence while at the same time knowing that someone had come forward.

5. Having spent some considerable time analysing and formulating a response to the Bill and circulating that response to local representatives, it was a surprise to find the legislation being withdrawn. However, the Committee understands that this may only be an interim measure and that an alternative of some kind may be offered. We will, therefore, keep in touch with local representatives and be alert to this matter in order that the concern of the Church can be voiced. In the meantime we note the establishment of the Historic Inquiries Team and any hope that it may bring for the closure of unresolved cases.

6. Society in Northern Ireland continues to be challenged to move forward from the past. It is expected that the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill, while withdrawn in the meantime, will re-emerge as a bartering tool in the political process. The Committee particularly notes Sinn Fein's opposition to any member of the security forces coming under the Bill's remit. While we oppose the Bill, the Committee would argue that what is called justice for one should be justice for all. We oppose the Bill, but equally oppose any attempt for it to become exclusive or excluding.

7. The discussion about the devolving of justice and policing powers and the ongoing debate about community restorative justice also cause some concern to the Committee. We acknowledge and emphasise the need for accountability and information-sharing across the security services as a matter not only of providing adequate security systems but also as a matter of building public confidence. Changes cannot be finally put in place without the restoration of the Assembly; therefore the Committee has doubt as to the urgency some politicians express to devolve power. On the one hand, we believe that local issues are best addressed locally. On the other hand, we believe that trust-building and consensus are essential before the restoration of the Assembly occurs and that the Assembly's restoration would in no way be used to twist the arms of those as yet uncertain as to the way forward. We believe that the British government has a moral responsibility to support the development of the peace process at every level but that it oversteps responsibility when it forces the pace of the process for its own ends.

8. In Northern Ireland the victims of the 'Troubles' are those whose pain is sharpest and sacrifice greatest. No movement forward can be made without attention to the needs of victims. The Moderator has carried out three meetings with victims in the Presbyteries of Tyrone, Newry and Armagh.

## **NORTHERN IRELAND INDUSTRY**

9. In December cuts in Total Allowable Catches, under the EU Common Fisheries Policy, bring increasing concern for Northern Ireland's fishing industry. These cuts bring with them the possibility of a further 15 vessels being lost from the fleet and the subsequent loss in jobs and income. The Committee is concerned that Northern Ireland's Fishing Industry has not been more adequately represented in Europe, largely because the responsibility has fallen to a British Minister with an extensive brief.

10. The Committee is acutely aware of the dangers associated with fishing the waters off the coast of Northern Ireland and beyond, no more so than when two young fishermen from Ardglass lost their lives.

11. The movement of Avian flu across Europe threatens the poultry industry and highlights the need to protect the industry. The Committee is prayerfully conscious of the needs of farmers and of the necessary leadership and planning skills required to confront the challenges. We are concerned that adequate information is provided to the public and that good guidance and support be given to those involved in the poultry industry.

## **CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

12. Since December 19, 2005 the registration of civil partnerships has been permitted in Northern Ireland.

13. The Presbyterian Church considers that marriage has been ordained by God to offer lifelong companionship in a committed relationship of a man and a woman. This is the purpose for which God created male and female. While the Church would wish to be supportive and welcoming to people of all sexual orientations, it believes that the sexual act should be practiced in a committed heterosexual relationship. That is what makes marriage unique.

14. While the Civil Partnerships legislation makes no claim to providing marriage for same sex couples, nevertheless the manner of offering them in a way which mirrors marriage regulations challenges the uniqueness of marriage as a God-given ordinance. Civil Partnerships, while providing protection, for example of property rights, pose a challenge to the uniqueness of marriage. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland holds that marriage is ordained by God and unique.

15. At the 1979 General Assembly (Minutes p99) it was stated that, 'The Holy Scriptures clearly condemn homosexual practices, as they also condemn heterosexual immorality, but as clearly declare to those so involved the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with the promise of forgiveness and strength in response to repentance and faith.'

16. While holding to this belief the 1999 General Assembly (Reports p 192) stated that, '... there continues to be a misunderstanding of homosexuality, a spirit of judgmentalism, and even homophobia exists which is not proper in the Christian Church. We need to respond to homosexual people with compassion and understanding but many of us, if we are honest, struggle with how to do this.'

17. Taking into account the standard of heterosexual, monogamous, faithful relationship expressed in Christian marriage and the concern to resist

homophobia and judgmentalism, whether expressed in physical attacks or in insensitive language, the booklet 'Homosexuality' was commended to the Church for study in 1999. All the affirmations and recommendations within that booklet provide helpful guidelines for Christian behaviour. (p10)

- (a) We believe that men and women are created in the image of God and that our sexuality should be recognised as an important part of our personality.
- (b) We affirm that it is God's will that sexual intercourse should take place in the context of monogamous heterosexual marriage.
- (c) We believe that people with homosexual tendencies are loved by God, but we also believe that homosexual practice is condemned in both the Old and New Testaments as wrong and against God's design for humankind.
- (d) We affirm that we are all sinners and all of us are in need of the grace of God. Heterosexual and homosexual sins are equally offensive to our Lord.
- (e) We believe that in the past many within the Church, have discriminated, misunderstood and hurt homosexuals.
- (f) We call upon all people, whether homosexual or heterosexual, to exercise self restraint and discipline in their sexuality – fidelity within heterosexual marriage and abstinence outside of it.
- (g) We urge Christians to offer real support, patience and love to all who struggle with sexual morality and through it all the promise of forgiveness, and hope, in the name of Jesus Christ to all who repent.

18. While civil partnerships are a legal arrangement within the State, they have been unhelpfully portrayed by the media as 'gay marriage'. We emphasise the separation of Church and State but equally emphasise that homophobic attacks, either in speech or action, are not justifiable as they dehumanize and demean. 'We are all human beings ...and however strongly we may disapprove of sexual practices, we have no liberty to dehumanize those who engage in them.' (Homosexuality p 4). However, our Church believes that society can be strong and happy only where the marriage bond is held in honour.

#### **NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

19. The NIHRC strategic plan for 2006-2009 has been out for consultation, responses to be made by January 31 2006. The Committee's response is attached with this report.

#### **FROM THE REPUBLIC**

20. The Irish Government has published a white paper on the EU Constitution, which may be viewed on [www.europeanconstitution.ie](http://www.europeanconstitution.ie) it marks a concerted effort to try to promote the document to the public. The National Forum for Ireland is expected to play an important role in the renewed debate. No new date set for postponed referendum.

21. In October the Church and Society Committee met with Civil Servants in the Department of the Taoiseach to discuss matters such as the Peace Process and Immigration. Useful meetings were also held with representatives

of Fianna Fáil and with Mr. Enda Kenny TD leader of Fine Gael. It is hoped in the near future to have a meeting with representatives of the Progressive Democrats.

22. The Southern Co-Convener and the Moderator, Dr Uprichard and their wives paid a courtesy call to the President of Ireland, Mrs McAleese in Dublin on 20 October, 2005.

23. On 25 October 2005 the Ferns report was issued into Clerical Child abuse by Roman Catholic priests in Co. Wexford. This has ignited a huge debate in the Republic on the separation of Church and State. The next Diocese to be investigated is Dublin, where there are likely to be many more cases uncovered.

24. Specific legislative change is likely in the area of the creation of a criminal offence of recklessly endangering a child, or of failing to protect a child from such risks. This may have implications for our child protection policies.

25. The Committee on the Constitution has published its report. It recommends that there will be no change to the traditional definition of the family for the present, but does recommend:

- A constitutional amendment to underpin the individual rights of children, as follows “All children, irrespective of birth, gender, race or religion, are equal before the law. In all cases where the welfare of the child so requires, regard shall be had to the best interests of the child.”
- Legislative changes to give tax, inheritance and stamp duty concessions to unmarried and same sex couples are proposed in terms of providing civil partnership schemes for both heterosexual co-habiting couples and same-sex couples.
- A constitutional amendment is proposed to make the provision relating to women in the home gender neutral. The Committee recommends research into the benefits of the family to the social solidarity of the nation. It also “believes that an endorsement by the state of the traditional family should be accompanied by a scheme of practical support for its primary social role.”
- Legislative changes aimed at strengthening the natural father’s position before family law courts.
- It is also suggested that legislation to promote the welfare of children should have a special concern to secure adequate resources for lone parent families.

26. As the British Government has withdrawn its legislation concerning “On The Runs” (OTR) the Irish Government has also withdrawn its proposals, which would have taken the form of pardons for those not yet convicted.

27. Minister Michael McDowell has set up a working group on Civil Partnerships in the light of the situation in the United Kingdom, to report in March.

28. The Committee notes with regret the intention of David Moore to resign as co-convener of the Church and Society Committee.

## **BOARD RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the report be received.

2. That the General Board expresses concern regarding the dumping of asbestos in the Crumlin area, notes the far-reaching effects this will have on the health and well-being of the residents of Northern Ireland and beyond, and asks the minister, Lord Rooker, to pay particular attention to the concerns that have been brought to his attention and act accordingly for the good of all.

3. The General Board welcomes the withdrawal of the Northern Ireland (Offences) Bill and the establishment of the Historic Enquiries Team but believes that any such inquiries should issue in prosecutions as far as possible.

4. That the Moderator and his chaplains be thanked for the work done in meeting with victims in the Presbyteries of Tyrone, Newry and Armagh. In light of those meetings:

- (a) The General Board recognises the fortitude and courage of those many members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, who for many years have had to live with the effects of personal loss and injury due to terrorist activity, and commend them to the ongoing prayers of the Church and the grace of Almighty God.
- (b) The General Board expresses warm appreciation of the excellent work done by many Ministers and Congregations, which has been widely recognised as bringing help, hope and comfort to those who lives have been affected by terrorist activity.
- (c) That the General Board expresses its concern to those members of the Church who have suffered because of past terrorist activity and who are still facing problems within their local community.
- (d) The General Board requests the Board of Studies and Christian Training to consider incorporating some training on counseling for trauma victims into the training course for Ministerial Studies.
- (e) The General Board encourages further meetings with members of our Church who have suffered as the result of terrorist violence.

5. That the General Board expresses concern at the continuing reduction in fishing quotas and prayerfully remembers all those involved in the fishing industry, particularly the families of Connor Bogues and Donal Gibson to whom we express our sympathy.

6. In light of the Civil Partnership Legislation, the General Board affirms:

- (a) that marriage has been ordained by God to offer lifelong companionship in a committed relationship of a man and a woman. This is part of the design of creation. While the Church would wish to be supportive and welcoming to all people, it believes that no sexual intercourse should take place outside marriage.
- (b) that the use of the terms 'marriage' and 'wedding' with regard to civil partnerships, particularly by the media, is erroneous and misleading
- (c) that violence, hatred and abuse directed towards homosexuals, expressed in speech or action, are dehumanizing and demeaning and have no place in the Church where all kinds of people are welcomed on the journey of faith and growth in grace through continuing repentance and the experience of forgiveness
- (d) that the General Board believes society can be strong and happy only where the marriage bond is held in honour

7. The General Board draws the attention of the Church to the 1979 Reports, pp181-195, "The Church and the Homosexual", and to the Minutes (p 99) of that same year when the General Assembly resolved that, "... the Holy Scriptures clearly condemn homosexual practices, as they also condemn heterosexual immorality, but as clearly declare to those so involved the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with the promise of forgiveness and strength in response to repentance and faith ..."

8. That the resignation of Rev David Moore as co-convenor of the Church and Society Committee, from June 2006, be noted and steps taken to fill the position.

### APPENDIX 3

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY SUBMISSION TO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

### Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan 2006 – 2009

#### A Response to the consultation document by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

January 2006

#### Introduction

This response comes on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, representing Presbyterian clergy and lay members in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It has been formulated by the Church and Society Committee, a representative body of the Church as a whole.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. In responding we reiterate the following:

- The dignity of the human person arises from the fact that we are made in the image of God, which is a prior consideration to issues of class, race, religion or sexual orientation.
- The God in whose image we are made has existed from the beginning in the unity and community of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- We believe that human rights proceed from the social natures of humanity (God combines unity and relationship within himself). Everyone is a person-in-relationship whose well being cannot be attained alone. To be human is to have rights which are to be respected and to have responsibilities which are to be freely undertaken.
- The dignity and worth of each individual and consequent rights and responsibilities derive from such a basis.

**Aim 1: Building a human rights culture in Northern Ireland**

We welcome efforts made by Chief Commissioner Monica McWilliams to meet with stakeholders including a visit to the Church and Society Committee at the end of 2005. We look forward to further constructive engagement with the Chief Commissioner and her staff during the period of this strategic plan.

A human rights culture can often be assumed to be in and of itself self-evidently and unquestionably good. We hope that in seeking to build a human rights culture in Northern Ireland the Commission will facilitate open debate and allow differing but nonetheless equally valid perspectives which at times may validly question human rights principles and decisions without automatically implying that those perspectives are deemed to be anti-human rights.

**Aim 2: Challenging and preventing human rights abuses**

We recognise the investigations undertaken by the Commission to date in many areas, including for example the investigation in to the imprisonment of women and girls in Northern Ireland.

**Aim 3: Building support for a Bill of Rights and working in partnership with others for its implementation**

We welcome the objective to develop a round table of political parties and representatives of civil society to consider proposals for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. We would wish to continue to be consulted on proposals for such a Bill.

A Bill of Rights out to be inspirational and forward looking and therefore be briefly stated. Rights of freedoms conferred by a Bill of Rights should maximize and not minimise the liberty of citizens.

Since the rights of an individual or a group are seldom absolute and must be balanced against the rights of other individuals or groups, should a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland seek to be too specific, it will be necessary within the Bill of Rights to protect the rights of the other individuals or groups.

Any recommendations should enhance the overall concept of a single community marked by diversity, rather than a fractured community hell bent on asserting diverse rights regardless of the need to foster relationships based on mutuality and respect.

Furthermore the important issues around Human Rights cannot be severed from the relationships between individuals and groups of people. Human Rights cannot discard responsibilities.

**Aim 4: A strong and effective Human Rights Commission**

We acknowledge the work that has been done by the new Commissioners since their appointment last year.

We welcome any initiatives which will ensure the most efficient and effective use of public money in the administration of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.



## Conclusion

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is pleased to continue its relationship with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

## MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Moderator's Advisory Committee met on three occasions during the year. It appointed assessors to sit with the Ballymena Presbytery in dealing with a matter of difficulty. It also advised that a book launch would not appropriately be held on the Concourse. The Committee is considering advice on the nomination and role of the Moderator of the General Assembly.

DONALD J WATTS, Convener

## RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

1. The Recognised Ministries Committee met once during the year. It considered a request from the Ards Presbytery that "Mission Africa" be recognised as an organisation to which a Minister may be called in recognised service. "Mission Africa" would have been known in the past as the Qua Iboe Fellowship and works mainly in Nigeria, Chad and Burkina Faso. The Rev Paul Bailie, a Minister without Charge, has been appointed as Senior Executive. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve "Mission Africa" as a recognised organisation in the terms of the Code Par 200(5)(a).

2. The Rev Doug Baker has been working in a recognised ministry under "Mediation Northern Ireland". Recently his job has changed and he now works directly with his home Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), as Regional Liaison for Ireland and the United Kingdom. In this work he gives valuable service both in the United States and in Ireland, especially in his work co-ordinating the Conciliation Panel and as Convener of the Peace and Peacemaking Panel. While greatly appreciating his work, the Committee concluded that it is not possible to treat another Church as a "recognised organisation" and so recommends that the Rev Doug Baker becomes a Minister without Charge, under the care of the East Belfast Presbytery.

3. The following list of Ministers without Charge was considered and the recommendations adopted.

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev C D Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev D M Spratt	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev W J P Bailie	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

North Belfast	Rev C I McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev W A Shaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev W M Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev F W Vincent	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev R A Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev W J Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev J McVeigh	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev R K Graham	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev C Meban	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Carrickfergus	Rev A T Maze	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Coleraine	Rev J D Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Derry/Strabane	Rev J C Teeney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev S Armstrong	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev R N Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Dublin & Munster	Rev L Kennedy-Ritchie	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Foyle	Rev K G Patterson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev E G McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Route	Rev Dr Victor Dobbin	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Tyrone	Rev I F Smith	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

### **Ministers in Recognised Service**

*The Rev Desi Maxwell reports:*

4. It is not always easy to measure the impact of the classroom but it was a joy for me to visit former students who have carried material from Belfast Bible College into Tajikistan, Hungary and Slovenia. In all three countries I was able to work alongside graduates who have become friends and have returned to their homelands. At their invitation I was able to conduct courses for nationals. There have extensive opportunities for ministry in England, Wales and Ireland as well as the regular lecturing schedule in the Belfast Bible College.

*The Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:*

5. This year Restoration Ministries returned to its roots by taking a renewed look at the 23rd Psalm, in particular the phrase “He restores my soul”. Two courses were held: in the autumn “A Journey of Self-Discovery” and at the beginning of the year “A Journey Towards Wholeness”. These were attended largely by people new to Restoration Ministries and the demand for more has been encouraging. Along with our now well-established programme in the last 18 months we have completed a project of providing a well for the village of Ugwuakulu in Enugu State, Nigeria. This has brought the blessing of living water, not only for the villagers but also for all the Friends of Restoration Ministries worldwide.

6. The opportunities for sharing the message of restoration with many different and significant groups throughout Ireland and beyond increase daily. Central to all that we do and are is prayer and we value the prayers of all who identify with the vision of Restoration Ministries.

DONALD J WATTS, Convener

## **GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee continues to oversee the work of its three constituent panels on the Environment, Race Relations and Peace and Peacemaking.

2. A number of personnel changes have occurred. We thank the Rev Lesley Carroll for her wise and sensitive leadership in guiding the Committee into being before assuming the convenership of Church and Society. The profile of Race Relations has been raised throughout the Church under the visionary, indefatigable and resourceful leadership of the Rev Dr Gordon Gray. Now we know that the work of the Panel will continue to gain momentum under the direction of his able successor, the Rev Richard Kerr. The name of the Rev Doug Baker has become synonymous with Peace and Peacemaking and as a Church we are deeply indebted to him for his wise, faithful, dedicated and sustained leadership. This General Assembly he steps down from his convenership and we anticipate a new face at the helm. Passion and dedication also characterised the Rev Dr James Harper’s leadership of The Environment Panel. We were shocked by his sudden death and are still looking towards appointing a successor.

3. An exciting development for Peace and Peacemaking this year has been the appointment of Mrs Laura Coulter as our Programme Officer who began her work on 1 January. We assure her of our prayers as she continues to

settle in, liaises with Presbyteries and congregational peace agents, defines and develops her role.

4. At its meeting two years ago in Ghana the World Alliance of Reformed Churches adopted major resolutions relating to the global economy. Each of the member Churches was invited to make its response. Our Committee established a Panel on the global economy under the leadership of the Rev Dr Alan Russell. We bring our report which is printed in full below. At its March meeting the General Board agreed to set up a Church-wide conference looking at questions of Christian lifestyle in today's world.

5. The Committee covers a wide number of issues challenging the quality and integrity of our witness as disciples of Jesus Christ – stewardship of creation, loving our neighbour and welcoming the stranger, to name but three. We need a clear, strong prophetic voice in each of these areas where we believe we have a very distinctive contribution to make to the well-being of society. Panels offer more flexibility than Committees when it comes to drawing upon necessary expertise. The difficulty, however, is that the work of too many areas is being subsumed by one Committee.

### **Global Economy Panel**

1. We are all aware of many exceedingly complex issues surrounding the global economy. "The Independent" on Saturday 11 February led with the stark headlines that global warming had passed the "tipping point" and that the world was at its warmest for a millennium. According to the reports we are now on course for a rise in global mean temperatures to two degrees above the level before the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth century.

2. Devastating consequences would include the irreversible melting of the Greenland ice sheet, diminishing agricultural returns not only in Africa but also in Europe, the USA and Russia, putting up to 200 million more people at risk from hunger, and up to 2.8 billion additional people at risk of water shortages for both drinking and irrigation.

3. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches covenanted at its General Council meeting in Ghana in 2004 for justice in the Economy and the Earth. This Accra Confession deplored inequality and poverty. It noted that "The annual income of the richest 1% is equal to that of the poorest 57%, and 24,000 people die each day from poverty and malnutrition." The debt of poor countries continued to rise at an alarming rate. The HIV and AIDS global pandemic affects life in all parts of the world while millions of people continued to die from preventable diseases. It is argued that the policy of unlimited growth among industrialized countries and the drive for profit of transnational corporations have plundered the earth and severely damaged the environment.

4. The General Council attributed the present crisis to "the development of neoliberal economic globalization, which is based on the following beliefs:

- unrestrained competition, consumerism, and the unlimited economic growth and accumulation is the best for the whole world;
- the ownership of private property has no social obligation;
- capital speculation, liberalization and deregulation of the market, privatization of public utilities and national resources, unrestricted

access for foreign investments and imports, lower taxes, and the unrestricted movement of capital will achieve wealth for all;

- social obligations, protection of the poor and the weak, trade unions and relationships between people, are subordinate to the processes of economic growth and capital accumulation.”

5. Elsewhere in the statement the culture of rampant consumerism is rejected and the competitive greed and selfishness of the neoliberal global market system, or any other system, which claims there is no alternative. The Confession declares that “the economy exists to serve the dignity and well being of people in community”, while condemning any system that “puts profits before people”. Do we really believe that there is an economic model somewhere that would guarantee these conditions? We would seek to widen the debate beyond attributing the blame to any particular economic system. The reformed doctrine of human total depravity would suggest that humanity will always seek ways to exploit any economic system for personal selfish gain or the particular advantage of one’s own family, community, ethnic group or nation.

6. We agree with the confession’s condemnation of unbridled consumerism. We acknowledge that present rates of economic development are unsustainable and the permanent damage being caused to the environment. Greed and selfishness are routinely attacked from our pulpits; support for “Make Poverty History” has been impressive and unchallenged. The problem, however, is at least twofold. Firstly, although many of us are perplexed and bewildered as we attempt to survey the global scene, we feel totally powerless to effect any change. We are locked into the incessant demands of a disposable society where the latest technological gadgets pay the wages in another part of the world. What can we do? Secondly, it is easy to describe, condemn and even ridicule the activities of large companies and economic systems, to voice disgust at the recent massive profits of the oil companies or the inability of the EC to deal with unfair agricultural subsidies. What we are still lacking is a practical vision of alternatives both to present economics and our own personal lifestyles.

7. In all of this as a panel we find ourselves struggling as to how to progress these matters. We are against producing long, academic reports with no ensuing action. We feel in any case a lack of expertise to draw up what might be described as a Christian view of the economy. However, the question still needs to be addressed as to how we lead our lives as Christians in a manner which is totally distinctive from the values of secular society around us. In terms of consumer lifestyle we can take the Pauline view that “everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial.” Such an approach could be seen, however, as shrugging off any responsibility towards the world in which we live as stewards of God’s creation.

8. Perhaps at this stage one suggestion may be appropriate: Given the enormity and complexity of the issues involved as well as our desire to see if anything can be done practically, we should convene a conference on the subject of Christian lifestyle bringing together the relevant expertise from the boards and agencies of our Church.

## PANEL ON PEACE AND PEACEMAKING

*The Rev DR Baker writes:*

1. The Peacemaking Panel continues to be focused on challenging members, Presbyteries, Boards, and agencies of PCI to identify ways in which they may foster improved relationships across all kinds of divisions and equipping them for initiatives that will contribute to stable peace in wider society.

2. “*When Difference Works*” was the title of our day Conference in November and attended by over 150 Peace Agents and others. The Church’s Peace Vocation Statement adopted by the Assembly in 1994 included this phrase: “We understand peacemaking to be an affirmation and accommodation of diversity.” The main speakers, the Rt Rev Harold Miller, Church of Ireland Bishop of Down and Dromore, and the Very Rev Dr John Dunlop identified some of the attitudes and practices present in settings where difference does work. A video produced for the event focused on four different Congregations taking initiatives to deal positively with political, religious and ethnic differences in their settings.

3. A second Conference, “*A Shared Future: Implications for the Churches*” was held in April and co-sponsored by the Church and Society Committee. Mr Billy Gamble, Good Relations Unit of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) highlighted key points in the government policy document, “A Shared Future,” and some of the ways it is already impacting everyone’s lives in Northern Ireland. The Rev Lesley Carroll focused on what our Church said in response to the Shared Future consultation paper and ways in which the new policy picks up on themes our Church has been affirming in our statements for a number of years. Dr Duncan Morrow, Community Relations Council, spoke of the challenges the vision of a shared future presents to the Church at both central and local levels.

4. The Panel is pleased to report that Mrs Laura Coulter was appointed as Peacemaking Programme Officer and began working in January 2006. Since that time she has been actively meeting with Presbytery and Congregational Peace Agents, speaking to Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries, sharing in planning for Conferences and newsletters, assisting with the revision of the “Preparing Youth for Peace” manual. She is also overseeing work on an introductory course for adults on peacemaking as an integral part of Christian discipleship to be piloted in the Autumn. The Panel is excited by the breadth of experience she brings to this new post and encourages the wider Church both to make use of her and to uphold her with prayer.

5. The Panel acknowledges with gratitude substantial grants received from the International Fund for Ireland, The Community Relations Council and the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Incidental Fund, in support of the Peacemaking Programme.

6. The Panel thanks all those at Congregational and Presbytery level who have accepted responsibility as Peace Agents and urges the wider Church to support and encourage them in responding to “*the Church’s own proper*

*calling to seek peace and the things that make for peace.”* (Church’s Peace Vocation Statement adopted by the Assembly 1994).

## **PANEL ON RACE RELATIONS**

*The Rev RC Kerr writes:*

### **Introduction**

1. Ireland, both North and South, has experienced further significant developments in its ethnic makeup over the past year. Fewer people are seeking asylum while numbers of migrant workers have increased dramatically. While the immigrants contribute considerably to society, there are also significant challenges for them and the indigenous communities of both parts of the Island.

### **Migrant Workers**

2. With the expansion of the European Union (EU), Sweden, the United Kingdom and Ireland agreed to allow access to workers from the new states. Despite scare mongering in some sections of the press, this has generally been seen as a very positive development. The economies of Britain and Ireland have benefited greatly from the arrival of people from these A8 accession states. It has been estimated that the Republic of Ireland requires 50,000 new migrant workers annually to sustain present economic growth. A reported 160,000 entered the state in the period from European enlargement in May 2004, to December 2005.

3. Numbers of migrant workers in Northern Ireland are smaller but also significant. (Estimates vary but generally range from 25-35,000). The province has the highest percentage of migrant workers from the A8 accession states of any part of the United Kingdom. Others from outside the EU and with differing immigration status supplement this workforce and together they provide an invaluable contribution to our health, hospitality, food processing and construction sectors.

4. This new wave of immigration has largely been very positive. There are however issues that give cause for concern. Migrant workers tend to take on jobs that are ‘dirty, dangerous and degrading’; jobs which are not sought after by local people. Often too, and sometimes due to language and cultural barriers, they are unaware of employment legislation and as such are open to poor working conditions and exploitation.

### **Destitution**

5. People from the A8 accession states are entitled to social welfare only after they have completed one year of uninterrupted employment. Given that many are on short contracts, this may in fact take several years to achieve. Those who lose their jobs, for whatever reason, struggle to meet accommodation costs and can rapidly become homeless. The situation is compounded by the fact that statutory bodies will not fund hostel accommodation for migrant workers who are destitute.

6. The possible consequence of this situation was graphically illustrated last year by the case of Oksana Sukhanova, the young Ukrainian woman who had both her legs amputated following frostbite after she had been sleeping rough. Yet despite the outcry generated by that incident, the reality is that the situation now is much more serious; hostel providers are reporting an ever increasing number of destitute migrant workers.

### **Human Trafficking**

7. There are also a number of 'irregular' or 'illegal' immigrants in Ireland. Because they have no legal status and no possibility of finding employment, they work in the informal sector and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. People in this situation may well have entered the country by legitimate means but have not left when their visa expired. However contributing to their number is the smuggling and trafficking of human beings into Europe, including the British Isles.<sup>1</sup>

8. According to the Home Office, the vast majority of people entering the UK illegally are being smuggled rather than trafficked. Those who are smuggled are often fleeing situations of civil and economic instability and are smuggled into Europe by 'agents' who charge for their services. The smugglers charge large sums of money to facilitate their clients' illegal entry into the UK but the transaction will end there. However, those who are trafficked into the UK will continue to be under the control of the traffickers after arrival. They are expected to pay off those who have brought them into the country and are therefore forced to work illegally to pay off the debt.

9. Women who are trafficked are especially vulnerable; many being forced into the sex trade. In fact, the evidence suggests that some are essentially kidnapped in their country of origin and subjected to appalling treatment before being forced to provide sexual services in European cities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Irish cities are not exempt. Women who are treated in this way are deeply scarred. Their dignity and value as human beings has been eroded and many are depressed and suicidal.

10. Karen Campbell, Assistant Minister in Harmony Hill Congregation and a member of the Race Relations Panel, attended a conference in London in March run by CHASTE – *Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking Across Europe*. She

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1. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons defines trafficking as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or fraud or deception of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation'.  
The UN Protocol against smuggling defines it as 'the procurement of the illegal entry into or illegal residence of a person in a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident in order of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit'.



reports that 'There have been several important and hopeful developments in the government's response to human trafficking. Earlier this year, the UK government coordinated the first meeting of the Ministerial Group on Trafficking which was held to formulate high level policy on combating trafficking in persons. In January 2006, the Home Office issued a consultation on Human Trafficking. This document charts the progress made and suggests an action plan which works towards preventing people trafficking in the future. At the conference, CHASTE had invited some members of the Home Office to explain how Churches could be a part of the consultation process. CHASTE also provided useful information on how to activate the Church through building understanding, resource building, lobbying and more practical initiatives. It was encouraging to see the Home Office actively willing Churches to have an input on helping to eradicate this inhumane process'.

### **Legislation**

11. The issues of migrant worker destitution and human trafficking have implications for present and further immigrant legislation. The British Government has also suggested introducing an immigration system based on points. As a Panel we are concerned that any new legislation should protect vulnerable people and not be a brain and skills drain from developing countries. The Panel will continue to keep a watching brief on developments.

### **Pastoral Care of Immigrants**

12. The diversity of immigrants from different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds is one which enriches our communities both North and South and provides great opportunities for sharing the love of Jesus Christ in word and deed. As is widely reported, immigrants have transformed the face of many of our Congregations in the Republic of Ireland; providing a kaleidoscope of perspectives.

13. With such diversity however, comes challenge. It is not an easy task to provide meaningful pastoral support in a Congregation with people from several different cultural, ethnic and language backgrounds. Their lives, immigration status and working arrangements are often not conducive to traditional church life. Many migrants work awkward shift patterns including weekends. People seeking asylum may be moved at short notice or become unsettled or depressed because of the tedious and frequently long-drawn-out asylum process. The role of the pastor in these situations is wide and varied; yet s/he often feels equipped with only limited expertise and experience of multicultural situations.

### **Networking and Structure**

14. The Race Relations Panel is grateful for the support of a number of Boards and Committees of the Church as we attempt to address some of the issues raised. We are very conscious that many of these are cross-cutting issues and that they need to be incorporated into the thinking and strategy of our whole Church.

15. Members of the Panel attended the All Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism (AICCMR) conference in November 2005. This conference brought together people from all over the Island and helped create awareness of the issues and a focus for further action. It was in many ways a tribute to the life and work of Fee Ching Leong, a member of the Panel who was instrumental in establishing the AICCMR, and who died a couple of days after the conference. The AICCMR is to come under the umbrella of the Inter-Church Committee on Social Issues. The role of the Churches Commission for Racial Justice (CCRJ), who were heavily involved in the setting up of AICCMR, is also to change. They will become a body functioning independently of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

16. The Panel continues to meet in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as we attempt to understand the distinctive needs of both jurisdictions. We also keep close contact with the Churches Asylum Network and Embrace, as well as other relevant organisations.

## **PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

*Mr J Furphy reports:*

1. Two members of the Panel, the late Rev Dr James Harper and Mr JS Furphy, attended the conference of the European Christian Environmental Network in Basel, where the main topic was water and the crisis facing the world over the diminishing supplies of pure water across the globe. In Ireland we have no concept of just what a water shortage really implies and it came as a shock to us to discover that there are parts of mainland Europe where there are real difficulties in obtaining clean, healthy water for domestic purposes. We were given encouragement to use water wisely in all aspects of our lives and were told that of all the water we use daily, less than five percent needs to be fresh – all the rest can come out of the hot tap or re-used.

2. During the year we have been working towards re-launching a project which had lapsed over the years – the Eco-congregation project, designed to allow Congregations the opportunity both to manage their resources in an environmentally-friendly way, but perhaps more importantly, to give an understanding of the scriptural references to God's world and how we are to care for it. We are encouraging our Panel members and Presbytery environmental agents to publicize this project over the next few months, with a view to an official launch at some stage during the coming year.

3. The conference at Basel was the last occasion on which Dr Harper acted as our Convener. His passing was sudden and we miss his practical experience, advice and leadership greatly, as attested to in the tribute in the Presbyterian Herald. The Panel also lost a second wise and valued member during the year, Miss Daphne Gilmour, a person of great grace who gave all she could while her health allowed. To the family circle of both we express our sympathies.

4. It is one of the ironies that although environmental matters often seem to be at the forefront of the concerns and activities of the young, we have no younger persons on the Panel; we would appreciate expressions of interest from

those not yet of retirement age, and your prayerful support as we seek to find those who can help us demonstrate that ‘the earth is the Lord’s’.

CJC McMULLEN, Convener

## CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met 3 times throughout the year.

### **World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)**

2. The WARC Executive met at Evian in France in October 2005. This was the first meeting of the Executive since the General Council in Accra in 2004. It had been hoped to hold a joint Assembly of WARC and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 2010, but the LWF has said this will not be possible. However, WARC did decide to deepen its relationship with the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) whose roots are in the Dutch Reformed Church. REC has 12 million members in 40 Churches in 25 countries. WARC has 75 million members in 218 Churches in 107 countries. The two bodies have 27 common member Churches. The Rev Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick, President of WARC, visited Church House in the Autumn.

3. The Rev Gabrielle Farquhar is a member of WARC European Area Committee. A European Area Council will take place on 10-12 September in Budapest. There is a proposal to change the structure of this Committee, involving increasingly those in leadership in denominations in Reformed Churches in Europe in setting priorities and appointing a task force for the ensuing years.

4. The Rev Prof Cecil McCullough reported on ‘**the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe**’, formerly known as ‘the Leuenberg Fellowship’. There has been dialogue with the European Baptists and a paper on ‘Law and Gospel’. The 2006 Assembly will be held in Budapest. The theme is ‘Strengthening the community, the Protestant viewpoint in Europe.’

5. The Rev Brian Boyd represents our Church at the United Reformed Church Ecumenical Committee. There has been much discussion of the future structure of the URC.

### **Conference of European Churches - CEC**

6. The Central Committee of Conference of European Churches met in Crete in June 2005. The Rev Ken Crowe deputised for Mrs Heather McKinley. The island was a good place for east and western Christian traditions to meet. The Rev Colin Williams has been appointed General Secretary of CEC in succession to The Rev Dr Keith Clements. The next Central Committee meeting is in May 2006 in N Ireland. The Third European Ecumenical Assembly will be held in Sibiu, Romania 4-8 September 2007. The theme is ‘The Light of Christ shines upon all - hope for renewal and unity in Europe.’

7. The Rev Dr Donald Watts attends the Church and Society Commission of CEC which met in April in Stockholm. Subjects for discussion include the integration of Europe, peace security reconciliation, bioethics and

human rights. The peace security and reconciliation working group plans a meeting in Ireland in the autumn.

8. The Clerk, the Rev Kobus Gerber and Moderator, the Rev Dr Coenie Burger of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa visited Church House in July. They were able to network with the Rev David Montgomery concerning congregational mission and renewal. There was some discussion on the possibility of doing some joint research with our two Churches and the Hungarian Reformed Church on issues surrounding land and conflict. They also discussed how we might relate to Afrikanaar people living in Ireland.

### **Other Churches**

9. In response to a resolution at 2004 General Assembly the Committee sought to meet with the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Last year a report was received about our conversations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This year the Committee met with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Revs Robert Beckett, from Somerton Road and Crosscollyer Churches and Andrew Woolsey from Crumlin Church represented the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Revs Tony Davidson, John Brackenridge, Brian Boyd and Prof Cecil McCullough represented the Committee.

Within the denomination there are now 12 Congregations with 9 ministers and 2 students in training. They have a close relationship with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Free Church of Scotland where most of their Ministers are trained, and the Evangelical Church in England and Wales. They belong to the Evangelical Fellowship of Ireland, 'Affinity' which was formerly British Evangelical Council (BEC), and the International Council of Reformed Churches. which represents about 600,000 reformed Christians.

They explained the historical basis for their denomination. They raised issues which still concern them such as some elements of the teaching at Union Theological College, the ordination of women as elders and teaching elders and sacramental discipline. They expressed a desire to see reform in the Irish Presbyterian Church 'to bring it back to where it once was.' They appreciated the meeting as it seemed to be the first acknowledgement from PCI of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church as a denomination. The issue of how we recognise each others baptism, communicant membership and ordination was raised.

They appreciated how often there are good local relationships. There have been times when we could speak with one voice in the area of public morals and social witness. However they would not want to develop any closer links with PCI at a denominational level at this time. They did not want to pursue any links with ICC. The meeting was conducted in a friendly atmosphere.

10. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland are restructuring; the proposals are giving more authority to the English Scottish and Welsh national bodies. ICC has decided to become an associate member of this restructured CTBI. The Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland continue to be full members of CTBI. It was felt by the Committee that this option is most in line with past decisions of the General Assembly regarding our relationship with CTBI.

### **Irish Council of Churches**

11. The Irish Council of Churches AGM was held in St Andrews Parish centre in Lucan on 23 March. Following the resignation of Bishop Peter Barrett Mrs Gillian Kingston from the Methodist Church was appointed President of ICC. Mr Hilton Henry was appointed Treasurer. The theme of the AGM was 'Stronger together - weaker apart?' with inputs from Church representatives in West Dublin as well as international inter-Church bodies.

12. The Rev Dr Jim Campbell is Moderator of the Board of Overseas Affairs. In his absence the Rev Colin McClure has acted as Moderator. The Board's main areas of interest are world mission, international affairs, and development and relief issues. As well as receiving reports from Sudan, Sri Lanka and the Middle East it also receives valuable information reports on the work of Christian Aid.

13. The Woman's Link Annual Fellowship Day was in Edgehill College. The speakers were mother and daughter Mrs Audrey Kingston and Rev Dr Heather Morris, on the theme of 'God bless you'.

### **Irish Inter Church Committee**

14. The next Inter Church Meeting is planned for *November 2006* on the theme of 'Globalisation and economic justice'.

15. There was a Conference on Racism on 18-19 November in Dromantine, organised by the 'All Ireland Consultative Committee on racism'. The theme was 'Challenged by difference: threat or enrichment'. Over 80 people attended from the Churches across the island, including upwards of a third from minority ethnic backgrounds. The conference was important in challenging Churches to recognise their role and responsibility in welcoming new residents and addressing racism as well as in indicating that overcoming racism is not 'another project' an optional extra, but has to be a central focus for the churches arising from their calling. Major inputs were provided by the Rev Sahr Yambasu, United Church in Galway, the Rev Phil Summer, Catholic Oldham and the Very Rev Dr Ken Newell. There was a wide variety of workshops which provided an opportunity to hear and deal with other issues and stories and to look at individual Church responses to racism.

16. The Department of Social Issues are examining their future role and terms of reference. Issues which they have dealt with include, racism, environmental issues, alcohol use and abuse, socially responsible finance, suicide, child protection and restorative justice.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Inter Church Marriages**

#### **Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages**

1. The annual meeting of the above Committee was held at Mount Oliver, Dundalk, on Friday, 11 November 2005 at 2.00pm, and was chaired by the Most Rev Gerard Clifford.

### **Joint Preparation for Inter-Church Marriage**

2. Dr Ken Dunn gave a detailed report on the work of the Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association (NIMMA). A welcome development had been the appointment of Rebekah Johanson who would be involved in outreach and development work.

3. He expressed his appreciation that ACCORD were distributing NIMMA booklets at their courses.

4. The NIMMA website was receiving 115 hits per day and it was estimated that 20 of these were serious. In the past year altogether there had been 7,000 visits to the site which had generated 60,000 hits. The leaflet had been downloaded 5,400 times in 18 months, the equivalent of 3,600 in one year. About 20% of visitors returned repeatedly to the site, an inference being that these were clergy. There was also increasing traffic to the site from the Republic of Ireland. Search Engine entries revealed that the term "mixed marriage" provided the most frequent access to the site

5. The Inter-Church Families International Network had met for its biennial conference in Rome in 2003 and as a result of contacts being made ten members had a recent very useful meeting in October with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity which lasted five hours. Topics included the domestic Church, Eucharistic sharing and parish attitudes to mixed marriage.

6. In the ensuing discussion it emerged that the NIMMA website was attracting many with a loose adherence to the main Churches who, although basically non-practising, were still interested in a religious wedding service. The Catholic website on Preparing for Marriage was noted and Committee members gave encouragement to their particular denominations and Congregations to develop websites with specific reference to getting married as a potential tool for contact and outreach.

7. There were occasional enquiries to NIMMA from those with an inter-faith background, but these were referred to a relevant body in England.

8. Ken Dunn undertook to do some research on the origin of the term "mixed marriage" and its usefulness for today.

### **Recent Trends in Inter-Church Marriage**

9. Members of Committee highlighted many positive developments over the years in relation to marriage, but felt that more progress needed to be made now on baptism and confirmation of children from an Inter-Church background.

10. Various issues were discussed at length: How can both denominations be represented? Who will administer the sacrament of baptism? The logistical difficulty of clergy being present both at their own Sunday services and elsewhere for baptism or confirmation. What is the role of the local Church where the sacrament is administered, since the household of faith for mixed couples is two denominations? In baptism should we focus on the name of Jesus? The importance of baptism and confirmation as part of the local Church. Should we not baptise or confirm into one holy, catholic Church rather than a particular denomination? How do we overcome a superstitious

understanding of baptism? In those denominations which have sponsors or witnesses, how can these be included from other backgrounds?

11. It was agreed that the “Certificate of Baptism” recognised by the four main Churches had been a useful tool in building bridges on this very sensitive subject.

### **Pastoral Care of Inter-Church Families**

12. The importance of good relationships, trust, co-operation and mutual understanding was stressed. It was suggested that issues should be addressed in various Church magazines and periodicals.

AD DAVIDSON, Convener

### **CHURCH HOUSE PANEL**

*The Rev Dr Donald J Watts reports:*

1. The General Assembly in 2004 received a report from a Panel set up by the General Board in October 2003 to advise on “all matters relating to Church House and Fisherwick Buildings”. The immediate presenting problem was the degree of stonework decay which was being repaired, but with escalating costs. Other essential work identified at the time was to bring Fisherwick Buildings up to legal requirements, eg in terms of disability access and to create greater flexibility and efficiency in the use of the office space in Church House. A report was prepared by BTW Shiells estimating that the required work would cost in excess of £3.4 million. The decision of that Assembly was “that the Church House complex be sold and that a suitable alternative site and accommodation be acquired.” (Minutes, p 56, res 2).

2. Throughout the discussions the Panel has been aware of two principles which underpin much of the Church’s thinking in setting priorities. The first is that the primary mission unit of the Church is the local Congregation. The purpose of the central administration is to support the Church at a local level, or to provide services and facilities which it is not appropriate for individual Congregations to provide. The second is that while buildings may be useful as a visible sign of the Church’s presence, they are not of the essence of the Church. Even Solomon, who was understandably delighted at being allowed to build the Temple, prayed at its dedication: “Heaven itself, the highest heaven cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have built.” (1 Kings 8:27). The Church’s task is to continually build up people in faith, so that they may bear effective witness in their homes, at work and in the community.

3. In 2005, the General Assembly reaffirmed their commitment to the sale of Church House in approving a specific purchaser. (Minutes, p 44, res 15). The Assembly also authorised continuing discussions with Barnabas Ventures on the purchase of space in its May Street development. (Minutes, p 46, res 16). The General Board in September took the decision that it was not possible to proceed with the sale as outlined and asked the Panel to draw up a report of the current options.

4. The Panel takes the view that the options largely remain as previously outlined. However, during the year the Assembly Buildings Committee, aware

that the previous Architect's Report when dealing with the public safety aspects of the stonework had set an eighteen months limit, commissioned a new report. This was carried out by a conservation architect, Alastair Coey, and relates to the stonework, roofs and exterior. It does not make any comment on the interior and its suitability for use. A summary of the Architect's Report is published as Appendix 5 to the Board of Finance and Personnel report. The conclusion is that the estimated cost of repairs to the stonework, roofs and external features is £4.1 million.

5. The Panel considers that there are three options which should be carefully considered.

- (i) To sell the Church House complex, including Fisherwick Buildings, and move to a new site. This is the current decision which has not yet been implemented. If the General Assembly once again affirms this decision it should do so fully understanding that once the building is sold the Church has no control over its future. While it is impossible to predict accurate figures for the sale, taking the previous offer as a guide the buildings could be sold and new office accommodation found with little, if any, additional expenditure to the Church.

The information which the Panel has received indicates some delay in Barnabas Ventures' submission for planning approval of the May Street site and therefore accurate costings are not available at the time of writing. While not ruling out the May Street possibility the Panel is also investigating other options.

- (ii) To stay in Church House and maintain the complex, including Fisherwick Buildings. This would not only mean raising £4.1 million for the external work but giving consideration to other issues. The Shopping Mall is increasingly difficult to keep fully let and there are issues about restrictive covenants, especially on Sunday trading. The current use of office space is inefficient and does not create a modern working environment. The lease on the offices of Fisherwick Buildings is due for renewal and essential work will need to be done, especially in terms of disability access. More positively, it may be possible to create a more distinctive Conference Centre which could be a useful asset. For guidance, it should be noted that if the total work is paid for as an assessment on Congregations over 10 years, the figures would be:

If £5 million – rate of assessment 7.5p per £1 of stipend

If £6 million – rate of assessment 9p per £1 of stipend

If £7 million – rate of assessment 10.5p per £1 of stipend

- (iii) One further option may be to either sell Fisherwick Buildings as having development potential, or to develop it. To dispose of it as it stands has the attraction that its stonework is in relatively poor condition (see Upper Queen's Street Elevation in Architect's Report) and there is considerable necessary internal work, including disability issues. It is not covered by the listing of the complex.

To mitigate against the disposal of Fisherwick Buildings would be the difficulty and cost of separating services, eg the Boiler House for the whole complex is located in Fisherwick Buildings and the eastern



entrance to the Shopping Mall runs through it. It is also part of the complex which has proved more easily let both as shop units and offices. The current income is approximately £95,000 per annum. It could be difficult and costly to re-negotiate leases and may prove impossible at an economic cost.

For the Church to develop the Fisherwick Buildings site would have the attraction that the Church would still own/control the whole complex. It has the disadvantage that the necessary capital must still be raised.

If Fisherwick Buildings were to be sold or developed this would decrease to some extent the costs to the Church of the necessary repairs and renovation to Church House. However, it is very difficult to put a figure on a possible sale, or on the associated costs of managing the division of the complex.

6. These options were discussed at a meeting of the General Board on 6 April and feedback invited from the members. A fuller report will be drawn up for the General Assembly and printed in the Daily Minutes.

## MANSES PANEL

*The Rev JH Robinson reports:*

### BACKGROUND

1. The Panel began work in 2004 in response to a Memorial from the Presbytery of East Belfast whose prayer was, “to investigate the matter of Ministers being allowed to purchase their own house in place of a Manse”.

2. The Panel’s first report was to last year’s Assembly, when, *inter alia*, it:

- acknowledged the range and complexity of the issues involved;
- found little consensus of opinion in response to a questionnaire completed by 18 Presbyteries, 445 individuals and 178 Congregational Committees, except for majorities favouring greater flexibility in respect of the central issue;
- set out as comprehensively as possible the advantages and disadvantages to the Congregation and the Minister of the two options of residence;
- concluded that issues of finance should not be the overriding consideration; rather, “*if, in the situations where there is a viable choice, it could be demonstrated that the vocation of the Congregation and Minister would be enhanced by one type of residency rather than the other, and if appropriate safeguards were in place to ensure that released resources were in fact applied directly to service and ministry, then greater flexibility than at present could be permitted*”.

3. In so reporting, the Panel indicated that further detailed consideration had to be given to structures of approval, stringent safeguards and related practical issues. It further reports as follows:

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF APPROVAL**

4. Minister, Congregation, Presbytery and Union Commission have a role in approving any request for permission to move from Manse to home ownership, or *vice versa*.

The main approving bodies, however, are Presbytery and Union Commission, following the consent of the Congregation and the Minister.

If Minister and Congregation reach differing conclusions, the *status quo* should pertain. If Congregation and Presbytery reach different conclusions, the decision should rest with the Union Commission.

In a Union, the Congregations act as one, but the manse-owning Congregation will alone determine the future of its asset, with the approval of the Presbytery and the Union Commission.

### **Mechanisms for seeking Approval:**

#### **During a Ministry**

Minister and/or Congregation approaches Presbytery, who appoints an independent chairman for meetings of the Congregation. If Congregation consents by two-thirds majority at a duly-called meeting, and if Presbytery approves, permission is sought by the Congregation from the Union Commission.

#### **During a Vacancy**

Congregation approaches Presbytery. If Presbytery approves, Congregation seeks permission from Union Commission.

These processes should pertain for change of residency from home ownership to Manse.

## **SAFEGUARDS RE DISPOSAL/REALISATION OF ASSETS**

5. The Union Commission would ensure (a) that a financial structure exists to enable ongoing contributions towards Housing Allowance, and (b) that a significant proportion of the capital is retained for a period – such proportion and period to be determined, on a case by case basis, by the Union Commission.

## **SAFEGUARDS RE APPLICATION OF INCOME AND ASSETS FOR SERVICE AND MISSION**

6. The Congregation, having obtained the comments and approval of Presbytery, would seek the approval of the Union Commission for proposed disbursement, outlining the underlying principles and priorities.

The Union Commission would assess proposals against the following criteria:

- Mission before maintenance
- Personnel before plant
- Community before current membership
- Congregational and PCI Missions before other missions
- United Appeal before other appeals

Subsequent disbursement by the Congregation should be managed by a designated Management Committee, normally a sub-committee of Kirk Session,

together with leaders of congregational organisations/activities focussed on service and mission. The funds should be kept in a separate account, audited annually and presented with the other congregational accounts.

### **DISTANCE BETWEEN RESIDENCE AND PARISH**

7. The normal and preferable location for a Minister to reside is within the bounds of the Parish. If however, for special reasons, this is not possible or appropriate, the Minister should reside within a reasonable distance in order to identify with the community being served by the Congregation. Presbytery and Union Commission should approve a locality, or several localities, in instances where Ministers request to live outside the bounds of the Parish.

### **HOUSING ALLOWANCE**

8. The Panel investigated this issue at length but failed to find a rational basis for the long-standing Housing Allowance of £2,001. It also examined, with professional assistance, a wide range of options seeking a credible and transparent basis of calculation. It resolved, finally, to offer as a basis of calculation the average rental of a 3-bedroom detached home since this did not, compared with selling prices, fluctuate seasonally or present such a variation depending on location. The Panel is advised that the 2006 figures are: NI £500 per month; ROI €900 per month (semi-detached), taxable.

The Panel recommends that the Union Commission adopts this figure for 2006 and reviews it annually, utilising the same basis of calculation. It further recommends that the level of Housing Allowance should continue unaltered for the period of a ministry in a Congregation, and be updated to the then current level in the event of a Vacancy.

### **MANSE GUIDELINES**

9. The Panel considers that there have been some significant changes in the 12 years since the Church Architecture Committee drew up its 'Guidelines for new Manses'. These include: escalating energy costs; greater ecological awareness; the increasingly common practice of establishing an office in the Church premises for personal study and interviews; the trend towards smaller family units; the desirability of living in a house that more nearly approximates to those in the locality. A resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly.

### **INCOME TAX IMPLICATIONS**

10. It is the conviction of the Panel that only a small minority of Congregations and Ministers will opt for home ownership. This would be due, for example, to:

- personal and corporate preference for the established practice of Manse residency;
- the undesirability of selling a Manse immediately adjacent to, or in the grounds of, the Church;
- the terms of Title being such that the Congregation relinquishes its asset when it is no longer being used as a Manse;

- the financial challenge to a Minister on or near the Minimum Stipend of meeting the mortgage repayments associated with the purchase of a family-sized home.

The Panel was, however, concerned that the preference of a small minority of Congregations and Ministers might adversely affect the income tax position of the majority. The Inland Revenue was therefore acquainted with the Panel's judgement and reasoning, and responded, "the proposed recommendation under which a small number of Ministers may, if they wish, live in their own homes, will not affect the tax treatment of Ministers who continue to live in Manses".

## **TOWARDS RETIREMENT**

11. The Panel considered carefully the question of relaxing somewhat the Union Commission's "rule of thumb" that Ministers may be permitted to move into their own homes (on request and if geographically convenient) up to 1 year prior to retirement or a little earlier on health grounds. The Panel concluded that this "rule of thumb" was sound, since, if extended, it might inadvertently encourage the impression of a Minister coasting to the finishing line.

Further, the Panel was aware that Ministers who prefer (and are permitted to opt for) home ownership would have less disposable income but would have at least secured a foothold in the property market, assisting their provision for retirement, whereas Ministers who, through preference or lack of viable option, continue to reside in Manses, face a major financial challenge to secure a house as retirement approaches.

In an ideal world, an increased Ministerial Minimum and a ready supply of long-term, wonderfully-considerate tenants, would put house purchase (with a view to retirement) within the grasp of Ministers living in Manses. In reality, it requires a spouse's regular income and a stout heart to face the vagaries of unreliable tenants. Not surprisingly, many baulk at these dynamics, putting off making a personal housing provision until retirement is on the horizon. It is in this context that the Retired Ministers' House Fund offers its invaluable assistance.

The Panel is hesitant at making any comments on the area of responsibility of another body but feels that it would have neglected an important corollary to its remit if it did not offer the following tentative observations:

- The provision available from the Retired Ministers' House Fund has not changed for some years, while the cost of housing over the period has escalated;
- The funding exigencies experienced by the Retired Ministers' House Fund from time to time has lead its Committee, quite correctly, to give priority to those whose circumstances are most acute. This policy, however, has the potential to be at variance with the principle of treating all Ministers with equity.

The Panel warmly encourages the Retired Ministers' House Fund Committee to review its provision in the light of today's costs, including the securing of such loan facilities as would enable it to treat all applications in accordance with predetermined criteria.

**CENTRES REVIEW PANEL**

*The Rev Dr Donald J Watts reports:*

1. Following the decisions of the last Assembly, the Centres Review Panel commissioned a Feasibility Study from BDO Stoy Hayward. On the basis of this study, Presbyteries were asked to comment.

2. The main findings of the Feasibility Study were:-

- (i) There was a demonstrated demand for Congregations to have access to residential centres, but the requirement for these to be owned by PCI was less clearly defined.
- (ii) The main differences of opinion on whether PCI should own any new Centre surrounded the projected running costs and the cost to the Congregations for using the Centre.
- (iii) Main users of any new Centre would continue to be youth groups.
- (iv) The design and scale of any new Centre should allow it to accommodate a number of separate groups at any one time.
- (v) The focus for any new Centre should be on providing a high standard of accommodation rather than incorporating a range of other activities, which may be better provided by external operators.
- (vi) Any new facility in Northern Ireland should be based in a scenic area near water and in close proximity to a range of activities. Guysmere was suggested as a possible site.
- (vii) The need to maintain a separate smaller presence in the Republic of Ireland to service the needs of Southern Congregations was recognised but this would not necessarily be a residential centre.
- (viii) A number of potential sources of funding were identified for any new Centre, including the disposal of surplus land and property and/or a levy on Congregations.
- (ix) A summary of potential disposal proceeds is as follows:

	Lucan	Guysmere	Total
Lower Value	£750,000	£1,750,000	£2,500,000
Upper Value	£5,537,000	£1,750,000	£7,287,000

The potential disposal proceeds for Lucan are dependent upon planning approval for residential development and improved road access to the site.

3. Reports were received from 15 of the 21 Presbyteries. It was generally accepted that finance would not be available to build on a green field site, so discussion focussed on the existing locations. Following the consultation the Panel concluded:

**LUCAN:**

- (i) The Board of Social Witness should be approached to see if they are enthusiastic about partnership in a Sheltered Housing Scheme, what portion of the site would be required and what amounts of money might be released back to the Youth and Children's Ministry Board.
- (ii) The Board of Mission in Ireland would be consulted about use of remainder of the site for Church plant?
- (iii) Having spoken to the Boards the Panel would then consult with the Dublin and Munster Presbytery.

**ROSTREVOR:** It was recognised that the Congregation and Centre Committee of Rostrevor have been very helpful. The Panel would like to meet with them to discuss the future, although it seems clear that the Rostrevor site will not be chosen for future development.

**GUYSMERE:** The extent to which Guysmere can be renovated/refurbished will depend on the finance available, but the responses indicate that this is seen as the best option.

Further progress will be reported in the Daily Minutes.

## PANEL ON PRESBYTERY BOUNDS

*The Rev Dr Donald J Watts reports:*

1. The first report of the Presbytery Bounds Panel was received by the General Assembly in 2005 and forms the background to this present report. It recognised the roles and responsibilities identified as critical in the life of a Presbytery. This year the Panel has tried to build on those principles, while recognising that there are inevitable tensions. In particular, to fulfil its strategic role the Presbytery needs to be of a sufficient size to be relatively objective. On the other hand, to fulfil the pastoral and fellowship responsibilities there needs to be a closeness. The Panel has tended towards larger Presbyteries for strategic reasons, while recognising that already Presbyteries, for fellowship needs, often fall into distinct geographical areas e.g. in the Carrickfergus Presbytery there are the areas around the three main towns of Ballyclare, Carrickfergus and Larne. It is also noted again that there is no one size fits all solution.

2. The Panel looked in particular at three areas where some Presbyteries have become very small. These were the North West, the Border area and Belfast.

- (a) In the North West, where Donegal and Foyle are both small Presbyteries, discussion centred on whether a cross-border Presbytery is appropriate. It is, of course, a fact that many unions are linked at present between Derry and Strabane and Donegal. Innishowen would tend to see a natural link with Londonderry.
- (b) In the border area around Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh there was again discussion of cross-border issues. It was also recognised that in the very wide geographical spread of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery some Congregations had a more natural affinity with the Borders.
- (c) In Belfast, three models were considered. A **single Presbytery** has the advantage of giving a Presbyterian voice to the city, although it was recognised that a significant part of the present Synod of Belfast lies outside the city bounds. It was also felt that local government boundaries are not static and should not dictate Presbytery bounds. One single Presbytery would be very large. **Three Presbyteries** were also considered with some re-arrangement to bring together Congregations in the Shankill area and move the South Belfast boundary towards Forestside. The disadvantage was recognised as leaving small Presbyteries, which may well have to be re-arranged again very soon. The Panel recommended a **two Presbytery model**.

The North and West would take in the city centre and may be seen as taking the lead in civic relationships. It was also recognised that common interest groups could be set up which relate across the Presbyteries eg in urban mission or suburban ministry. This may be facilitated by the Board of Mission in Ireland. The issue of the Education Board of the Synod can be dealt with by the two Presbyteries appointing members to one Board.

3. In sending out a paper to Presbyteries for discussion, the Panel recognised that particular local issues may dictate the appropriate placing of a Congregation and invited response. It indicated proposed bounds for four new Presbyteries – North Coast (Coleraine/Foyle area); North West (Donegal/Derry and Strabane/Foyle); Mid West (Omagh/Derry and Strabane); Midlands (expanded Monaghan) – as well as a two-Presbytery model for Belfast. The names are only intended to be working titles until the Presbyteries themselves choose a name.

4. Fifteen Presbyteries responded to the consultation paper in February/March and many of the comments were positive and appreciative. At the same time it was recognised that it would be impossible to develop all five of the key roles and responsibilities identified in the 2005 Report to the same extent in every situation. Some Presbyteries were concerned that the larger size of Presbytery would not promote fellowship and mutual encouragement, indeed in some cases travel time would make it difficult for all Congregations even to be represented at business meetings. The Panel is still of the view that the Presbytery should be big enough to make strategic decisions, while encouraging the creative development of groupings for fellowship, pastoral care and mutual support.

5. The issue of cross-border Presbyteries was raised and there is clearly a difference of opinion as to their effectiveness. A particular concern, naturally, is for their ability to relate to two jurisdictions. While accepting the validity of that argument, the Panel is of the opinion that civic administrative boundaries, whether on the border or in other context, should not be decisive in determining Presbytery bounds. While maintaining cross-border links, especially on the Donegal border, the points raised about distance and natural affinities have led the Panel to re-visit the Donegal Congregations to see if some would more naturally gravitate to Strabane/Mid-West and others to Londonderry. It is hoped that discussion can be concluded in time to bring definite proposals to the Assembly in the Daily Minutes.

6. Two of the three Belfast Presbyteries responded, but neither with definite proposals. One is clear that it does not favour a “one Belfast Presbytery” approach but thinks that the Panel “needs to consider other models for the Greater Belfast area” – at present unspecified. The other reports that “a case was also made for one new Presbytery” but it does not seem to have been adopted in that the resolution agreed simply states that “the present proposals for the Belfast Presbyteries are unacceptable and fail to deal with the mission and administrative needs of the Presbyterian Church in Belfast”. That Presbytery also asked for a forum of the three Belfast Presbyteries to discuss the matter further. While recognising that the Belfast issue is also of concern to the whole Church, the Panel will facilitate the three Belfast Presbyteries meeting. It is not

sure that a solution will be found easily, but will report progress to the Assembly.

7. Several responses commented on the fact that many Presbyteries will remain virtually unchanged. The Panel suggests that it should remain in existence for a further year to deal with outstanding issues and consider whether other matters need to be dealt with at the present time. Detailed proposals, considering comments on the placing of individual Congregations, will be discussed further with the relevant Presbyteries before being outlined to the Assembly in the Daily Minutes.

### **MISSION EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATIONS PANEL**

*The Rev Dr Donald J Watts reports:*

1. The General Assembly in 2005 received the Panel report and encouraged the Communications Board to develop a co-ordinated Communications Strategy, as outlined in the report (res 29). The Assembly also called for further consultation on the future of the three magazines – Presbyterian Herald, Christian Irishman (now Reach Out) and Wider World (res 30). That consultation has taken place during the year.

2. The Panel, after considerable discussion, concluded that there could be a place for three publications provided their roles and target audiences are clearly defined. The *Presbyterian Herald* should continue to be the flagship magazine of the denomination, containing items of news and general interest, including longer articles promoting discussion of current issues.

*Reach Out* should become a mission journal, issued perhaps 4-6 times per year and targeting those with a particular interest in mission issues and wishing some in-depth discussion. Initially this will be published by the Board of Mission in Ireland, but discussion will take place with the other main Mission Boards.

*Wider World* would continue as the magazine of the Presbyterian Women's Association, promoting its specific work while consulting with the Mission Boards on issues relevant to them. It would be the responsibility of the PWA Executive, who should monitor its costs ensuring that it does not draw on funds which might otherwise be used in support of deaconesses or missionaries overseas.

3. To ensure co-ordination, it is recommended that the Communications Board should set up an Editorial Panel, including representatives of the Mission Boards, to advise on the content of the Presbyterian Herald and plan in general terms the future editions of Reach Out as part of the overall Communications Strategy of the Church. The editing of the Presbyterian Herald would naturally remain with the Communications Board. The detailed content of Reach Out would be determined by a group within the Board of Mission in Ireland and possibly in the future other Mission Boards, with the Board of Communications who would then be responsible for its production.

4. If this report is received the Panel believes that it has completed its work and should be discharged.



**MEMORIAL RECORD**

**The Rev James McGregor, BSc**, died on 28 June, 2005 in the 21st year of his ministry. Born and brought up on a farm in the Limavady area he was educated at Balteagh Primary School, Coleraine Technical College and the New University of Ulster, Coleraine before proceeding to Union College, Belfast for his theological studies. His home Congregation was Balteagh. Before becoming Assistant in First Ballymena he was summer Assistant in Magheramason Congregation in 1982. On 10 March, 1986 he was installed as Minister of Brigh, Albany and Stewartstown where he remained until May 1989 when he moved to Donemana Congregation. He remained in Donemana until his retirement in 2002. Among his hobbies were gardening and fishing. He sought to exercise an expository pulpit ministry which was greatly appreciated and had a particular love for the Psalms. He will be sadly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him and particularly by his wife the former Kathleen Helen Hynds. To her and his wider family circle goes the sympathy of the General Assembly.

**The Rev Samuel Ernest Milliken Brown, BA, BD**, died on 17 September, 2005 in the 85th year of his age and 59th year of his ministry. He was born in Dungiven, Co Londonderry and his home Congregations were Dungiven and Strand, Londonderry. Before going to the then Assembly's College in 1952 for his theological studies, he was educated at Dungiven Primary School, Foyle College, Magee University College and Trinity College, Dublin. Married to the former Miss Mary Wallace Campbell they had three sons, Thomas Ronald, John Campbell and Timothy Lyle to whom the sympathy of the General Assembly is directed. Licenced in June 1943 by the Presbytery of Derry, he was ordained in July 1946 in Gransha Congregation by the then Comber Presbytery. He remained in Gransha until 1956. In that year he received a call to the Congregation of Seaview, where he remained until August 1971 when he was called to the Abbey Congregation, Monkstown. He retired in April 1986 after a long and faithful ministry. Always very loyal to the Courts of the Church he was for a time Clerk of the then Comber Presbytery, Moderator of the Synod of Belfast and Convener of the Union Commission between 1978 and 1983. Always keenly interested in education he for a time taught RE at Belfast Royal Academy and took a keen interest as a member of Dunlambert, Graymount and Mount Vernon School Committees. He was a most loyal and supportive member of the 'Brown Study' and his contribution within its fellowship was greatly appreciated by its members. SEM Brown will always be remembered by those who had the privilege of knowing him as a man of tremendous warmth of personality and, whereas his pulpit ministry was always thoughtful and meticulously prepared, it was as a pastor that he was most of all appreciated. Only eternity will reveal the multitude of lives touched for good by this genuine man of God.

**The Rev James Dickson Young, BA**, died on 30 December, 2005 in the 85th year of his age and the 55th of his ministry. A son of the Rev WP Young who with his wife Marion raised four sons for the Presbyterian ministry, he was born in Galway on 17 November, 1921. His home Congregation was Clones. He

was educated at the High School, Clones, Campbell College, Magee University College, Trinity College, New College, Edinburgh and what was then the Assembly's College, Belfast. At Campbell College he had the distinction of being on the First fifteen for Rugby and at New College, Edinburgh was a Hockey Blue. He was licenced by the Cavan Presbytery in July 1950 and ordained the following year in Glascar. Before that he served as assistant in Gt Victoria Street, Belfast. After 22 years of faithful ministry in Glascar he was called to the Congregation of First Derry where he remained until retirement in 1987. During the second world war he served with the Royal Air Force in recognition of which he was made an Honorary Chaplain. He had the distinction of being Moderator of the Synod of Derry & Omagh in 1980. Married to the former Miss Margaret Gray Anderson who predeceased him by a mere three months, they had one daughter – Lesley Margaret – to whom the sympathy of the General Assembly is directed. Jim Young was a man of deep compassion. He loved people irrespective of class or creed. He was always calm, polite and courteous and once you were his friend you were a friend for life. In addition to his interest in sport, he loved choral music and it was always a joy for him to sing in the choirs of the Churches of which he was Minister. Always faithful to the Courts of the Church he carried out his responsibilities with integrity and care.

**The Rev David Andrew Gibb Milligan, BA**, died on 7 March 2006 in the 85th year of his age and the 60th of his ministry. Born in Belfast on 15 August, 1921, he grew up on the home farm in the Lylehill area of County Antrim. Educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Queens University, Belfast and what was then Assembly's College, Belfast where he undertook his theological studies, after which he served as assistant in Cregagh Congregation. Licenced by the Templepatrick Presbytery in 1945 he was ordained in the Congregations of Ardstraw and Douglas in 1946 and remained as Minister of these Congregations until he retired in 1986. Married to who was then Miss Jean Ramsey they had two children, Owen and Jane. They can rest assured that the thoughts and prayers of the General Assembly are with them in their loss. Of a quiet disposition David Milligan's deep faith in God was evidenced in all aspects of his ministry. Over the years of his long ministry in Ardstraw and Douglas he gained the respect, not only of his own Congregations but of the surrounding area, irrespective of class or creed. His pulpit ministry gave evidence of thorough preparation and his availability to the members of his Congregations night and day made him beloved not just as a minister but a friend.

**The Rev William Moffatt Jackson, BA**, died on 7 March, 2006 in the 81st year of his age and the 52nd of his ministry. A son of the Manse, his father the Rev Culbertson Jackson was Minister of Crescent Church, Belfast where William grew up. He was educated at Methodist College, Belfast and Christ Church, Oxford from which he obtained an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree. Prior to entering the ministry he worked for some years as a Community Worker in Scotland and London. Licenced by the Belfast Presbytery in 1953 he was ordained under section of Paragraphs 314 of the Code for mission work in

Taughmonagh under the minister of McCracken Memorial. He served in Taughmonagh from 1954-1958 when he resigned to go as a missionary to Malawi where he remained until June 1970. In 1970 he was called to be minister of Townsend Street Church where he remained until August 1974 when he became Superintendent of Shankill Road Mission. He remained in this position until retirement in 1990. His passion for mission was evidenced in his publication entitled - 'Booklet on Malawi' - in the context of world need. In an effort to communicate more effectively with the Malawian people he became fluent in no less than three Malawi languages: Kyangonde, Chi Tumbuka and Chi chi Nyanja. He and his wife, Dorothy Mary had three children, Peter William, Susan Mary and Stephen Andrew to whom the sympathy of the General Assembly is directed at this time of sorrow and loss. Their loved one's quiet humble walk with God bore consistent testimony to a deep faith in God and was always evidenced in a caring commitment to people of all races, colours, classes and creeds.

**The Rev Charles Francis Young, MA**, died on 17 March, 2006 in the 89th year of his age and the 60th of his ministry. His brothers the Revs Cyril, James, and Hugh, were all Presbyterian Ministers and sons of the Rev Dr William Pearse Young, who for many years was Minister of Clones Congregation in County Monaghan. Educated at Clones High School, Campbell College, Magee University College, Trinity College and what was then Assembly's College, Belfast, he was licenced by the Cavan Presbytery on 3 December, 1942 and ordained to his first Congregation ie Newtownstewart on 27 February 1946. Prior to this he had been assistant in Newbliss and Crumlin Road Congregations. After 13 years in Newtownstewart he was called to the Congregation of Ballylinney in 1959 where he remained as much loved and highly respected Minister until retirement in October, 1982. In addition to being Moderator of the Carrickfergus Presbytery, he was Moderator of the Synod Ballymena and Coleraine in 1980. He is survived by his wife Edith, their son John and daughters Frances and Susan who can rest assured of the sympathy and prayerful support of the General Assembly at this time of sorrow and loss.

**The Rev David Pinkerton Kirkwood, BA**, died on 20 March, 2005 in the 72nd year of his age and the 15th of his ministry. Brought up in the City of Belfast, he had at various stages membership in Ballysillan, Ravenhill and May Street Congregations. He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Queens University and Stranmillis Training College. Before entering the Ministry he spent several years teaching Classics at Dungannon Royal School. With his wife Pamela, also a teacher, they reared two sons, John and Timothy and one daughter Lisa. Entering the ministry somewhat late in life he studied at the Union Theological College, Belfast, subsequent to which he was summer assistant in The Mall, Armagh, Student Assistant in Brigh, Albany and Stewartstown and Licentiate Assistant in Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maquiresbridge and Newtownbutler. On completion of his term as Licentiate he became the much loved and highly respected Minister of these latter Congregations in April 1992 where he remained until retirement in March, 1999. Since then he has been

residing in Sion Mills. Predeceased by his wife, his sons and daughter can rest assured of the sympathy and prayers of the General Assembly.

**The Rev Hugh Young, BA**, died on 24 March, 2006 in the 90th year of his age and the 61st of his ministry. Born at Fourtowns Manse, Poyntzpass on 6 September, 1916 where his father was then Minister. He was one of four sons of that manse to become Presbyterian Ministers. In 1928 he obtained a Scholarship to Clones High School and in 1930 a further Scholarship to Campbell College, Belfast at which he obtained Matriculation to Magee University College, Londonderry. In 1939 he graduated as BAarts from Trinity College, Dublin and undertook his theological studies at what was then Assembly's College, Belfast. On 3 July 1941 he was licenced by the Cavan Presbytery and ordained to his first Charge – Toberkeigh – on 3 October, 1945. He served as student assistant in Newbliss, Stonebridge and Drumkeen and as assistant in Westbourne Church, Belfast. On 17 May 1953 he was installed as Minister of Hillhall where he remained as much loved and deeply respected Minister until retirement in September, 1981. He served on several Committees of the General Assembly and was Convener of the Union College Management Committee from 1978-1985. Married to the former Miss Daisy Borland, they had two surviving children, Ian and Hilary to whom the sympathy of the General Assembly is directed at this sad time in their experience.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Rev Andrew Gibson be appointed Professor of Practical Theology.

### Priorities Committee

3. That the General Assembly encourage the Boards of the Church to focus on the five key areas of work outlined in the "Conclusions" section of the report and consider ways in which these may be effectively developed.
4. That the General Board be instructed to set up a Panel to consider, in consultation with Presbyteries, ways in which both Manse families and Congregations may be given practical pastoral support at times of illness, or other stress, and to implement recommendations during the year.
5. That the Board of Studies and Christian Training be encouraged to review the present arrangements for Ministerial Development and In-Service Training with a view to greater participation and accountability.
6. That the Business Board be asked to consider ways to encourage the sharing of gifts and expertise by participation on Boards and Committees, especially of younger members.
7. That the General Board be encouraged to consider if new structures are necessary to adequately facilitate the work of Church and Society and Global Concerns.

**Doctrine Committee**

8. That the General Board forms an ad hoc committee to explore and take forward the recommendations contained in the Doctrine of Ordination.

**Church and Society Committee**

9. That the General Assembly note the ongoing and changing needs of victims of the 'Troubles' and commend them to the prayers of the Church.

10. In expressing concern for the ongoing and changing needs of victims, the General Assembly call on all in civil society to make themselves aware of those needs, to respond practically and compassionately and to give room for victims to grieve, survive and recover.

11. That the General Board commend every attempt to reach accommodation on the matter of parading; encourage everyone who can to take courageous steps towards arrangements which enable peaceful parading; commend to the prayer of the Church work being done to achieve accommodation.

12. That the General Assembly express concern at the level of criminality across society and urge against complacency so that we do not exchange one set of problems for another.

13. That the General Assembly, while accepting the differentiation of Church and State, express concern regarding the increasing acceptance of homosexual unions as we believe them to be contrary to the teaching of Scripture.

14. That the General Assembly affirm that society can only be strong and happy where the marriage bond is held in honour.

15. That the General Assembly urge the Irish Government to continue to support the Constitutional position of the family based on marriage, and refrain from any legislation that would weaken this view.

16. That the General Assembly express concern regarding the dumping of asbestos in the Crumlin area, noting the far-reaching effects this will have on the health and well-being of the residents of Northern Ireland and beyond, and ask the minister, Lord Rooker, to pay particular attention to the concerns that have been brought to his attention and act accordingly for the good of all.

17. That the General Assembly urge the British and Irish Governments to continue to work together to progress the establishment of political institutions in Northern Ireland which can claim the support of all sections of the community.

18. That the General Assembly urge the Irish Government to take immediate action to grant leave to remain to the 'aged-out minors' as a matter of justice and grace.

19. That the contribution of our Church to the salary costs of the Rev Matthew Ross in his ministry at the Church and Society Commission in Brussels be extended for a further three years, at £11,000 per year and that the staff of the Church and Society Commission be commended to the prayers of the Church.

20. That the resignation of the Rev David Moore as Co-Convenor of the Church and Society Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev Alan Boal be appointed in his place.

21. That grants of £2,000 for the general work of the Committee, and £10,000 for work in Brussels be made available as a charge on the Incidental Fund.

#### **Moderator's Advisory Committee**

22. That the Moderator's Advisory Committee be encouraged to review the role and nomination of the Moderator of the General Assembly and report in 2007.

#### **Recognised Ministries Committee**

23. That "Mission Africa" be approved as a recognised organisation in terms of the Code Par 200(5)(a).

24. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Recognised Ministries Committee on Ministers without Charge.

#### **Global Concerns Committee**

25. That the General Assembly thank those at congregational and Presbytery level who have accepted responsibility as Peace Agents and urge the wider Church to support and encourage them in responding to "*the Church's own proper calling to seek peace and the things that make for peace.*"

26. That the General Assembly welcome Mrs Laura Coulter as Peacemaking Programme Officer and encourage the Church to support her with prayer and by providing opportunities for her to engage with members on issues of peacemaking.

#### **Manses Panel**

27. That the Union Commission assume responsibility for overseeing the outworking of the above recommendations and in the general terms outlined.

28. That the Church Architecture Committee be invited to reconsider the 1994 'Guidelines for New Manses', since a less-demanding specification may now be more appropriate and could yield greater parity between Manse provision and home ownership, and report to the 2007 General Assembly.

29. That the Manses Panel be continued for a further year for consultation, if necessary.

#### **Mission Education, Promotion and Communications Panel**

30. That the roles and target readerships of the three publications – Presbyterian Herald, Reach Out and Wider World – as differentiated in the report, be noted and adopted.

31. That the Communications Board be asked to set up an Editorial Panel as outlined.

#### **General**

32. That the General Board, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 272 of the Code as follows:

**OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS****Anent Par 25(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 25(1) of the Code, after the word “congregation” there be inserted the words “except that a ruling elder may be given permission by the Kirk Session not to carry out the duties of the eldership for a specified time” and after the word “vote” there be added the sentence: “Where a ruling elder has been temporarily released from the duties of the eldership in the Congregation for a specified time, that elder shall not act as a member of the Kirk Session and shall not be entitled to attend, speak or exercise a vote in the Kirk Session.”

**Anent Par 30(3) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 30(3) of the Code the words “but the Kirk Session may assign such other duties as it sees fit” be added after the word “report”.

**Anent Par 50(2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 50(2) of the Code the word “being” be deleted and the words “discussed and” added in its place.

DONALD J WATTS

**OVERTURE TRANSMITTED****Anent Par 85(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 85(1) of the Code after the words “ordained minister” and “minister”, there be added the words “and licentiate”.

DONALD J WATTS

# JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

1. This has been a busy year for the Judicial Commission, which at the time of writing has met on 11 occasions since the last General Assembly. Part of the workload has been in dealing with two complaints referred by Presbyteries, which fall under the recent child protection guidelines for dealing with complaints of abuse. As with any new procedures there have been questions to be sorted, particularly in relation to the Code. The Judicial Commission has spent many hours on these matters and is satisfied that both the spirit of the guidelines and the demands of the Code have been met. The Commission is indebted especially to its legal members, under the chairmanship of Mr Mervyn A Morrow QC, for their hard work and insightful judgements in this regard.

## **APPEALS OF MRS ANN COULTER AND REV ALAN MITCHELL FROM THE DECISIONS OF THE DUBLIN & MUNSTER PRESBYTERY CONCERNING THE APPROVAL OF PRESBYTERY FOR THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MR MARK SMITH AS VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKER IN HOWTH & MALAHIDE**

2. Following Hearing of the Appeals of Mrs Ann Coulter and the Rev Alan Mitchell, and consideration of a Notice of Appeal from Mr Richard Williams, the Judicial Commission issued the following finding:-

The Judicial Commission convened on 1 July 2005 and 31 August 2005 to consider the Appeals of Mrs Ann Coulter and Rev Alan Mitchell from the decisions of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery dated 3 May 2005 and 7 June 2005, and a Notice of Appeal from Mr Richard Williams purporting to appeal the said decisions, approving the arrangements of the Kirk Session of Howth and Malahide to engage the services of Mr Mark Smith as a full time Volunteer Youth Worker.

Having read the Notices and Grounds of the Appeals, and having read the submissions and opinions of the Appellants and having heard Mrs Coulter and Mr Richard Williams, and the responses and opinions expressed on behalf of the Presbytery Commission, and having investigated the matter, the Judicial Commission rejects the Appeals and finds: -

- (1) Mr Williams does not have a right of appeal because he is neither a member of the inferior court (ie Presbytery) nor a party in a case before the court within the meaning of paragraph 163(2) of The Code.
- (2) Both Appellants were present at the meeting of Presbytery on 7 June 2005 by which date Union Commission approval had been obtained, and neither voted against the proposal to approve the said arrangements, which proposal was minuted as having been passed unanimously. Having taken cognisance of paragraphs 160(1) and 161(4) of The Code, in light of the submissions of the Appellants the Judicial Commission proceeded to hear and determine their Appeals.



- (3) The Kirk Session and Presbytery had complied sufficiently with relevant guidelines concerning the appointment of Mr Smith as a full time Volunteer Youth Worker; in particular:
  - (a) the Kirk Session with the approval of the Minister had decided to authorise the appointment of Mr Smith subject to the approval of Presbytery;
  - (b) the Congregational Committee had approved the basis of the agreement for the appointment and had also minuted the commitment to rent accommodation for Mr Smith and his family;
  - (c) in all the circumstances the decision of Kirk Session was justified notwithstanding that Mr Smith was at the time of the decision resident in Australia and the position had not been advertised locally to invite applicants;
  - (d) Presbytery had been satisfied that there was a sufficient guarantee of financial support for Mr Smith from the Emerald Trust and from his friends and family with recourse to congregational funds limited to €3000 for expenses and the provision of suitable accommodation for Mr Smith and his family;
  - (e) Presbytery had been satisfied that Mr Smith is in sympathy with the doctrines and practices of PCI;
  - (f) The decision of the Kirk Session and the approval of Presbytery were not invalidated by the presence of two members of Kirk Session in addition to the representative Elder, Mrs Coulter, at the meeting of Presbytery on 3 May 2005 or by the absence of notice in the agenda, or by the continuance of the investigation of the Presbytery Commission concerning other matters in connection with Howth and Malahide congregation;
  - (g) Presbytery had sought and obtained the approval in principle of the Union Commission for the appointment;
  - (h) The appointment would not in effect be an appointment of an Associate Minister.

The Judicial Commission is concerned for the peace of the Presbytery, the Minister, his family and the Appellants, and Mr Mark Smith and his family, together with the congregation of Howth and Malahide, and commend all to the Grace of God.

**SECOND APPEALS OF MR RICHARD WILLIAMS AND MRS ANN COULTER FROM THE DECISION OF THE DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY COMMISSION CONCERNING THE MINISTER OF THE CONGREGATION OF HOWTH AND MALAHIDE**

3. Following Hearing of the Appeals of Mr Richard Williams and Mrs Ann Coulter the Judicial Commission issued the following finding:-

The Judicial Commission convened on 1 July 2005 and 31 August 2005 upon the Appeals of Mr Richard Williams and Mrs Ann Coulter from the decision of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery dated 10 May 2005, delivered in a Finding on 15 May 2005, that the difficulties current in the Congregation of Howth and Malahide do not warrant the removal of the Rev Dr Gary Millar from the Congregation under paragraph 224 of The Code.

The Judicial Commission refers to its Finding dated 22 February 2005 concerning the first Appeals (pages 72 to 75, 2005 Annual Reports). The Judicial Commission continues to commend the Commission of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery for all that was done pastorally during its attempts to assist the Kirk Session and the Congregation in connection with the situation in Howth and Malahide. The Judicial Commission accepts that the Appellants' complaints and requests are motivated by their beliefs, which they genuinely hold, that they act for the benefit of a sizeable proportion of more longstanding members of the congregation who they believe have been hurt and dismayed as a result of changes which have occurred since Dr Millar's installation in 2000.

Having read the Notice and Grounds of the Appeals, and having read and heard the submissions and opinions of the Appellants, and the responses and opinions expressed on behalf of the Presbytery Commission, and having investigated the matter, the Judicial Commission rejects the Appeals and finds:-

- (1) The further investigations by the Presbytery Commission which had been directed by the Judicial Commission on 22 February were extensive, prolonged and thorough. The Commission had met with the Appellants, and all who by their signatures had purported to share the complaints which the Appellants had advanced, who had accepted the invitation to meet, and had heard and minuted their complaints and submissions (referred to hereinafter as "complainants"). The Commission also met again with the Kirk Session and put numerous written questions to which the responses have been minuted, and met with Dr Millar and put questions to him and minuted his responses.
- (2) The Commission discussed the relevant information which had been imparted by those whom it had heard, and was justified and correct in concluding that the complainants formed a minority in the Congregation. The Commission was also justified and correct in reaching its decision and in issuing its Finding that while Dr Millar's ministry had become impaired among the complainants, at a congregational level it has not in fact become so "seriously impaired", as is required under paragraph 224 of The Code, to merit his removal and therefore that the difficulties current in the Congregation did not warrant his removal under paragraph 224.
- (3) Recommendations contained in the Finding of the Presbytery Commission lacked provisions whereby observance therewith or consequences thereof could be monitored.

The Judicial Commission reiterates the Recommendations of the Presbytery Commission contained in its Finding with variations and additions by way of the following Directions:

- (1) That the Kirk Session:
  - (a) seeks the assistance of the Presbytery and of the General Assembly's Conciliation Panel in drawing up and implementing a congregational strategy for easing the conflict that exists within its membership to be instigated before the end of 2005;

- (b) distributes communion tokens twice each year prior to the May and November Communion Sundays, to be returned at the Communion Services, and carefully keeps the communion roll updated at least annually, commencing November 2005;
  - (c) with the Moderator, encourage all Elders to play a full and active role within the life of the Congregation. It is strongly recommended that the notice of a meeting of Kirk Session be given by announcement from the pulpit at the two preceding Sunday services and/or by two weeks notice in writing to every member of the Kirk Session.
  - (d) ensure that the issue of the Manse relocation be sensitively and carefully handled and kept under review, and that no final decision regarding relocation is taken without the informed consent of the Presbytery and the Union Commission.
- (2) That the Presbytery of Dublin & Munster:
    - (a) assists the Congregation and the Kirk Session of Howth and Malahide to comply with these Directions and takes such steps as are necessary to monitor and to ensure compliance;
    - (b) arranges a Special Visitation of the Congregation to be held in or before January 2007, to include the encouragement of the members and to address any outstanding issues that may have arisen.
  - (3) That the Appellants, Minister, Elders, all members of Presbytery and all others concerned make every effort to seek reconciliation and to restore unity within the Congregation.

The Judicial Commission is concerned for the peace of the Minister, his family and the Appellants and the Congregation of Howth and Malahide, and commend all to the Grace of God.

### **LARGY REFERENCE**

4. It was reported last year that the Judicial Commission, following investigation of issues at Largy Congregation, had issued a determination and was awaiting responses. Some of these have been forthcoming in that a joint Manse Committee, with representatives from Dungiven and Largy, has been re-established; office-bearers have been appointed and for a time the Largy Kirk Session was augmented by elders appointed by the Foyle Presbytery. A meeting between members of Dungiven and Largy Kirk Sessions took place under the chairmanship of the Very Rev Dr Rodney Sterritt and it appeared that some progress might be possible. However, despite a clear instruction from the Judicial Commission a cheque outstanding from Largy Congregation to Dungiven Congregation has not been paid over. A new Committee has been appointed in Largy but at its first meeting it still failed to implement the Judicial Commission's determination. The Commission is considering further steps and will report through the Daily Minutes.

Some of the signatories to an Appeal against the Finding of the Foyle Presbytery following a Consultation in Largy wished their Appeal to be heard, despite the Judicial Commission's determination, The Commission decided that it would not consider the Appeal until its instructions have been followed.

### **APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY REGARDING A STUDENT**

5. The Judicial Commission ruled that a student has the right to appeal the decision of a Presbytery to terminate his candidature as a student for the ministry in terms of Code Par 215(6)(b). The Judicial Commission met for such an Appeal, under the chairmanship of the Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson. The student did not appear and the Appeal was held to be abandoned.

### **THE BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY**

6. The Ballymena Presbytery wrote to ask for clarification of a number of issues arising from the Judicial Commission Finding on the Appeal relating to the nomination of a student for the ministry. As the Convener of the Board of Studies and Christian Training had assured the General Assembly that the issues would be considered by the Board, the letter was referred in the first instance to the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

### **REFERENCE FROM A PRESBYTERY REGARDING COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MINISTER**

7. As the relevant statutory authorities indicated that they were not taking any action under criminal law in the case of complaints against a minister, the Judicial Commission considered oral and documentary evidence and issued the following Finding:

“Oral and documentary evidence has satisfied the Judicial Commission, on the balance of probabilities, that the complaints of three women against a man, whom they have each identified, are substantiated concerning his conduct with them in the late 1970s and early 1980s when they were children.

The man has since become an ordained Minister and is now under the care of a Presbytery and in consequence of this Determination the Judicial Commission will direct the Presbytery pursuant to paragraphs 161 and 21 of The Code that he should no longer be considered as a Minister in good standing under the care of the Presbytery, that his name should be removed from the list of Ministers without charge and that credentials should not be issued to him.”

### **SECOND REFERENCE FROM A PRESBYTERY REGARDING COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MINISTER**

8. In the case of a complaint referred by a different Presbytery, the statutory authorities indicated that they were not taking any action under the criminal law. The documentary evidence has only become available at the time of writing. The Judicial Commission will be conducting a preliminary investigation under Code Par 161 and will report further in the Daily Minutes.

### **APPEAL AGAINST A DECISION OF THE BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY**

9. An Appeal was lodged by the Rev Brian Kennaway, against a decision of the Ballymena Presbytery, in that the Presbytery had not dealt with a complaint of Mr Kennaway against the Rev Stephen Dickinson, but had resolved that it “cannot proceed”. The Judicial Commission ruled that, as

minuted, this was not a correct decision of the Presbytery as under Code Par 74(b) the Presbytery can proceed.

The Judicial Commission subsequently received a letter from the Ballymena Presbytery asking for guidance as to whether the Courts of the Church are the correct forum for a difference of opinion between members of an organisation outside the Church to be resolved. The Judicial Commission reiterated that as both men are under the care and discipline of the Courts of the Church it is competent for the Presbytery to deal with the matter.

### **ADVICE TO THE TYRONE PRESBYTERY**

10. The Tyrone Presbytery asked for determination and advice under Code Par 21 on whether a Presbytery has “the right to require something of its members, particularly in relation to ‘matters of faith and worship,’ when (a) Scripture, (b) the Subordinate Standards, (c) the Code are silent on the particular issue?” The Judicial Commission determined that Code Par 21 does not refer to hypothetical situations and, while the Commission was aware of the background to this request, it would not give a ruling which could then be taken out of context.

### **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

11. During the year the Union Commission consulted on special arrangements.

### **OVERTURES**

12. Overtures to be presented to the General Assembly are being considered by a Panel and amended where necessary.

## **RESOLUTION**

1. That the Report be received.

### **OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS**

#### **Anent Par 163(2)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 163(2)(b) of The Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

“(b) any party to a decision of a court who feels aggrieved by the decision and desires to have it reviewed;

(c) any member or adherent of a congregation who is affected by a decision of a court and desires to have it reviewed.”

DONALD J WATTS

# UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev TJ STOTHERS

Secretary: Rev SA MATTHEWS

## INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 2005 to February 2006.

### Very Rev Dr AR Rodgers

2. Having completed nine years on the Union Commission, the Very Rev Dr Andrew Rodgers retires as its Chairman. Dr Rodgers has been a reassuring presence for members of deputations seeking Leave to Call, having some personal knowledge or experience of virtually every Congregation in the General Assembly. He has chaired meetings of the Commission and the Allocation Committee with a firm geniality and has been an enthusiastic member of deputations of the Commission that have travelled to all parts of Ireland. The Commission records its gratitude and appreciation. His successor is the Very Rev Dr John Lockington.

### Rev SA Matthews

3. The Rev Uel Matthews retires as Secretary of the Union Commission, having served in this capacity since 1999. He has brought considerable experience and meticulous attention to detail to this work, as well as a clear desire that the work of the Commission be carried out in a way that is befitting the Church of Jesus Christ. The Commission expresses its thanks to Mr Matthews for his work and is delighted to learn of his forthcoming and well-deserved award of Doctor of Divinity.

### Internal Committees

4. The Rev Dr Ian Hart succeeds Mr Matthews as Secretary of the Union Commission and he in turn is succeeded by \_\_\_\_\_ as Convener of Reviews. The Rev Colin McClure retires as Convener of Additional Appointments and is succeeded by the Rev Roy Mackey. The Commission is grateful to the outgoing Conveners for their careful and faithful service. Mr Jack Hutcheson and Mr Alastair Giffen continue as Conveners of Expenses & Fees and Manses, respectively.

## OVERVIEW

5. This has been a year with both a high volume and high importance of business. 36 deputations from Charges seeking Leave to Call have been received, and the Commission itself has sent deputations to various parts of Ireland. Apart from this routine work, various important subjects have demanded time and these are reported on below. There has, however, been one major recurring theme: the fact that we have too many Charges for the number

of Ministers available. This has not only increased the number of vacancies, but also their average length.

### **CALL TO PRAYER**

6. The Union Commission calls the Church to prayer concerning the number of vacant Charges that presently exist. Such prayer will include asking God whether we need fewer Charges or more Ministers, and if the former, then for courage to follow that through. If the latter, then for an openness among those he is calling to respond to that call.

### **RESOURCING MINISTRY**

7. In resourcing Ministry in the past year the Union Commission has met with encouragement and disappointment. In some instances Congregations and Presbyteries have taken a realistic view of local situations and unions and amalgamations have taken place. In a few cases this has meant the closure of Church buildings and the Union Commission recognises the pain that this causes for many.

8. The Commission particularly commends the Congregations of First Ballybay & Drumkeen and Second Ballybay & Rockcorry in the Monaghan Presbytery, where two separate two-point Charges have entered into a Union whereby there are two services each Sunday alternating between First & Second Ballybay and Drumkeen & Rockcorry and where a strong unit has now been created which can much more effectively witness and worship in its area. Special thanks are expressed to the Rev David Nesbitt, Minister of one Charge and Convener of the Vacancy in the other, without whose guidance this arrangement would not have come about.

9. Conversely, in some other places, the Commission has met with an unwillingness to consider changing present arrangements. The Commission is seriously concerned about this as the number of Ministers is not projected to increase over the next few years, while the number of vacancies already puts a big strain on many through Convenerships. The fragmentation and dilution of witness and worship that exists can only be detrimental in the long term. There is, mostly, an unwillingness to take this on board locally, which has to change.

10. The Commission has decided that smaller Charges will only be given Leave to Call on the Restricted List, unless the Presbytery or the Board of Mission in Ireland can make a compelling case otherwise. It is intended that this will direct Ministers newly available for call to areas where there is evident opportunity for mission, outreach and growth as well as focus attention on the resource problem that we have. Other factors, such as the distance from the next nearest Presbyterian Congregation, population density, and the profile of that population will also be taken into account.

11. There is a conception that the Commission's prime concern in unions and amalgamations is the Central Ministry Fund. This is not true. (The policy on the Restricted List outlined above may in fact produce a bigger drain on CMF.) The prime concern is how to provide ministry given the number of Charges and the number of Ministers.

12. The Commission has not only looked at how smaller Charges are resourced; it has continued to examine the Associate Ministry and has taken a more rigorous approach as to whether Associate Ministry posts may be established. Here CMF *is* a factor and it is ensuring that, where larger Congregations have an Associate Ministry, there is an appropriate relationship to CMF. This has now moved to a policy whereby the rate of assessment on the Associate's Salary is normally 100% of the rate on the Minister's Stipend, rather than 5% as previously. This enables the Commission to ensure that financially strong Congregations are not net recipients from CMF. However, the Commission feels that these Congregations ought to continue to make a meaningful contribution to CMF and, as there is no mechanism beyond raising the rate of assessment on Salary to 100%, this presents difficulties. When the scheme was introduced in 1995 it replaced the Ordained Assistantship scheme, which included an element of training. This was perhaps reflected in the fact that the Congregation was only required to pay 16/40ths of the Minister's Stipend towards salary. Soon afterwards it was set at this or 65% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum, whichever is higher. The Commission no longer considers training as an aspect of Associate Ministry and there are some cases where the Commission can see no reason for the Congregation not paying 100% of Salary. A resolution is appended to allow flexibility here, so that Congregations for which an Associate Ministry is appropriate, but which are financially weak, can have appropriate arrangements made.

#### **MINISTER'S EXPENSES AND HM REVENUE & CUSTOMS (HMRC)**

13. The Board of Finance and Personnel has obtained a dispensation from HMRC concerning Minister's Expenses whereby no return of Expenses received and incurred needs be made on Income Tax Returns. The Board has kept the Union Commission informed through the whole process and various modifications to the scheme suggested by the Commission have been accepted.

14. The Commission recommends to Ministers and Congregations in Northern Ireland that the procedures described by the Board of Finance and Personnel be followed in order to avail of the Dispensation from HMRC.

15. The dispensation recognises categories of expenses other than those presently recognised by the General Assembly. An Overture is brought to allow what the Church recognises to more closely match what is allowed by HMRC.

#### **REVIEWS**

16. At present the Union Commission can only review Stipend after seven years, or at the request of a Congregation or Presbytery, unless a review has been written into the Leave to Call. Occasionally, such as when a Congregation receives through sale of property or some other means a large increase in finance, or when Specified Sources show a marked and sustained increase, it may be appropriate to review the settlement. An Overture is appended.



## OPERATION OF TYRONE MEMORIAL

17. In response to concerns raised by the Board of Finance and Personnel as part of their review of the operation of the Tyrone Memorial, the Union Commission confirmed that it has regard to 'ability to pay' when conducting reviews of augmented Charges; that it has regard to CMF when agreeing Leave to Call for Charges that will have to be substantially augmented. It also notes that in recent times no Stipend has been set that has been more than twice the prevailing Basic Ministerial Minimum.

## ASSOCIATE MINISTRY SCHEME

18. In 2004 the General Assembly passed this resolution: 'Recognising the need for a small number of Congregations to extend an Associate Ministry beyond the present seven-year limit, the General Assembly approve the drawing up of legislation along the lines indicated in the report.' (Minutes p31) The Reports (p 296) stated: 'In a very small number of situations there may be a case for an Associateship to be extended beyond the 7 year maximum. We believe this would call for a thorough-going review by the Union Commission. Thereafter the appointment would still be subject to a 3-yearly review by the Union Commission. Such arrangements would require the Congregation to accept more significant financial obligations. It would also be important that the Associate could and would rise above the appropriate Ministerial Minimum.' An appropriate Overture to enable this is appended. The Commission will adopt the following as policy: *A very strong case has to be proved and supported by all parties. The review will be done by meeting rather than correspondence. The salary will not be less than the lower of (a) the appropriate Ministerial Minimum plus 20% or (b) 2/3 of the Minister's stipend. All costs will be met by Congregation. All Assessments – CMF RMF WMF MPS - will apply at full rates.*

## GUIDELINES ON ELIGIBILITY OF ASSISTANTS FOR CALL

19. Concern was expressed to the Commission that the existing Guidelines on the eligibility of licensed Assistants (General Assembly Minutes 2000, p 25) were, in part, insufficiently clear to produce uniformity of practice. It is recommended that the Guidelines be amended to read as follows:

- (i) Public worship is open to all, so visitors from vacant Congregations cannot be excluded because a soon-to-be eligible Assistant is preaching, but such a visit cannot be regarded as a formal 'hearing' of the candidate.
- (ii) Similarly, Assistants are free to drive past vacant Churches and manses, but it is inappropriate to enter into negotiations about possible repairs etc at this preliminary stage.
- (iii) It is reasonable for Assistants to say that, when the time comes, they might be interested in a particular vacancy, among others, or that they will not be interested in it, but no commitments should be entered into, particularly of an exclusive nature.
- (iv) Kirk Sessions for their part should not give the impression that they are committed to any one candidate before the list closes. It follows

that any preliminary contacts should be brief, informal and limited to the question of whether an application may be forthcoming or not.

- (v) Applications may be submitted on or after the date of eligibility, but Kirk Sessions should allow 7 days for applications to arrive before interviewing or closing their list. Where possible they should present the Congregation (or hearing committee) with a reasonable selection of names.
- (vi) The required announcements of the Election Meeting should not be made until the Clerk of Assembly has authorised the Vacancy Commission to proceed with arranging a hearing.

### **OTHER HEARING AND ELECTION ISSUES**

21. It is further recommended on two related issues:

The procedures as currently set out in the Code do not specify a minimum time between the completion of the list and the hearing of the candidates. An Overture is appended to require notice to be given for two Sundays prior to the commencement of hearing of candidates. Such notice could, when appropriate, be given concurrently with the process of selection and approval of candidates, in which case the names of those under consideration would not be disclosed.

The rules relating to the Election Meeting (Par 195) currently allow for the consideration of a name or names other than those on the list. This provision does not, in the Commission's judgment, give sufficient weight to the role of selection of the Kirk Session or that of approval and completion by the Vacancy Commission and by the Clerk of Assembly in consultation with others (as per Par 194(7)). An Overture to remove this provision is appended.

### **MATERNITY LEAVE PROVISION**

22. The Commission agreed new provisions for payments to those on maternity leave, applicable to Licentiate and Ordained Assistants, and to Ordained Ministers, including Associates. There will be no qualifying period, except for those coming from other denominations, or who have been Ministers without Charge for a period of more than one year. The provision will not apply to Students for the Ordained Ministry or to Student Assistants.

### **PART TIME SERVICE OF ORDAINED MINISTERS**

23. Following a request from an Associate Minister to serve on a part-time basis and continue in membership of the Courts of the Church following a period of maternity leave, which the Commission did not feel able to accede to since the General Assembly has not agreed such in principle, the Presbytery of East Belfast requested the Commission to consider the issue, with a view to bringing enacting legislation to the General Assembly. The Commission reports on the matter as follows:

- (i) The question of the part-time deployment of Ordained Ministers should be clearly differentiated from the service that might be offered by an auxiliary or non-stipendiary ministry.
- (ii) The concept of an auxiliary or non-stipendiary ministry has been drawn to the attention of the General Assembly on a number of occasions, most

recently in the 2004 Report of the Board of Studies and Christian Training (Assembly Reports 2004, p295). Given the valuable service rendered in this capacity in many denominations, including the Church of Scotland, the Commission is supportive of a resolution being brought to test the mind of the Assembly.

(iii) The Courts of the Church are currently made up of Ordained Ministers who serve in a full-time capacity (or who have retired from such full-time service), together with corresponding ruling elders. Others are regularly invited to sit and deliberate. The Commission is not persuaded that a fundamental alteration should be made to the composition of our decision-making and policy-forming bodies.

(iv) Part-time Ministers and Ministers without Charge could, however, be invited to sit and deliberate and should be encouraged, where appropriate, to use their gifts at congregational level via the existing provision of "temporary Assistant" to the Minister (Code Par 81(3)).

### LEAVE TO CALL MINISTERS

Note: This is only a summary, not all of the conditions attached to the Leave to Call may be recorded. Expenses are initial expenses to be kept under review and are to be paid in accordance with the procedures agreed by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

Congregation	Stipend		Expenses
Donagheady	£16,200	(2005)	£6,200
Downpatrick and Ardglass	£15,850	(2005)	£4,500
Trinity, Greyabbey	£ 3,250	(2005)	£1,500
McCracken Memorial	£19,500	(2005)	£6,000
Whitehead	£32,100	(2005)	£6,618
First Lurgan	£26,000	(2005)	£6,612
Cooke Centenary	£30,000	(2005)	£7,000
Second Ballyeaston	£26,000	(2005)	£6,250
Gilnahirk	£29,194	(2005)	£6,700
Glendermott	£28,000	(2005)	£6,500
Hill Street Lurgan	£30,000	(2005)	£6,750
New Mossley	£31,500	(2005)	£6,500
Bushmills	£ 6,419	(2005)	£5,300
Ballyloughan	£23,000	(2005)	£6,250
Spa and Magherahamlet	£26,500	(2005)	£6,350
First Carrickfergus	£11,340	(2005)	£3,240
First Ballymena	£ 9,850	(2005)	£2,760
Dungannon	£37,000	(2005)	£7,376
Second Ballybay and Rockcorry	£33,000	(2006)	£6,650
	£33,000	(2006)	£6,500
	€12,536	(2006)	€2,900
	€ 6,395	(2006)	€1,500

### LEAVE TO CALL ON THE RESTRICTED LIST

Dromore and	£5,800	(2005)	£2,885
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Drumquin	£7,100	(2005)	£3,200
Toberkeigh	£19,451	(2006)	£6,000

#### **LEAVE TO CALL UNDER HOME MISSION SCHEME**

Enniscorthy	€4,150	(2005)	€ 500
Wexford	€3,250	(2005)	€ 500

#### **REVIEW OF REVIEWABLE TENURE**

Oldpark: The Commission extended the tenure for three years on the existing terms, in the context of the Presbytery's efforts to develop the situation to further the aims of mission in the whole area.

First Ballymacarrett: The Commission extended the tenure for up to one year from June 2006, in the context of the Presbytery's desire to conduct a wider review of the situation.

#### **CHANGE IN THE TERMS OF REVIEWABLE TENURE**

Ballygomartin: In consultation with the Presbytery, the Commission changed the terms of the Leave to Call under reviewable tenure adding the following:

1. For the avoidance of misunderstanding: it is accepted by Kirk Session, Presbytery and Union Commission, that there will be a need for a Presbyterian witness in Ballygomartin for the long-term future. It is not envisaged, therefore, under the terms of the Reviewable Tenure arrangements that the Congregation will be amalgamated or dissolved. Any review will therefore be of the nature of Ordained Ministry, that is, what the emphases ought to be, rather than the need for Ordained Ministry per se. At the same time, the person in post will be expected to give the emphasis in his or her ministry to the areas considered appropriate by the Presbytery and Union Commission, and the post may be terminated under reviewable Tenure procedures if this is not the case.

2. In view of changed circumstances since the original terms of Reviewable Tenure were agreed in 2003, it is accepted by Kirk Session, Presbytery and Union Commission that the Highfield area is only one of several areas in the community that it is important for the Congregation to establish contact with. References to the Highfield area should now therefore be taken to refer to an emphasis on making contact and developing relationships with those who live in the local community but who have no meaningful Church connection.

#### **LEAVE TO CALL WITHDRAWN**

Leave to Call a Minister was withdrawn from Clontarf and Scots in February 2006.

#### **LEAVE TO CALL AN ASSOCIATE MINISTER**

Leave to call an Associate Minister was given to the following Congregations in accordance with the General Assembly's Form of Call and the following terms:

Congregation	Salary	Expenses
Knock	£20,600	£3,800
Whiteabbey	£20,000	£4,000

### **LEAVE TO CALL AN ASSOCIATE MINISTER SUSPENDED**

Hillsborough: Leave to Call an Associate Minister was suspended in the context of an attempt to recruit a Youth Development worker.

### **EXTENSION OF TERM OF ASSOCIATE MINISTRY**

Westbourne: The Associate Minister's term was extended up to 12 months from 21 October 2005 in the context of the anticipated application from Westbourne to be designated an Urban Mission Congregation under the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Carnmoney: The Associate Minister's term was extended by 12 months from the conclusion of the initial 3 year term (15 January 2006).

### **REVIEWS**

Through its Reviews Committee, the Commission conducted reviews of the finances of Congregations in the following categories:

#### Further review from 2004:

Garnerville: Stipend for 2005 £17,000; further review in 2006

Second Castledearg: No action, no further review

Alt: No action, no further review.

St Columba's Lisburn: Stipend for 2005 £16,000; further review in 2006.

#### Reviews scheduled for 2005:

Conlig: No action, no further review

Movilla: Stipend for 2005 £17,500; further review in 2006

Wellington Street, Ballymena: No action, no further review

Kirpatrick Memorial: Stipend for 2005 £17,500; further review in 2006

Sion: No action, no further review

Urney: No action, no further review

First Lisburn: No action, no further review

Dun Laoghaire: No action, no further review

#### 7 year reviews

Abbey, Dublin: Stipend for 2005 €15000; further review in 2006.

No action was taken in the case of the following Congregations: Ballyhenry, Ballygrainey, First and Second Markethill, Letterkenny and Trenta, Joymount, First Ballymoney, Cuningham Memorial, Sixmilecross, Annahilt and Drumlough, First Coleraine, Banbridge Road, Dromore, Carnone and Convoy.

#### Requested reviews:

Crumlin: Stipend for 2005 reduced to £14,000 with the Tyrone Memorial applied in 2006 and following years.

### **STATED SUPPLY**

Donoughmore and Stranorlar: In March 2005 the Commission nominated the Rev T Luke as Stated Supply for one year and agreed the terms.

Clones: The Commission renewed its nomination for 12 months from 17 May 2005 and agreed the terms.

Strathfoyle: In March 2005 the Commission nominated the Rev Norman Hunter as Stated Supply for one year and agreed the terms.

Gortnessey: The Commission renewed its nomination of the Rev A McM Kerr as Stated Supply for one year from 1 April 2005.

Gilnahirk: The Commission nominated the Rev C Meban as Stated Supply for the duration of the vacancy from 1 September 2005 and agreed the terms.

Ray and Newtowncunningham: The Commission nominated the Very Rev Dr R Sterritt as Stated Supply for one year from 1 January 2006 and agreed the terms.

St Johnston and Ballylennon: The Commission nominated the Rev DC Caskie as Stated Supply for one year from 1 December 2005 and agreed the terms.

Ballina, Killala and Ballymote: The term of the Stated Supply arrangement was extended up to 30 September 2006.

### **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Where financial support of Ministers was necessary because of sickness, redundancy, resignation or other special circumstances, special arrangements were made.

### **RESTRICTED LIST**

The Commission continues to apply the following rules and it is the responsibility of the individual Minister to apply for an extension:

A. The name of a Minister shall be removed from the list of eligible Ministers (Code Par 193(1)(e)) after two years, unless the Minister concerned applies for and is granted an extension by the Union Commission.

B. When the Union Commission is not meeting on a monthly basis:

- (a) The Convener may grant an extension of up to two months, in consultation with the Clerk of Assembly.
- (b) The Allocation Committee may place a new applicant on the restricted list.

### **MANSES**

Decisions on manses are made by the Commission on the understanding that the required permissions from other bodies are obtained and that the appropriate guidelines are observed.

In view of difficulties caused in the past by a failure to arrive at certainty with regard to the future of the manse before the commencement of a new ministry, the Commission continued to delay granting Leave to Call until Congregations had come to a clear mind about the future of the manse. The Convener of the Manse Committee gave advice on various matters connected with manses and manse land.

The following Congregations were given permission to let the manse during a vacancy: Cooke Centenary, Clarkesbridge, Ballyloughan, Donagheady and Castlereagh. The need to have the manse occupied for security reasons has

to be balanced against the need to ensure that the manse is available for vacant inspection and refurbishment before the commencement of a new ministry. Proper legal agreements are required.

The following Congregations were given permission to demolish the existing manse and rebuild: Glendermott and Dungannon

Whitehead was given permission to sell the existing manse and purchase a new manse:

The Minister of Tobermore was given permission to vacate the manse for a time to allow for structural repairs.

The following Congregations were given permission to use proceeds from the sale of a manse, or manse land, in appropriate ways: Magherally, Castlebellingham and Dundrod.

Following the Union of the Congregations of First and Second Ballybay, Drumkeen and Rockcorry, Second Ballybay has been given permission to let the manse for approximately 2 years under certain conditions.

Permission has been given to the Minister of Greystones to vacate the manse and to live in an area adjacent to his Congregation for the last few months of his ministry before retirement.

### **CONGREGATIONS UNITED**

The following Congregations were united in the terms set out below:

#### **Downpatrick and Ardglass:**

1. That the Congregations of Downpatrick and Ardglass be united as from 17 May, 2005.

2. Each Congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.

3. Each Congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.

4. In the choice of a Minister the two Congregations shall act as one Congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.

5. The Stated Services shall be (a) Downpatrick 11.30am (and occasionally at 7.00pm) (b) Ardglass 10.00am, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.

6. That the Stipends be (a) Downpatrick, £15,850 [2005] (b) Ardglass, £3,250 [2005] and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) Downpatrick, £4,500 (b) Ardglass, £1,500 Holiday Supplies, Manse Telephone Rental and Business Calls, to be borne in the proportions (a) Downpatrick 80% (b) Ardglass, 20%.

7. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Downpatrick manse be borne in the proportions (a) Downpatrick, 80% (b) Ardglass, 20%.

8. The Minister shall reside in Downpatrick manse.

9. That the directions of the Union Commission be observed concerning Ardglass manse.

**Enniscorthy and Wexford (Home Mission Scheme):**

1. That the Congregations of Enniscorthy and Wexford be united as from 20 September 2005.
2. Each Congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each Congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister the two Congregations shall act as one Congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The Stated Services shall be (a) Enniscorthy 12.00pm (b) Wexford 10.30am, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends be (a) Enniscorthy, €4,150 [2005] (b) Wexford, €3,250 [2005] and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) Enniscorthy, €500 (b) Wexford, €500. Holiday Supplies, Manse Telephone Rental and Business Calls, to be borne in the proportions (a) Enniscorthy, 50% (b) Wexford, 50%.
7. That the Minister shall reside in Enniscorthy manse.
8. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Enniscorthy manse be borne in the proportions (a) Enniscorthy 60% (b) Wexford, 40%.

**First & Second Ballybay, Drumkeen and Rockcorry:**

1. That the Congregations of First & Second Ballybay, Drumkeen and Rockcorry be united as from an appropriate date.
2. Each Congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each Congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister the four Congregations shall act as one Congregation and the four Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. There shall be two stated services each Sunday: (a) at 10.30am alternating between Drumkeen and Rockcorry and (b) at 12 noon alternating between First and Second Ballybay. The times of these two services may be varied as the four Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine; notwithstanding, one single united service for all Congregations may be held from time to time as agreed by the four Kirk Sessions and evening services may be held from time to time as agreed locally.
6. That the Stipends be (a) First Ballybay, €11,505 [2006] (b) Second Ballybay, €12,536 [2006] (c) Drumkeen, €3,757 [2006] (d) Rockcorry, €6,395 [2006] and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) First Ballybay, €2,900 (b) Second Ballybay, €2,900 (c) Drumkeen, €1,000 (d) Rockcorry, €1,500. Holiday Supplies, Manse Telephone Rental and Business Calls, to be borne in the proportions (a) First Ballybay, 35% (b) Second Ballybay, 35% (c) Drumkeen, 12% (d) Rockcorry 18%.
7. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of First Ballybay manse be borne in the proportions: (a) First Ballybay, 35% (b) Second Ballybay, 35% (c) Drumkeen, 12% (d) Rockcorry 18%.



8. That the present Minister of First Ballybay and Drumkeen shall continue to reside in First Ballybay manse, and that the matter of residence be reviewed when a vacancy occurs.

9. That the directions of the Union Commission be observed in respect of Second Ballybay manse and manse property.

## **UNION DISSOLVED**

### **Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford**

This Union under the Alternating Ministries Scheme was dissolved, with effect from 1 June 2005 and with a view to forming the Joint Charge of Enniscorthy and Wexford under the Home Mission Development Scheme.

## **AMALGAMATIONS**

### **Corlea and Rockcorry**

The General Assembly decided in June 2005 that the Congregation of Corlea be amalgamated with the Congregation of Rockcorry on terms agreed by the Union Commission. The Commission agreed the following terms:

1. That the Congregation of Corlea be amalgamated with the Congregation of Rockcorry from 1 August, 2005, or other suitable date under the name 'Rockcorry'.

2. That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Committee until new Committee elections are held.

3. That, until Kirk Session decide otherwise and Presbytery approve, at least one service per year continue to be held in Corlea, apart from weddings and funerals.

4. That, apart from weddings and funerals, not more than 5 services per year be held at Corlea.

5. That all existing or future assets, including property or lands not disposed of, become the property of the amalgamated Congregation, except that Home Mission rules shall apply to the former Corlea property.

6. That, following any decision by Kirk Session, approved by Presbytery, to discontinue services altogether at Corlea, any expenses incurred in disposal of, or securing the property, providing insurance, and complying with any legal requirements, will be borne by the Board of Mission in Ireland.

7. That the terms of Union which apply to Rockcorry apply to the amalgamated Congregation until such time as new terms of Union may be agreed by the Union Commission.

### **Duncairn & St Enoch's and Whitehouse:**

The General Assembly had decided in June 2005 that the Congregation of Duncairn and St Enoch's be amalgamated with the Congregation of Whitehouse on terms agreed by the Union Commission. The Commission agreed the following terms:

1. That the Congregation of Duncairn & St Enoch's be amalgamated with the Congregation of Whitehouse from 30 September, 2005, or other suitable date, under the name 'Whitehouse'.
2. That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Committee until new Committee elections are held.
3. That, with respect to the assets of Duncairn & St Enoch's, only those listed here become the assets of the amalgamated Congregation: £10,000.
4. That all future assets become the property of the amalgamated Congregation.
5. That all other assets will have previously been transferred to the North Belfast Urban Mission Trust Fund.
6. That, notwithstanding the date given in clause 1 above, amalgamation will not in any case be effected until Presbytery is satisfied that the transfer referred to in clause 5 above has taken place.
7. That the amalgamated Congregation will not be responsible for any Duncairn & St Enoch's assets, apart from those which become its property under clause 3 or 4 above.
8. That the Stipend of the new Congregation be £21,158 [2005], with initial Ministerial Expenses of £6,600 plus manse telephone rental and business calls, with review in 2007.

#### **TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT**

**St Andrew's/Knockbreda** The Termination of the agreement whereby the Congregations shared a Church building and some ancillary rooms was approved by the Congregations, Presbytery and District. The Commission consented to the termination.

#### **CONVENERSHIPS OF COMMISSION WORKING GROUPS**

The following Conveners were appointed: Additional Appointments, Rev CD McClure; Expenses and Fees, Mr JB Hutcheson; Reviews, Rev Dr I Hart; Manses, Mr AJ Giffen. The Deputy Clerk of the Assembly acts as Secretary to the Allocation Committee.

#### **ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

The Commission, through its Additional Appointments Committee, approved 19 Additional Pastoral Personnel (APP) posts. As outlined in last year's Report, the process of making such strategic appointments – which includes Congregation, Presbytery, "Peninsula" and Union Commission – has been developed as a tool to promote best practice. The Commission, in association with other agencies, such as the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, is well placed to work in partnership with Congregations to ensure a valid process and a successful appointment. Congregations are therefore strongly urged to follow due process.

Two Ministers sought permission to undertake extra-parochial work. In each case the duties involved did not exceed six hours per week, which is taken as the standard. Ministers are reminded of their obligation to seek Presbytery

and Commission approval for work undertaken which is beyond their normal congregational and Presbytery duties.

### **TRAVEL EXPENSES**

The 2006 recommendations for travel expenses were set according to the new procedures as agreed with the Inland Revenue. Payment is to be made for the first 10,000 miles of 'business' motoring at the rate of 40p per mile, and 25p per mile for any excess of 'business' motoring over 10,000 miles.

Based on an average 'business' mileage of 14,400 miles, the recommended payment on account for 2006 would be

NI £5,100 (2005 £5,016)                      RoI €7,800 (2005 €7,716)

These figures are average figures issued for guidance of Congregational Committees. They cover motoring costs only and should not be automatically and universally applied as the appropriate amount for each Minister.

### **INADEQUATE EXPENSES GRANT SCHEME**

Applications for grant towards inadequate expenses for the year 2004 were approved for 10 Ministers in the RoI.

The total grants paid amounted to €52,847. This compares with 11 applications from the RoI and 2 from NI for 2003. (RoI €48,080 and NI £3,559).

The Commission appreciates the diligence of Ministers, Congregational Treasurers and Presbytery Finance Conveners in supplying relevant information and authorisation with the application forms (which are due after the March Presbytery meetings).

The recommended limits for 2006 claims are NI £5,200 and RoI €7,800

### **SUPPLY FEES**

In pursuance of Par 238(3), as amended in 2000, the supply fee for the year 2006 will be NI £80 or RoI €130, with £53 or €85 for a single service supply.

Travelling expenses should be paid in accordance with the rates for travel by car fixed for attendance at Assembly Boards, or based on Second Class rail or bus fares. Par 238 (4). Currently this rate is 12p or 20 cents per mile.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION  
CHARGES — 2006**

**Under Par. 234 (3)(a) of the Code**

<i>Church</i>	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 2006 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Downshire	1993	260 (173)	259	60,674	117,925
Lisnabreen	1993	226 (130)	195	44,010	66,380
Scrabo	1994	256 (172)	258	63,713	104,278
Burnside	1995	169 (158)	237	63,506	108,111
Movilla	2001	250 (195)	292	57,862	117,048
New Mossley	2005	87 (78)	117	20,162	32,522

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

**ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 2006**

<i>Church</i>	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Spec.</i>		<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	<i>Total £</i>
		<i>Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>				
Ballysally*	12,541	28,939	7,234	3,473	2,315	1,447	14,469
Strathfoyle*	—	2,281	274	137	91	55	557
Taughmonagh	—	16,278	4,883	2,442	1,628	977	9,930

\* Special Arrangement

## LICENTIATES — 2006

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £15,000 plus House Allowance p.a.  
(single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

### FIRST YEAR — From 1st January, 2006

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend £</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>
Newtownbreda	M. Anderson*	05.06.05	31,278 (30%)	9,884	6,118
Trinity, Bangor	N. Craig*	19.06.05	27,259 (30%)	8,679	7,323
Ballygowan	C. Dickson*	10.06.05	30,563 (30%)	9,670	6,332
Joymount	B. Hamilton*	17.06.05	31,250 (30%)	9,876	6,126
Wellington Street	Emerson McDowell*	12.06.05	31,579 (30%)	9,975	6,027
1st Larne	G. McFadden*	15.05.05	33,460 (30%)	10,539	5,463
Kilfennan	P. McKelvey†	03.06.05	28,383 (25%)	7,447	8,255
Kilbride	R. Mulholland*	26.06.05	28,821 (30%)	9,147	6,855
McQuiston Memorial	L. Patterson†	24.06.05	27,310 (30%)	8,544	7,158
2nd Comber	M. Shaw*	19.06.05	36,744 (30%)	11,524	4,478
Hamilton Road, Bangor	M. Welsh*	05.06.05	37,526 (30%)	11,759	4,243
1st Antrim	Alastair Dunlop†	05.06.05	31,265 (30%)	9,731	5,971
Strean, Newtownards	Alan Wilson*	07.06.05	30,492 (30%)	9,649	6,353

\* Married House Allowance    † Single House Allowance

## LICENTIATES — 2006

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £15,000 plus House Allowance p.a.  
(single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

### SECOND YEAR — From 1st January, 2006

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend £</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>
Cregagh	A. Best*	04.06.04	28,321 (30%)	8,997	7,005
Harmony Hill, Lambeg	K. Campbell*	13.06.04	31,771 (30%)	10,032	5,970
Whiteabbey	James Rogers*	20.06.04	33,129 (30%)	10,440	5,562
Craigy Hill	Jonathon Sloan†	20.06.04	29,500 (30%)	9,201	6,501
Malone	P. Wilson†	20.06.04	32,712 (30%)	10,165	5,537
Terrace Row, Coleraine	R. Campbell*	03.12.04	35,363 (30%)	11,110	4,892
Dundonald	C. Kennedy*	27.06.04	37,010 (30%)	11,604	4,398

\* Married House Allowance    † Single House Allowance

## LICENTIATES — 2006

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £15,000 plus House Allowance p.a.  
 (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

### THIRD YEAR — From 1st January, 2006

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend £</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>
Ebrington	D. B. McCorrison*	08.06.03	28,685 (30%)	9,107	6.895

\* Married House Allowance

**ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 2006**

**From 1st January, 2006**

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i>	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i>	<i>House Allow.</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Cong. Cont.</i>	<i>C.M.F.</i>
			£		£	£	£	£	£
M. Taylor	Cooke Centenary	11.01.85	25,625	100	20,000	1,002	21,002	11,392	9,610
D. Boyle	1st Keady & Armaghbrague	06.06.99	8,250 5,500	95	19,000	1,002	20,002	3,601 2,400	8,401 5,600
T. Morgan	Cregagh	24.08.03	28,321	95	19,000	702	19,702	11,679	8,023
H. Higgins	West Kirk	01.02.03	22,066	95	19,000	1,002	20,002	9,327	10,675
G. Stewart	St. Andrew's, Bangor	27.10.00	23,748	95	19,000	1,002	20,002	10,000	10,002



**ASSOCIATE MINISTERS 2006**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Salary</i>		<i>House Allowance Paid</i>	<i>Annual Assessment Recovery</i>
		<i>Paid</i>	<i>Recovery</i>		
		£	£	£	£
N. S. R. Lockhart	Hamilton Road, Bangor	20,000.00	15,010.40	2,000.00	417.58
G. Kennedy	First Bangor	20,000.00	13,204.00	1,500.00	1,454.03
R. Montgomery	Bangor, West	23,000.00	16,398.00	2,000.00	2,647.99
L. H. Eagleson	Carnmoney	20,000.00	14,194.00	2,000.00	411.46
A. Gibson	Bloomfield	21,000.00	14,000.00	2,000.00	940.00
C. Glover	Stormont	22,636.00	18,298.00	0.00	2,754.32
A. Carson	Orangefield	22,703.00	15,703.00	3,000.00	3,625.36
M. Gibson	Westbourne	20,000.00	s/a 9,507.00	2,000.00	376.34
s/a Special Arrangement					

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly urge Congregations and Presbyteries to take seriously the Union Commission's call to prayer concerning the number of vacant Congregations that now exist (Par 6 of the report).
3. That the General Assembly recognise that for historical reasons there are more Church buildings, Congregations and Charges than are required in present circumstances and that the worship and mission of the Church are hindered by this. The Union Commission is therefore encouraged, in consultation with Presbyteries and the Board of Mission in Ireland, actively to address this issue.
4. That the General Assembly note that the CMF assessment rate on the salary of Associate Ministers is now normally 100%.
5. That the Union Commission be authorised to set, on a case by case basis, the proportion of an Associate Minister's Salary that each Congregation pays, along with an appropriate CMF assessment rate, at a level that allows the Congregation to make an appropriate contribution to CMF.
6. That the General Assembly approve the revised Guidelines on Eligibility of Assistants for Call, as outlined in Par 19 of the report and ask that Presbyteries and their Vacancy Commissions ensure that they are strictly observed.
7. That the General Assembly encourage Ministers without Charge to consider using their gifts at congregational level under the provision of the Code Par 81(3) and encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to consider inviting, where appropriate, those so employed, along with Stated Supplies and other part-time Ministers, to sit and deliberate.
8. That the Business Board be asked to consider whether criteria can be drawn up for inviting Ministers without Charge, Stated Supplies and other part time Ministers to sit and deliberate at meetings of the General Assembly.
9. That the CMF be authorised to pay grants towards expenses incurred by Ministers in Congregations, up to a limit of NI £5,200 or RI €7,800, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70, General Assembly Minutes, 1988.
10. That the Congregation of Second Rathfriland be amalgamated with the Congregation of Third Rathfriland on terms agreed by the Union Commission, on 1 July 2006 or other suitable date.
11. That the Union Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 128 of the Code as follows:

## OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

### **Anent Par 82(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 82(4) of the Code the words "held for the benefit of the minister," be deleted; that after the word "sold" the words "nor its proceeds used for any purpose" be added; and that after the word "obtained" a new sentence be added: "No capital funds created by a sale of a manse, glebe or manse farm prior to 31st December, 2005,

shall be used for any purpose other than as previously agreed without permission of the Presbytery and the Union Commission.”

TJ STOTHERS

## **OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**

### **Anent Par 193(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 193(4) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

The following conditions shall apply to a Minister being called and inducted as an Associate Minister in a Congregation. The appointment shall be for a term of 3 years. This period of service may be extended by the Union Commission up to 7 years, after consultation with the Minister, the Associate Minister, the Kirk Session and the Presbytery. In very exceptional circumstances, the period of service may be extended beyond 7 years, in terms of up to 3 years each, following a full review by the Union Commission in consultation with the above parties.

An appointment as Associate Minister may, after twelve months service, be terminated by mutual agreement, or by two months notice given by the Associate Minister of the Congregation, the Kirk Session and the Presbytery.

### **Anent Par 194(8) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 194(8) of the Code a new sub-paragraph (d) be added as follows:

(d) Notice to the Congregation of the commencement of the hearing of candidates shall be given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the commencement of hearing. Such notice may, when appropriate, be given concurrently with the process of selection and approval of candidates, in which case the names of those under consideration will not be disclosed.

### **Anent Par 195(3) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 195(3) of the Code the words “or to any other Minister of this or of a sister Church whom the Assembly has declared to be eligible, whether such Minister has been heard or they have been otherwise satisfied of his fitness” be deleted.

### **Anent Par 237 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 237(b) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place:

237(b) Payments for travel; telecommunications expenses; towards the lighting, heating and cleaning of the manse; towards the upkeep of manse grounds are among recognised ministerial expenses, along with other items as authorised by the Union Commission; that Par 237(c) of the Code be deleted and that Par 237(d) of the Code be renumbered as Par 237(c).

**Anent Par 274(2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 274(2) of the Code after the words 'refer a case to the Commission,' the words ' or the Commission itself deem it appropriate,' be inserted.

TJ STOTHERS

**MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED**

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 5th June 2006.

**The Memorial of the Kirk Session of Wellington Street, Ballymena Respectfully Showeth:**

That the Congregation of Wellington Street was granted permission by the General Assembly at its meeting in June 2002 to port to a new site and the Kirk Session has had the opportunity to carefully consider an appropriate name for the new Congregation.

The Kirk Session considers that the appropriate name should be Wellington Presbyterian Church.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to approve the change of name from Wellington Street Presbyterian Church, Ballymena to Wellington Presbyterian Church, Ballymena and for this to take effect from the opening of the new Church complex in 2008.

And Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Adopted by the Kirk Session at its meeting in Wellington Street Presbyterian Church, Ballymena on 2nd March, 2006.

NORMAN A BROWN, Moderator  
P McCLINTOCK, Clerk

Licensed by the Presbytery of Ballymena at its meeting in Ballymena on 7th March 2006 and transmitted to the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

ALISTAIR BEATTIE, Moderator  
JOSEPH J ANDREWS, Clerk

Transmitted by the Commission of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine at its meeting in Dervock on 14th March 2006 with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

JH THOMPSON, Moderator  
JOSEPH J ANDREWS, Clerk

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To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 5th day of June, 2006.

**The Memorial of the East Belfast Presbytery Respectfully Showeth:**

That whereas in recent years the stipend of ministers has been sufficient to allow the minister to commit to full time working, this has not always been the

case and is, in our modern world of flexible working patterns, not always the best model.

That in previous generations and biblical example, faithful ministers of the gospel have exercised their ministry alongside and integrally to their “tentmaking” activities.

That some Presbyterian manses were supplied with fields for the purpose of enabling ministers to work the land or keep livestock in order to provide for their families in times of financial poverty.

That in these present days of poverty of time and of family values, it is to be commended that ministers set forth a model of valuing time spent with their families or allowing fallow time for recovery and refreshment.

That just as ministers on full stipend are trusted each week to devote a full working week of their time to their ministry, ministers should where circumstances permit it, and without prejudice or loss of standing, be free to work for a reduced stipend, to permit freedom of mind and conscience to devote themselves to other activities in keeping with their vocation, such as personal care for family members.

That just as ministers in retirement continue to bring their experience and wisdom to the Courts of the Church, the Venerable Assembly should also gather the experience of other ministers who exercise their ministry in a part time capacity or who need to withdraw temporarily from full time active ministry.

That membership of the courts of the Church serves both to inform and direct the Church as a whole, and also to enable members to remain in touch with and be informed on issues beyond their own field of ministry.

That such membership is thus a privilege and a necessary part of nourishing and developing one’s own ministry and benefiting from the experience of one’s colleagues.

That withdrawal of such membership symbolically disenfranchises and disempowers members who due to personal circumstances may already be marginalised.

That the Church of Jesus Christ needs to be especially attentive to the voice of those who are on its fringes.

That in the Church’s treatment of its Ministers and employees, we damage our witness to the Gospel where we fail to respect and exceed the quality of care and provision and entitlement granted to employees in the secular world.

That the secular world has begun to value and protect family life and the flexibility of its employees/servants through legal requirements.

That secular employment law which applies to employees of the Church does not yet apply to Ministers.

That since Ministers may exercise their ministry in other organisations as recognised ministries without either specifying their hours of employment or forfeiting their voice and service in the General Assembly, part time Associate Ministers and Ordained Assistants within PCI ought also to contribute to the democratic procedures of the courts of the Church.

That the Church, in the interests of incarnating the Gospel, should welcome and seek as far as possible to facilitate Ministers who in conscientious exercise of their personal, family and ministerial commitments desire to exercise their ministry in a part time capacity.

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly to authorise the Union Commission to grant leave to Congregations to call part time Ministers as and when appropriate, such Ministers to retain full membership of the courts of the Church.

And Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Adopted by the Presbytery of East Belfast at its meeting on 7th March, 2006 and transmitted to the Synod of Belfast with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

ALISTAIR SMYTH, Moderator  
DOUGLAS COWAN, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Commission of the Synod of Belfast at its meeting on 13th March 2006, simpliciter.

IAN HART, Moderator  
ALISTAIR R BILL, Clerk

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To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, to meet in Belfast on the 5th day of June, 2006.

**The Memorial of the Kirk Session of Fortwilliam Park and Macrory Memorial Respectfully Showeth:**

That a successful amalgamation of Fortwilliam Park and Macrory Memorial has taken place and the Session has had the opportunity to consider carefully the appropriate name of the amalgamated Congregation;

That the Kirk Session has sought a name which both reflects the new situation and recognises the roots of the historic Congregations which have amalgamated;

That at a Congregational Meeting it was decided to request that the name be changed to Fortwilliam & Macrory Congregation;

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to approve the change of name from Fortwilliam Park and Macrory Memorial Congregation to Fortwilliam & Macrory Congregation;

And Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Adopted by the Kirk Session at its meeting on 5th March and transmitted to the Presbytery of North Belfast.

LESLEY E CARROLL, Moderator  
MURIEL TORRENS, Clerk

Licensed by the Presbytery of North Belfast at its meeting on 7th March and transmitted to the Synod of Belfast with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

THOMAS V PATTERSON, Moderator  
COLIN MORRISON, Clerk

Transmitted by the Commission of the Synod of Belfast at its meeting on 13th March 2006 with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

IAN HART, Moderator  
ALISTAIR R BILL, Clerk

# REPORTS OF SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES

## SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN

The **SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN** report that the Rev TW Gordon, BA, BD, PGCE, is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held at Church House, Belfast, during the General Assembly.

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev James Gordon, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev John Murdock, BMus, PGCE, DipMTA, BD, Minister of Greyabbey, resigned his charge on 8 April 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev Gary Aitcheson, BEng, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was installed to the charge of Kilcooley on 24 June 2005; that the Rev Mark Henderson, BA, MDiv, was installed as Chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces on 22 April 2005; that Mr Colin Dickson was licensed on 10 June 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that Mr Alan Charles Wilson was licensed on 12 June 2005; that Mr Nigel Craig was licensed on 19 June 2005; that Dr Mark Welsh presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was received as a Licentiate; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Rev David McKee, BD, the Rev Mark Spratt, BEd, DipTh, ALCM, the Rev Craig Mawhinney, BD, the Rev Paul Bailie, BA, BD, MPhil; as Licentiates Mr Alan Wilson and Dr Mark Welsh; as students, Mr Ivan Thompson, Mr Colin Anderson, and Mr William Harkness; that they held Consultations at Groomsport, Regent Street and Carrowdore; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Credentials  
Under Care

Consulted

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev WJA Moody, BEng, is their Moderator; that the Rev TA Moore, BA, BD, retired on 31 July 2005; that the Rev S van Os, BA BD, Minister of First Lurgan, resigned his charge on 17 March 2005 on being appointed to an Army Chaplaincy; that the Rev DR Byers, BA, DipTh, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was installed to the charge of Cladymore and Tassagh on 1 April 2005; that the Rev EP Gamble, BA, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry and was installed to the charge of The Mall, Armagh on 15 April 2005; that the Rev JS Carson, BSc, MA, MAR, MTh, presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was installed to the charge of First Portadown on 3 June 2005; that the Rev CUR Bradley, MTh, MDiv,

Retired

Resigned

Installed

presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was installed to the charge of Armagh Road, Portadown on 15 June 2005; that they have under their care as students for the ministry Messrs RS Agnew, A McConnell, R McIlnea, JD Montgomery, K Nelson and R Orr; that during the year they Consulted the Congregation of Ahorey; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Thomas I Harte, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev John L Keenan, Minister of Spa and Magherahamlet died on 15 February 2005; that the Rev Dr James Harper, BA, MA, MTh, Minister Emeritus of Ballygowan, died on 30 May 2005; that the Rev Adrian Moffett, BSc, BD, Minister of Clough and Seaforde resigned his charge on 1 December 2005 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that the Rev David Stanfield, BA, BD, was inducted to the recognised Ministry of Youth Link (NI) on 5 February 2006; that Mr Leslie A Patterson was Licensed on the 24 June 2005 and was presented with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr David Mark Shaw and Mr Colin Dickson presented credentials from the Presbyteries of North Belfast and Ards respectively and were received as Licentiates; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Rev RN Stewart, BA, BD, and the Rev S Armstrong, BSc, BD; as a student Mr Mark Catney; that they held Consultations at Second Killyleagh and First Ballynahinch; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev AK Duddy, MSc, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that Mr KA Jones, Licentiate Assistant in Hillhall, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry & Strabane; that the Rev AA McCullough, BEng, MDiv, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Monaghan, was installed to the pastoral oversight of the Congregation of Magheragall on 8 April 2005; that Mr M Anderson, BSc, PGCE, was Licensed on 5 June 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that they have under their care as students for the ministry, Mr Colin McKibbin, Martyn Cowan and Raymond McKibbin; that during the year they held a Consultation with the Congregations of Hillhall and Legacurry; and that Financial Statements are being published separately by each Congregation.

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JRI Harbinson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev DS Mackay, BSc, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine and was installed to the charge of Magherally on the 19 day of May 2005; that the Rev RA Moffett, BSc, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed to the charge of Donacloney on the 2 December 2005; that under their care as a Minister without Charge (retired) is the



Rev EG McAuley, MA, BD, MSc and as a student Mr TN Bingham; that they held Consultations at Bannside, Katesbridge and Ballydown; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Consulted

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DS Henry, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev EP Gamble, BA, Minister of Clarkesbridge & First Newtownhamilton, McKelvey's Grove, & Garmany's Grove resigned his charge on 14 April 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that they held Consultations at Downshire Road and at Tullyallen and Mountnorris Congregations; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Consulted

## SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

The SYNOD OF **BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE** report that the Rev JA Thompson, BA, BD, MSc, DMin, is their Moderator and that the next Stated Meeting will be held in Church House, Belfast, on Thursday, 8 June, 2006.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JA Beattie, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Very Rev RI Birney, BA, BD, DMin, DD, retired from the duties of the Active Ministry in High Kirk, on 30 November 2005; that the Rev DE Jones, BA, DipTh, MTh, retired from the duties of the Active Ministry in Clough on 31 January 2006; that the Rev JJ Currie, BD, resigned his charge as Minister of First Ballymena on 7 April 2005, and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone; that the Rev DW Brice, BSSc, BD, resigned his charge as Minister of Ballyloughan on 8 September 2005, and was given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that the Rev JG Johnston, BSc, MAR, DipTh, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine, and was installed as Minister of Carnlough-Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin on 25 November 2005; that Mr RA Mulholland was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 26 June 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr JE McDowell presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine, and was received as a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery on 13 September 2005; that Mr SJM Lindsay, BD, DipMin, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone on 30 August 2005; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs: T Bruce, WE Chestnutt, ME Donald, CWA Jones, TP McCullough and Mrs LM Keys; that they held Consultations with the Congregations of First Ahoghill and West Church; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Credentials

Under Care

Consulted

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev CD McClure, BSc, BD, MSSc, is their Moderator; that Rev JA McFall, MA, Minister Emeritus of Woodburn and Loughmorne, died on 6 June 2005; that the Rev SS McFarland, BA, Minister of First Carrickfergus, retired on 1 October 2005; that on 13 September 2005 Mr W Hamilton and Mr G McFadden presented credentials from the Presbyteries of North Belfast and Dublin and Munster respectively and were received as Licentiate; that on 13 September 2005 Mr WJ Hayes, Licentiate Assistant in Ballyclare, resigned and was presented with credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that they have under their care as Minister without Charge the Rev AT Maze, BSc; as Licentiates Mr JE Sloan, Mr WG Hamilton, Mr G McFadden, as Students Miss HM Rendell, Mr RSJ McIlhatton, Mr MJ Gracey, Mr WJA Buchanan, Mr GR Connor, Mr JA McKay and Mr MF Russell; that during the year they held Consultations at Ballycarry and Woodlands and that the Financial Statements of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **COLERAINE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Richard Gregg, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Stanley Lindsay, BD, retired from the duties of the active ministry on 1 September 2005; that the Rev Stewart Mackay, BSc, BD, Minister of Boveedy and Second Kilrea Congregations resigned his charge on 19 May 2005 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that the Rev George Johnston, BSc, DipTh, Minister of Moneydig Congregation, resigned his charge on 20 November 2005 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that on 12 June 2005, they licensed Mr Emerson McDowell, as a Probationer for the Ministerial Office and issued him with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that Mr Robert Campbell, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane and was received as a Licentiate; that the Presbytery has under its care as a Minister without Charge the Rev J Douglas Mark, MA, BD; that the Presbytery has under its care as Students for the Ministry: Patrick Martin Baxter, David S Brownlow and William Montgomery; and that Congregations present their Financial Statements individually.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev ST Carson, FIMLS, BSc, DipTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev I McClean, BA, BD, ACII, Minister of Toberkeigh, resigned his charge on 5 May 2005, and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that the Rev RD McDowell, BSc, BD, Minister of Bushmills, resigned from the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland on 31 August 2005; that the Rev RW Gaston, BA, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry & Strabane and was installed to the charge of Finvoy on 21 April 2005; that they have under their care: as a Minister without Charge the Rev V Dobbin, MA, MTh, PhD, DD; as students Mr AD Mullan, Mr JB Mullan; that they visited the Congregation of Mosside; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J Holmes, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev PP Campbell, BAgr, BD, MPhil, Minister of Second Ballyeaston, resigned his charge on 2 March 2005, and was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that the Rev WJ Murdock, BMus, PGCE, DipMTA, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was installed to the charge of Killead and Loanends on 8 April 2005; that the Rev RC Kerr, MSc, MDiv, presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast and was installed to the charge of Templepatrick on 1 September 2005; that Mr DH Brown, a Licentiate was given credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone on 5 August 2005; that they have under their care as Licentiates, Messrs RA Mulholland and AJ Dunlop; as a Student, Mr P Turton; that during the year they held Consultations at First Donegore and Kilbride; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Installed

Credentials

Under Care  
Consulted

## SYNOD OF BELFAST

The **SYNOD OF BELFAST** report that the Rev Ian Hart, BA, BD, MTh, DTheol, is their Moderator; that their next meeting is appointed to be held in Church House on Wednesday, 7 June, 2006 and will meet by Commission on 13 March, 2007.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev TV Patterson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev SEM Brown, BA, BD, Minister Emeritus of Abbey died on 17 September 2005; that the Rev Christina Bradley, MTh, MDiv, Assistant Minister in the Congregation of Rosemary resigned her charge on 14 June 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev Ian K McDonald, BSc, DipTh, Minister of New Mossley Church Extension Charge resigned his charge on 27 November 2005 and was installed in the newly-constituted Congregation of New Mossley on 1 February 2006; that the Rev. David W Brice, BSSc, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was installed to the charge of Glengormley on 9 September 2005; that Mr William Hamilton was licensed on 17 June 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr Mark Shaw was licensed on 19 June 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs CI McKnight, BA, WA Shaw, BD, WM Smyth, MP, BA, BD, WG Stewart, BA, BD, and FW Vincent, BA, BD; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr James Rogers; that Consultations were held with the Congregations of Rathcoole and Seaview; and that congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Died

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Under Care

Consulted

The **SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DJ Boden, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Kenneth D Harvey,

Died

BA, Minister Emeritus of McCracken Memorial, died on 9 May 2005; that the Rev R Trevor Anderson, BA, MTh, Minister of Richview/Berry Street retired on 31 July 2005; that the Rev Richard Kerr, MSc, MDiv, a Licentiate Assistant at Fisherwick, resigned on 31 August 2005 and was issued with credentials to the Templepatrick Presbytery; that they have under their care the Rev Brian Martin, BEd, MCS, as a Minister without Charge; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Dr P Wilson; that they have under their care as students, David McCarthy, David McIlwaine, Edel McLean, Dario Leal, Graeme Fowles and Karen Simpson; that Consultations were held with the Congregations of Townsend Street, and Malone; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev AS Smyth, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev SJ Campbell, BA, DipEd, MDiv, DD, retired as Minister of Cooke Centenary on 5 June 2005; that the Rev J Scott, BA, BD, retired as a missionary serving under the Board of Mission Overseas on 30 November 2005; that the Rev John McVeigh, BA, MDiv, resigned as Minister of Gilnahirk with effect from 31 August 2005 and was placed as a Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that the Rev Cheryl Meban, LLB, BD, PGDM, resigned as Associate Minister in Gilnahirk on 31 December 2005 and was placed as a Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that the Rev RK Graham, BA, BTh, resigned as Minister of Castlereagh on 31 December 2005 and was placed as a Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that the Rev PP Campbell, BAg, BD, MPhil, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick and was installed as Minister of Belmont on 3 March 2005; that the Rev DJ Montgomery, BA, MDiv, was installed as Director for Congregational Life under the Board of Mission in Ireland on 16 September 2005; that on 5 June 2005 Alastair J Dunlop and Dr Mark J Welsh were licensed as probationers for the ministry; they were given credentials to the Templepatrick Presbytery and Ards Presbytery respectively; that credentials have been received for Michael Anderson from Dromore Presbytery and for Leslie Patterson from Down Presbytery; that under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs J McVeigh, BA, MDiv; RK Graham, BA, BTh; C Meban, LLB, BD, PGDM; RA Crooks, BA, (retired); Elizabeth Jamieson, BA, MEd, MTh, PhD; R Pedlow, MA and WJ Harshaw, BEd, BD; as Licentiates: A Best, CWP Kennedy, L Patterson and M Anderson; as Students: David Clawson, Martin D McNeely, Scott A Woodburn, Janice M Browne, Ben J Walker and Liam Rutherford; Consultations have been held with Garnerville and Cregagh Congregations; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

## SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH

The **SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH** report that the Rev David Latimer, TD, MA, BSc (Econ), DipTh, is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held in Monreagh Presbyterian Church on Wednesday 7 March 2007 at 2.30 pm.

The **DERRY AND STRABANE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Alastair James Andrew Rosborough, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev James Dickson Young, BA, Minister Emeritus of First Derry Congregation died on 30 December 2005; that the Rev Robert William Gaston, BA, BD, demitted his Charge as Minister of Second Castlelurg and Alt on 20 April, 2005, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that Mr Knox Anderson Jones, BD, DipMin, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore was ordained and installed as Minister of Waterside and Fahan on 14 September 2005; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge, the Rev John Craig Teeney, BSc, BTh; as Licentiates Mr Darran Basil McCorriston, BA, DipMin, MDiv, and having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh on 13 September 2005, Mr Philip McKelvey, BD, MTh; as a Student for the Ministry Mr Nigel John Edward Reid; that they are holding Consultations with the Congregations of Second Derry (Strand and Buncrana) and Burt; Carndonagh and Malin; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately.

The **FOYLE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev James Lindsay Blair, BSc, is their Moderator; that the Rev James McGregor, BSc, Minister Emeritus of Donemana and stated supply of Strathfoyle died on Tuesday 28 June 2005; that the Rev Eric George McKimmon, BA, BD, MTh, Minister of Cumber and Upper Cumber, resigned his charge on the 29 September 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of St Andrews in the Church of Scotland; that under their care is the Rev Kenneth George Patterson, BA, DipTh, as a Minister without charge, that they held a Consultation at Dungiven, and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Edwin Samuel McDowell, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Gareth Aitcheson, BEng, BD, resigned his charge on 23 June 2005 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev Ian McClean, BA, BD, ACII, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Route and was installed to the charge of Ballygawley and Ballyreagh on 6 May 2005; that Mr Philip Lyndsay McKelvey was licensed on 3 June 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; that they held a Consultation at Clogherney; and that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being published separately.

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that Rev Andrew Kerr, MB, BCh, BAO, FRCS, is their Moderator; that the Rev Jonathan Currie, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was installed to the charge of Lecumpher and Union Road, Magherafelt on 8 April 2005; that Mr Mervyn Lindsay presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was ordained and installed to the charge of Pomeroy and Sandholes on 31 August 2005; that Mr David Brown presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick and was ordained and installed to the charge of Castlecaulfield and Eglish on 15 September, 2005; that under their care is, as a student, Mr Adrian McAllister; that they held Consultations at First and Second Moneymore; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

Installed

Under Care  
Consulted

## SYNOD OF DUBLIN

The **SYNOD OF DUBLIN** report that the Rev WA McCully, BSSc, BD, is their Moderator and that the Synod will meet during the General Assembly in Church House, Belfast.

The **DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev SJ Richmond, BD, MSc, is their Moderator; that the Rev SW Rea, LLB, BD, Minister of Milford, Fannet and Rathmullan, resigned his charge on 24 February 2006 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that the Rev S Stewart, BSc, DASE, BTh, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Foyle and was installed as School Chaplain in the Royal and Prior School, Raphoe on 24 April, 2005; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed in a Year Book.

Resigned

Installed

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that Rev Alan Boal, BD, PGCE, is their Moderator; that Rev John Mann, BA, BD, retired on 28 February 2005; that Rev Ruth Gregg, BD, Minister without Charge, resigned on 4 October 2005; that Rev John Rushton presented credentials from the Presbytery of Glasgow and was inducted as Minister of Carlow on 18 March 2005; that Rev Stephen Rea, LLB, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Donegal and was inducted as Minister of Enniscorthy and Wexford on 25 February 2006; that Mr William Hayes presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and inducted as Minister of Mountmellick and Tullamore on 22 October 2005; that Mr Gareth McFadden was licensed on 15 May 2005 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that under their care are: as Minister without Charge Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, BA, LTh, MA; as Student for the Ministry Mr Andrew Carroll; that they held Consultations at Arklow and Greystones; that the Financial Statements of Congregations are being printed separately.

Retired  
Resigned  
Installed

Licensed

Under Care

Consulted

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev SG Anketell, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev AA McCullough BEng, MDiv, Minister of Second Ballybay and Rockcorry, resigned his charge on 7 April 2005 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that they have under their care as students for the ministry Miss Molly Deatherage and Mr Clark Deering; that the Consultation with First Castleblayney and Frankford was completed; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Under Care  
Consulted**RESOLUTION**

1. That the Report be received.

# BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The General Assembly, 2005, instructed the Business Board, in consultation with the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, to investigate ways in which young people may be facilitated to actively engage in Assembly debate. While a panel has been set up it will not be able to bring a substantial report until 2007. The Business Board recognises that the panel is likely to bring recommendations which will challenge the way Assembly business is conducted.

2. The Dublin and Munster Presbytery have issued an invitation for the General Assembly to meet at Sligo in 2007. Subsequently, an inquiry from another Presbytery indicated that it was considering issuing an invitation to meet within its bounds. Aware of the uncertainty with regard to the future of the Assembly Hall, the Business Board took a view that a report should be drawn up outlining the facilities and support which is necessary for an Assembly to take place and the frequency with which we might consider moving the meeting out of Belfast.

3. In response to a letter, the Business Board again reviewed the Memorial Roll, as read on the Opening Night. It was agreed that it was an appropriate occasion to recognise the deaths of ministerial members, but some changes were made to the format, in consultation with the Rev Jack Richardson.

4. Code Par 226(a) allows the General Assembly, on the proposal of the relevant Presbytery, to decide to allow a Minister who has voluntarily resigned the pastoral charge of a Congregation to have his name enrolled as Minister Emeritus of the Congregation and as such be a member of the superior courts of the Church.

The Rev John McVeigh resigned the Charge of Gilnahirk on 31 August, 2005 and the East Belfast Presbytery requests that his name be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Gilnahirk.

The Rev IF Smith resigned the Charges of Orritor and Claggan on 31 March, 2006 and the Tyrone Presbytery requests that his name be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Orritor and Claggan.

## Board Membership

5. The Business Board is appointed in accordance with the provisions of Par 275 of the Code to take office on the 15 March preceding the Assembly. The Board for the year 2006-2007, together with the associated Arrangements Committee is as follows:-

The Clerk, Convener

- (a) The Moderator, Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly, Moderator-Designate, former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, Conveners and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards.



- (b) Rev W Cordner; W Graham — Rev CG Harris; WJ Hamilton — Rev BCG Black; M Barbour — Rev DB Knox; J McDowell — Rev GE Best; E McCleary — Rev Dr MA Barry; Wm Grills.
  - (c) Rev D Knowles; WG McDowell — Rev AE Tolland; N Carmichael — Rev D Clarke; T Gilliland — Rev RW Gaston; A Hanna — Rev D Bannerman; GJ Nutt.
  - (d) Rev TV Patterson; Miss M Torrens — Rev JR Burnett; V Elliot — Rev JR Lambe; DC Cowan.
  - (e) Rev Dr WJH McKee; Mrs R Millar — Rev Dr SR Jones; T Allen — Rev R Herron; J Cochrane — Rev H Ross; E. Carroll.
  - (f) Rev S Stewart; N Watt — Rev GA Mitchell; W McIlreavy — Rev D Nesbitt; A McAdoo.
- A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (6) Rev TC Morrison, Convener
- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Information Officer, Hospitality Secretary, Secretary Assembly Buildings Committee, Buildings Manager; Rev TC Morrison.
  - (x) Rev Alan S Thompson; D Crowe, M Fisher, Mrs J Anderson.
  - (y) Revs JR Lambe, GE Best, W Cordner, AE Tolland, R Herron, D Bannerman; Miss M Torrens, WG McDowell.

### Other Churches

Delegates to the governing bodies of other Churches were appointed as follows:-

- Church of Scotland 2006: Rt Rev Dr REH Uprichard, Rev JJ Andrews, Mr G Ferguson
- United Reformed Church 2006: Rt Rev Dr D Clarke
- Presbyterian Church of Wales 2006: Rt Rev Dr D Clarke
- Church of Ireland General Synod 2006: Very Rev Dr KNE Newell, Mr WH Scott
- Methodist Conference 2006: Very Rev Dr REH Uprichard, Dr C McKay

### The URC Assembly 2005

*Rt Rev Dr REH Uprichard reports:*

1. The United Reformed Church General Assembly met at Warwick University from 2-5 July 2005. Dr Watts and his wife Fiona accompanied me to the Conference and we enjoyed a time of happy fellowship and hospitality with our friends from the URC. There are 1691 Congregations in this denomination throughout England, Scotland and Wales. There is a sameness about Church conferences, but some things stood out strikingly. “Catch the Vision” was a forward looking document which formed the background to the reports and within the Assembly there were discussion groups who then reported back – quite a unique feature. FURY, the Fellowship of United Reformed Youth, met for two days prior to the Assembly, looked at the agenda and took an active part in the debate of the Assembly itself. On a practical note there were 4

microphones situated on the stairway of the hall where speakers queued and were heard in turn. This facilitated the flow of debate.

2. The business discussed reflected in large measure the denomination's situation and theological stance.

3. The URC is **administratively changing**. Ministry was much under discussion. Because of the decrease of numbers offering for ministry of Word and Sacrament there was a concentration on future opportunities rather than historic patterns. There was a look at leadership in each Congregation where the future was not seen to be one Minister, one Congregation but self-supporting and Special Category Ministers would play a larger part. The URC were encouraged to look at Sister Churches and see what they were doing.

4. Eldership was also discussed. The idea of developing elders in leadership was mooted but in relation to Word and Sacrament there were concerns that this was unclear and threatening. Elders were to be more significantly appointed not just congregationally, but on a wider base. There were plans to develop skills of eldership locally and more widely along with a desire to understanding the concept of eldership more clearly within URC. Significantly, there was also a development toward the more personal episcopate of the Anglican Church with a view to relating to the Anglican/Methodist Covenant, clearly for ecumenical reasons.

5. By far the greater debate was over the general structure of the denominations polity. General Assembly, Synods, District Councils, Local Councils had hitherto been the descending mode of structure. In future there would be one group between General Assembly and Local Councils, namely Synod. 13 "New Synods" under a Moderator were to be established focussing ecumenical and administrative changes and absorbing that of District Councils. Group discussion examined this in detail and reported back. I got the impression that Synods in their terminology represented Presbyteries in ours and sensed the desire for a slimmer order of Church government. It was mooted that from 2007 General Assembly would meet every 2 years, with a reduced number of members hopefully producing better fellowship, deeper relationships and more time for prayerful consideration.

6. The URC is **ecumenically driven**. This was obvious in a general sense. There were links with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches but on a wider spectrum, relationships with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches were encouraged.

7. In England the Anglican/Methodist Covenant was a focus of development. In Wales there was disappointment at the failure to appoint an ecumenical bishop but a reaffirmation of journeying together in covenant relationships. In Scotland strong links with the National Sponsoring Body for Local Ecumenical Partnerships were promoted. There was an evident proclivity towards the Anglican Hind Report and this meant measures toward personal episcopate in eldership and aspirations toward a greater degree of relationship, even perhaps union.

8. Local Ecumenical Projects were to be rigorously developed. The Life and Witness Report encouraged those among all ages to engage with community in evangelism, if possible ecumenically, in supporting the work of elders and

stimulating District Councils (where remaining) and Synods in developing a combined strategy for mission.

9. The URC is **multiculturally aware**. This note came through prominently. It is of particular interest since here in Ireland we are experiencing a similar influx of immigrants if of smaller dimension than the mainland, nevertheless significant even more in the South of Ireland than the North.

10. Provision for the inclusion of multicultural ministry with appropriate training was put decisively on the drawing board. Relevant research was to be carried out to see if Congregations were reaching minority ethnic people, if not evangelistically, certainly in terms of care. This process was where possible to be ecumenically related. There is a desire to reflect ethnic minorities in personnel within URC structures. Support for racial justice advocacy is a strong theme in the denominations work. The Church and Society Committee were outraged at the situation in Zimbabwe calling on the support of URC for their partners there, asking the Ecumenical Committee to take measures to end injustices and urging the UK government to recognize the claims of refugees. Both inside and outside the parameters of the denomination's influence a strong sensitivity to multicultural conditions and injustices is plainly evident.

11. The URC is **inter-faith** conscious. Again the situation reflects the mainland somewhat in advance of the Ireland of Ireland. There was a presentation with a view to illustrating how to relate to those of other faiths. It was a well-prepared presentation. In the introduction and throughout the sequence it portrayed methods of evangelism while attempting to preserve the uniqueness of the Christian message.

12. One appreciated the sincerity and, indeed, excellence of the presentation. It resembled those 'special' presentations we have lately got used to in our own General Assembly. However, there was always the sense of a degree of syncretism and the underlying motif that all religions lead to God. In this very difficult field, it is all-important, even if in a blunt and uncompromising way, that the uniqueness of Christianity is dominant, I felt at times that was not the case.

13. The URC is **inclusively** directed. A clear aim at inclusiveness relating to age discrimination, target representation on panels and boards and equal opportunities monitoring was constantly in view. No-one must be allowed to sense themselves as a "second-class citizen" with the denomination. There was a patent desire within Church balance to keep men and women in equal numbers and 10% from minority grouping. While understandable, one wondered did this at times sideline expertise and ability in favour of gender and other balance.

14. The URC is **socially** sensitive. This was a prominent feature. The "Make Poverty History" campaign was current and time was given to underscore both by speech and video presentation what was being attempted. Of the same nature was the Revised Ethical Investment Policy which was to pointedly avoid companies manufacturing weapons or supporting the alcohol and tobacco industry.

15. Alongside this heavy business schedule, there was great friendship, warm hospitality, opportunity to meet many from different world situations and time to discuss "Church matters" and other things together: an interesting and useful exercise.

### **The Methodist Conference 2005**

*The Very Rev Dr IA McKay reports:*

1. The 236th Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland was held in Portadown from Friday 10 to Tuesday 14 June. The premises used were those of the Thomas Street Church.

2. The corresponding observers from our Church were the Very Rev Dr IA McKay and Miss Daphne Gilmour. Other denominations were represented and Dr McKay brought greetings from the Presbyterian Church. The welcome was warm and hospitality generous.

3. The opening service on the Friday evening saw the large Thomas Street building packed for the installation of the Rev Desmond Bain (son of a former President who was present) as President of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

4. On Sunday evening an Ordination Service was conducted by the President of the British Methodist Conference. Two candidates were ordained for the ministry. Both testified before the whole Conference as to how God had called them to study for the ministry.

5. Being considerably smaller than our Assembly the debates were somewhat more relaxed and less intense. However, a wide spectrum of issues was dealt with – Manses and Mission; Prayer and Priorities; Finance and Fasting(!); Itinerancy and Inter-Church Relations; Social Concerns and Salaries. The challenges facing all our Churches today are very similar.

6. “Work of God Reports” and “conversation” on the same subject allowed an appreciation and analysis of what God is doing in various Districts. This sharing was profitable especially in relation to much increase in congregational life as a result of many newcomers flooding into Ireland from overseas in recent years.

7. It was a privilege and joy to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

### **The Welsh Assembly 2005**

*The Rt Rev Dr REH Uprichard reports:*

1. It was most interesting for me, with Maisie, to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales meeting at Lampeter from 11-14 July 2005. Lampeter is a delightful little university town with the campus within easy walking distance of the residential and shopping area and, with the weather being virtually a heat-wave, it could not have been more pleasant. The warmth of the hospitality provided by the Presbyterian Church of Wales within the campus was second to none and the whole atmosphere was friendly and inviting.

2. Every Assembly is rooted in tradition. The direct conduct of the business in Welsh might seem quite forbidding, but the immediate translation made it no problem at all. The singing, of course, was something to be experienced even if you did not understand a word. Moderators have a greater share in the business, which moves on quite quickly though there does seem to

be ample time for debate. The Youth input is striking and certainly the young folk seem to be well keyed into the business of the agenda.

3. It is a much smaller Assembly than ours and their theme “Moving Forward in Faith” seemed to be reflected in very practical ways. There are too many Churches and too few ministers. Hence, there is an ongoing investigation into the future and sustenance of Ministers. Ministry is both full-time and part-time and there are moves to experiment with team ministry looking to Scotland and Ireland for role models. Training of elders with regard to sacramental administration is in view and the employment protection for ministers seems to be quite a knotty problem.

4. Restructuring is also part of the “Moving Forward in Faith” theme. There are three Associations, two Welsh-speaking and an English-speaking one in the East with predictable tensions but co-operation is good. There is a merging of Boards to create 3 new Boards and of Presbyteries to create 14 new Presbyteries which may appear strange, but which does seem to regularize things somewhat. Like ourselves “Centres” for Youth and Children are under discussion and presently two are to continue, but one faces disposal or leasing.

5. Inter-Church affairs is primarily concerned with relationships with the Methodist Church, but inter-faith relations seems to be a far more pressing issue. With the increasing influx of immigrants knowledge of other faiths is seen to be a necessity and particularly in terms of “dialogue”. Attempts in debate were made to define dialogue not in a judgemental but missiological sense, but some were unhappy with the discussion document claiming that it watered down the uniqueness of Christ far too much.

6. Other concerns common to us all were on the agenda. Church and Society Board pressed hard for full implementation of a Welsh Assembly and adopted declarations to Turkey, Iraq, Burma (Myanmar), and on Nuclear Disarmament. The Mission Board pressed for further links with Taiwan and Hong Kong, encouraged the work of their Women’s Department and strongly supported Fair Trade and Making Poverty History. Education, Communications and Finance Boards reflected matters similar to our own. It is interesting to compare notes on similar matters in somewhat dissimilar circumstances and undoubtedly our relations with our Welsh Presbyterian friends ought to be encouraged.

### **The Waldensian Synod: 21-26 August, 2006**

*The Rev Dr DJ Watts reports:*

It is some time since the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was represented at the Waldensian Synod in Torre Pellice, Italy and the welcome to Fiona and myself was a very warm one. This is a lively fellowship, trying to think through its witness as a reformed Church in secular Italy but also struggling with its relationships in a strongly Roman Catholic culture. There are many ways in which we and the Waldensians can learn from one another.

The Waldensians are a pre-reformation Church which began under the influence of Peter Waldo in Lyon and spread throughout Europe, but especially to the Alpine Valleys between France, Switzerland and Italy. It was a movement

for Bible teaching among the “ordinary” people, especially the poor. During the Reformation the Waldensians were exiled from the Italian valleys and many were influenced by the teaching of the reformers in Geveva. When they were allowed to return it was largely to the valleys of North-West Italy, although there are Churches in many of the larger Italian towns. I was surprised to learn of a smaller Waldensian Synod in South America.

The debates of the Synod were lively. It is a Synod of the Waldensian and Methodist Churches, although the two have not formally united and tensions were apparent at times. Their way of doing business was interesting – a Committee is appointed to draw up resolutions as the debate goes on until eventually they come up with one which is agreed. This may take some time and so the debate may have moved to a different topic by the time the resolution is presented. Time didn't seem to matter too much. The Synod simply goes on until the business is done, sometimes meeting to near midnight. I'm told a lot is achieved on the Friday afternoon!

While a small Church, the Waldensians have a vision for maintaining the place of reformed thinking and worship in Europe. It is a Church with which we should maintain contact as many of their issues are our own.

## **ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**

### **Communion Service**

1. The Communion Service this year will once again be held in Church House commencing at 12 noon on Tuesday. There will be a coffee break immediately prior to this service, but members of Assembly are asked to be in their seats not later than 12 noon since late arrivals tend to disrupt the worship and distract other worshippers. Your help in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

### **Bread and Cheese Lunch**

2. Bread and Cheese lunches will be available at lunch time on Tuesday, with proceeds going to the World Development Appeal as usual. On other days there will not be any lunch time meals or tea/coffee available for sale in the Minor Hall. Tea/coffee etc will be available for purchase in the Minor Hall – as well as on the Concourse – at the stated coffee breaks.

### **Voting Cards**

3. Voting Cards should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk at the Carrickfergus Window where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning, after which Members should contact the Financial Secretary's Office. Ministers please note once again this year that when obtaining your voting cards you are asked to produce the Registration Card which is enclosed with these Reports.

**Admission**

4. Admission to the Private Session is only for those who have and show their own voting card. In any vote the Moderator may call for voting cards to be shown and only those displaying their own voting card are eligible to vote.

**Expenses**

5. All Members may claim a daily allowance but travel expenses cover the cost of only one return journey in the week. Claims should be made on the appropriate form obtainable from the Reception at the Wellington Street entrance. Full details of rates are printed on the form.

COLIN MORRISON, Convener

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That the Rev John McVeigh be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Gilnahirk, with immediate effect.
4. That the Rev IF Smith be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Orritor and Claggan, with immediate effect.
5. That the professional amplification controller and the visual display operator be admitted to the private session.
6. That a grant of £18,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.
7. That the Business Board, with its associated working committee, for the ensuing year beginning 15 March 2007 be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code.

# BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Convener: Rev W A KENNEDY  
Secretary: Mr STEPHEN LYNAS

1. The “mission” of the Communications Board is to service communication between the various component parts of the Presbyterian Church - Boards and Committees, Presbyteries and Congregations and to act as a service agency for the Church in communicating with the world.

2. If the Church has been charged with anything by her Lord and Master it is to communicate His message in words and in deeds.

3. Moreover we live in a generation when the means of communication have never been more powerful and more sophisticated. The Board of Communications must model, teach and goad the Church at every level to maximise our use of the means provided for us.

4. Use of such techniques has already revolutionised the work and leisure of our members. Indeed the normal means of communication within many Kirk Sessions is now by email. A large number routinely use data projection in worship whether for the display of the Sunday announcements, the words of the singings or for the content of sermons. Indeed those who use data projection in preaching find that it revolutionises both preparation and delivery. Response from all ages is positive.

5. There is need for the Church centrally to provide Congregations with short presentations to sell or report back on projects or aspects of our denominational mission. The Boards intend to address the provision of such material as a matter of urgency.

6. A large number of Congregations host their own web sites and attached to this report is a series of guidelines for the use of the internet by Congregations and by people (especially young people) on Church premises.

7. Statistics show that most younger people spend more time surfing the net than watching television - a development which could not have been foreseen but which has huge implications for Christian education and our investment in teaching and promotion of the Christian way.

8. The pace of this communications revolution will increase and the Church needs a central body charged with thinking through its implications and harnessing its power in the service of Christ.

9. In June 2004 the Board presented to the General Assembly a programme of work which received the blessing of the Church. We have been slower in turning these ideas into practice than we would have liked due to a combination of factors including initial uncertainty as to their status, the prolonged illness of the Convener and various ongoing discussions within the structures of the central Church. However, we hope at the 2007 Assembly to be able to report real progress in implementing our new role following the redirection given by the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities.

10. Once more we are profoundly grateful to those who devote their working lives and creative skills to the tasks given to the Communications



department. Stephen Lynas has continued to run an effective and much admired press office and to oversee the production of the Presbyterian Herald, Points for Prayer and many other publications by his team: Anne McCully, Sarah Harding, Edward Connolly, Arthur Clarke (Herald Editor) and Alan Sykes (Financial Assistant).

11. For some time now the department has, for unforeseen reasons, operated at a reduced staffing level. This has placed heavy burdens on staff and skewed responsibilities away from developmental work. We hope through new appointments within the existing budget to remedy this.

12. As part of that process we propose that Mr Stephen Lynas be encouraged to be more creatively involved in developing new areas of communication as agreed by the Assembly in 2004. As Information Officer for 12 years Stephen has had great success in the onerous task of press liaison but both we and he believe that the appointment of a full time deputy/assistant would free him from some of the routine press work and give him more time to fulfil this expanded function. As part of this process we propose that the Information Officer should from now on be known as the Communications and Press Secretary.

### **Minister in Recognised Service**

*Rev Dr Bert Tosh reports:*

1. This has been an important year for the BBC. There has been much discussion on the renewal of the Royal Charter, by which the BBC operates. At the time of writing we await the delayed publication of the White Paper that will outline the Government's plans for the BBC for the next ten years. It would certainly appear that the place of religious broadcasting within the BBC's output remains secure, although it is always possible that certain changes in emphasis and direction may be indicated.

2. Meanwhile, the regular output of programmes continues. *Sunday Sequence* has recently had the best audience figures ever, which is a tribute to the diligence and commitment of Martin O'Brien, the programme's producer, and the presentation skills of William Crawley. *Sunday Sequence* continues to examine and probe that area where religion, ethics, cultural and societal affairs meet. *Morning Service* has a committed audience which is not only made up of those who are unable to attend their own place of worship. *Thought for the Day* aims to bring something worthwhile to a very large audience whose dispositions will necessarily differ according to their circumstances.

3. As ever, I am grateful to all those who take the time and make the effort to contribute to the programmes made by the small Religion Unit in Belfast. I am conscious that without those religious broadcasting would be poorer, if not impossible.

4. I continue to serve as Convener in charge of the vacancy in the Congregations of Cargyreevy and Loughaghrey.

## COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

1. As the Standing Committee of the Board, the Committee is responsible for the administration and finances of the Board, the Communications Office and the *Herald* (the monthly periodical of the Church). Consequently, as the Board begins to implement the various elements of the Co-ordinated Communications Strategy, as agreed at the last Assembly, it will be the responsibility of the Committee to apply these to the work of the Communications Office and the future running and format of the *Herald*. It is our expectation that practical results of this work will become increasingly apparent in the months before the next Assembly.

### Department

2. The department incorporates the offices of information, publication and the production of the *Herald* and we are grateful for the various tasks they have fulfilled during the past year. At the same time we have been aware that staff numbers are below strength and we have been supervising plans for recruitment. We trust that a full complement within the department will put us in a strong position to implement the practical responsibilities as expeditiously as possible.

3. Stephen Lynas still continues to lead his hard working staff in maintaining an excellent service for our Church and we look forward to their role in developing the work of the department as the Communications Strategy unfolds.

### Presbyterian Herald

4. Once more we express our appreciation of the good work of Rev Arthur Clarke and his staff while we review the role and content of the magazine within the guidelines of the Communications Strategy.

### Historical Society

5. The Committee was delighted to see the recovery that Rev Ivor Smith has made from his illness. We look forward to his continued role in drawing the attention of our Church to its historical heritage.

R ALAN RUSSELL, Convener

## CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has met on nine occasions since the last report and dealt with seventy-three submissions.

2. The work of the Committee varies from dealing with new buildings to renovating old property.

3. Occasionally a site visit is required and this is usually very beneficial.

4. All Congregations requesting our approval receive an answer within five days of the meeting.

5. Congregations are reminded of the importance of sending their plans early to enable the Committee to make any suggestions regarding alterations which would enhance the building.

6. It has been brought to the attention of the Committee that there are Congregations involved in building programmes who do not consult this Committee. Presbyteries should ensure that all building work is brought to us for approval.

7. In October 2005 the Committee visited the Presbytery of Glasgow. We went to four Churches, all of which had their own distinctive features. We saw Ruchazie Church, a community Church on the edge of a housing estate. Then to Chryston, a traditional Church. Next day we visited Blairbeth, a traditional Church but with a modern interior. Our last visit took us to Priesthill situated in a difficult housing estate but used to reach out to the community.

8. As Convener I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all members of this hard-working Committee for their dedication and enthusiasm. A special word of thanks to the experts who work on this Committee, for the time given and advice offered. Their knowledge is greatly appreciated.

GEORGE SIMPSON, Convener

## **COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee has sought to fulfil the Assembly's remit of media training, media development, media consultancy and media relations in a number of ways.

2. The Committee has corresponded with Government and Regulatory bodies on a wide variety of media issues this year, including the BBC Charter, standards in Broadcasting and the issue of television funding mechanisms.

3. Religious advisers for TV and radio continue to inform us of developments in broadcast media.

4. Rev Liz Hughes, Religious Advisor to UTV, reports that Alan Bremner retires as Director of Television at UTV in September. Alan Bremner actively encouraged the work of the Religious Advisory Panel for many years, chairing the meetings personally and inviting comment, reflection and evaluation on all aspects of TV coverage. Under his leadership a variety of events have been hosted at UTV to enhance the quality of communication between Church and media. The Committee wishes him well in his retirement and extends good wishes to his successor, Michael Wilson.

5. The Committee received a copy of the report of the Irish Churches' Council for Television and Radio Affairs 2005. Rev Frank Sellar continues to represent PCI interests on the Council.

6. A successful informal meeting with representatives from BBC Northern Ireland was held in Church House on 15 November 2005 to discuss areas of mutual concern. A similar meeting will be held in May to host

representatives of UTV in Church House as part of the Committee's commitment to developing good relations with local broadcasters.

7. Guidelines for Churches on *The Use of the Internet* have been finalised after a period of consultation with Committee members and those with relevant expertise. These guidelines will be provided as a basis for individual Congregations to draft their own internet policy, governing website maintenance and internet access. These are available for download from the PCI website and will also be circulated throughout the Church.

8. Proposals to recognise and showcase excellence in congregational communications throughout Ireland, whether print, electronic or broadcast are currently being drawn up.

9. A working Committee has been set up to review PCI's website and produce proposals for the ongoing development of PCI's web presence.

C GLOVER, Convener

## APPENDIX I

### INTERNET USE GUIDELINES

#### Developing Good Practice

The internet provides Congregations with a creative opportunity to share their mission and fellowship with congregational members, the local community and the world wide web. A website may be the first point of contact for many people with a Congregation, or the Church in general. With imagination this unique opening to share more than information about dates, times and venues can provide a dynamic introduction to Christian faith.

Whether providing access to the internet or publishing material on the internet, each Congregation should develop and maintain a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in the use of internet resources, using imaginative and engaging material.

The following material is provided as the basis for developing congregational guidelines but should not be viewed in any way as a final statement. Each Congregation should revise the material carefully with respect to their individual needs.

The final congregational internet guidelines should be approved by the Kirk Session.

#### Contents

#### Congregational Website Guidelines

1. Website Administrator
2. Purpose
3. Content
4. External Links
5. Consent Issues
  - (i) Privacy
  - (ii) Copyright

- (iii) Use of Photographic Material
- 6. Security
- 7. Accessibility
- 8. Indemnity
- 9. Software

### **Providing Internet Access**

- 1. Access to the Internet
- 2. Messaging
  - (i) Email
  - (ii) Instant Messaging
  - (iii) Message Boards
- 3. Child Protection
- 4. Internet Security
- 5. Downloading Material
- 6. Training
- 7. Software

### **Congregational Website Guidelines**

#### **1. Website Administrator (Webmaster)**

1. The Kirk Session will designate the person(s) authorized to add or remove material from the congregational website(s). If more than one person is authorized, then one person will be designated by the Kirk Session as the primary site administrator. The website(s) will be under frequent review by the Kirk Session whose decision over the inclusion of content will be final.

2. The administrator(s) should be someone with skill, enthusiasm, and long-term commitment. The administrator(s) must be trusted to develop and maintain the website(s) regularly without supervision. The administrator(s) will need to have, or be provided with, equipment and software.

#### **2. Purpose**

1. To provide a safe online environment, connecting and informing congregational members and site visitors, protecting their privacy, and promoting the current mission of the Congregation in a creative and attractive manner.

#### **3. Content**

1. All web content should support the Congregation's mission and fellowship.

2. Any material which the Kirk Session and/or its representatives consider contrary to Church doctrine or congregational ethos should be removed immediately.

3. No content should be submitted for posting on the site that may subject the Congregation to claims of copyright breaches, or to claims for libel or slander. All illegal internet activity will be reported immediately to the appropriate civil authorities.

4. A copy of these guidelines and privacy statement shall be made available for review by site visitors from every web page. This information will usually appear via hyperlink at the bottom of each web page.

#### **4. External Links**

1. External links may be included which are considered helpful to site visitors.

2. The Congregation assumes no responsibility for material on websites linked to the congregational website(s). All external links shall contain the following disclaimer:

“(Congregation Name) are not responsible for the content of external websites nor do they necessarily endorse their sponsoring organizations.”

3. External links will open a new browser window to indicate that the visitor is exiting the congregational website(s).

4. The Congregation will not include links to sites which contain material unsuitable for children.

5. The content of every external linked site shall be reviewed by the site administrator(s) for suitability prior to inclusion and not less than every 3 months thereafter.

#### **5. Consent Issues**

1. All site material must have the consent of those represented or whose material is used.

##### **(i) Privacy**

- Express permission will be sought before any email address or phone number, other than that of congregational staff or Church office, is included on the website.
- No personal information of congregational members or site visitors will be shared with third parties. This includes names, email addresses, phone numbers and mailing addresses.
- Email links to individuals should be minimized. Online forms are preferred for interactive communications from the site.
- If the site employs the use of cookies which capture the user’s IP (network) address for the purpose of determining the web pages viewed by visitors to our site, at no time will this information be shared with third-party organizations. Visitors may refuse the use of cookies by modifying the permission settings in their web browser.

##### **(ii) Copyright**

- All material included must comply with copyright requirements.
- Copyrighted works can include, but are not limited to, news stories, software, novels, screenplays, graphics, pictures, music, video clips and email, and should not be used without permission.

##### **(iii) Use of Photographic Material**

- The use of photographs of individuals appearing on any congregational webpage should be minimal. Express permission

from each congregational member in a picture to be used must be obtained.

- The site administrator(s) will have discretion concerning the size and placement of images on web pages.
- When using photographs of congregational children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures. All images of children shall comply with the **Presbyterian Church in Ireland Board of Social Witness *Taking Care* guidelines**: [www.presbyterianireland.org/bsw](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/bsw)
- Consent forms (*Taking Care*, TCF5/04) will be used to obtain parental consent for the use of images of congregational children for general Church purposes.
- Stock photography of children not connected with the Congregation may be used, as long as material is not protected by copyright.

## 6. Security

1. No one other than designated site administrator(s) shall have access to passwords for posting website material. Passwords should be regularly changed.

2. Appropriate firewall software and anti-virus software should be installed and regularly updated to ensure the protection of restricted data.

3. Posting new messages on forums (message boards), chat rooms or email shall be restricted to registered users and appropriately monitored.

## 7. Accessibility

1. Reasonable steps will be taken to provide access to website services for people with disabilities who may use specially designed software or hardware to access content on the internet. Web content should follow world wide web Consortium (W3C) guidelines: [www.w3.org/wai](http://www.w3.org/wai)

## 8. Indemnity

1. The Congregation shall ensure appropriate indemnity for all internet use.

## 9. Software

1. All software used for developing and maintaining the website will be legally registered (if necessary) with the appropriate fees paid.

## Providing Internet Access

It is essential that the use of the internet is managed securely and openly.

### 1. Access to the Internet

- (i) If internet access is provided (in a youth club, coffee bar, etc) equipment will be placed in an open position allowing group leaders to monitor internet activity.
- (ii) No one will be allowed to view offensive or abusive material.

- (iii) All internet access for children and young people shall be monitored by appropriate child-content monitoring software (“cyber nanny” software) or by constant supervision.
- (iv) The inappropriate use of internet resources will result in the immediate withdrawal of access to the internet.
- (v) Any illegal internet material will be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation and appropriate civil authorities:  
[www.internetwatch.org.uk](http://www.internetwatch.org.uk)

## 2. Messaging

### (i) Email

- Personal email addresses should never be posted on a website.
- Personal email addresses of congregational members or website visitors should never be given to third parties.
- It is good practice to use email alias (for example *user@congregation.org*) rather than personal email addresses.
- The Congregation will not send unsolicited email (“Spam”)

### (ii) Instant Messaging

- The use of instant messaging services by children and young people should be monitored at all times.

### (iii) Message Boards

- All message boards must be moderated by a designated supervisor.
- It is good practice to restrict access to message boards. Users must register details before being allowed access via their username and password.

## 3. Child Protection

1. There may be occasions when congregational staff or youth leaders wish to demonstrate the internet to children or young people, or encourage them to access online information as part of the teaching programme.

2. All use of internet resources with children and young people shall comply with the **Presbyterian Church in Ireland Board of Social Witness *Taking Care* guidelines**: [www.presbyterianireland.org/bsw](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/bsw)

3. All web material used should be previously checked to ensure that it is appropriate for the age group taking part.

4. No child or young person shall be allowed access to the internet without supervision at any time.

## 4. Downloaded Material

1. No material shall be downloaded illegally.

2. Illegal downloads include the copying or sharing of any copyrighted material including, but not limited to, music, video files, games, online articles, organ music, choral music, or photographic images.

3. It is good practice not to install peer-to-peer file sharing systems (such as Kazaa, BiTorrent, eDonkey, etc.) that encourage illegal downloading or transmission of viruses.



**5. Internet Security**

1. Appropriate anti-virus software shall be installed and frequently updated to ensure that downloaded material and emails are virus-free.
2. Appropriate firewall software shall be installed and frequently updated to protect restricted data.

**6. Training**

All congregational staff members and volunteers with internet access should be provided with appropriate training opportunities.

**7. Software**

All software used for accessing internet services will be legally registered (if required) with the appropriate fees paid.

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly commend the work of the Communications Department and express thanks to the Information Officer, the office staff and the Editor of the Presbyterian Herald.
3. That the General Assembly encourage the Communications Board in the continuing implementation of the new strategy and programme to co-ordinate and service the communications of the Church as presented to the 2005 Assembly by the General Board and agreed.
4. That the Information Officer be henceforth known as the Communications and Press Secretary.
5. That the guidelines for Churches on *The Use of the Internet* be adopted and circulated throughout PCI, as the standard for individual Congregations to draft their own internet policy governing website maintenance and internet access.
6. That a grant of £1,500 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.
7. That a grant of £14,700 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Presbyterian Historical Society.
8. That the Board of Communications, together with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 277 of the Code as follows:

# BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS

Convener: Very Rev Dr SJ DIXON

Secretary: Rev WS MARRS

## A Step Further in Mission

1. Having set out its vision, mission and strategy to 2010 at the General Assembly in 2005, in the past year the Board of Mission Overseas has set about working through the implications of the review process. This has involved analysing how future priorities are already reflected in existing work in the overseas context. It has also meant being forward-thinking in our approach to revising the internal structures, membership and governance of the Board in a way that will best facilitate our next steps in mission. This work has been taken forward by a Resources Working Group that has had the opportunity to pray, reflect, discuss and plan during three 'Away-Days' over the past year.

2. The present **structures of the Board** have served us well over the past 13 years but are in need of revision so that the ongoing work is in line with the priorities agreed by the General Assembly in 2005. The Resources Working Group reported to the Board in October and December 2005, and the Board resolved to recommend that this year's General Assembly approve the replacement of the current geographically focused Assembly Committees (that is Asia Committee; Africa, Caribbean and Latin America Committee; and Europe and Middle East Committee) with Assembly Committees that are functionally focused, as follows:

3. **Mission Involvement Committee:** This new Assembly Committee will focus on the mission engagement priority which emphasises that mission is the calling not simply of individual missionaries, but of the whole Church at every level, especially local Congregations. We aim, therefore, to encourage the development of the missional identity and responsibility of all our members, enabling wide-ranging and effective awareness and involvement. (Please refer to the Mission Education section of this report).

4. **Outreach Ministries Committee:** This new Assembly Committee will seek to embrace two of our stated priorities for the future – outreach initiatives and compassionate ministries, adopting an integral approach to mission, while being true to our guiding principles of working Church to Church and being people-focused. In practical terms this will mean building on our existing relationships with partner Churches that are best placed to serve amongst grassroots communities, in order to share in their new initiatives to make disciples and plant new Churches, especially amongst those who have never heard the gospel. Where appropriate, this may mean sending mission personnel from Ireland. It will also include the out-working of our ongoing commitment to the outreach work of our partners in terms of different expressions of medical mission, including mission hospitals; Church Schools, especially teacher training programmes; and Church development programmes and projects.

5. **Leadership Development Committee:** This new Assembly Committee will take forward our leadership development priority, which recognises the growth and vitality of many of our partner Churches, especially in the Southern Hemisphere. It will give practical expression to our willingness to share with partners as they face up to the challenges such growth brings, and to our commitment to see indigenous Church leaders well equipped for ministry and mission in whatever form it takes.

6. The current **World Development Committee** remains unchanged, with its ongoing work largely focused on the World Development Appeal, reflecting our compassionate ministries priority which seeks to encourage our Church to share in God's creative and just purposes in active compassion for all He has made, such that all peoples might know fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

7. During Committee week in September 2005 the existing Assembly Committees noted that there would be a significant level of continuity in the work taken forward under the new Assembly Committee structure. At the same time, it was recognized that there is now an opportunity for a sharper functional focus in each of the new committees. Pilot Groups, with broad representation from the wider Church, were set up for each of the new committees in order to develop further their remits.

8. The **Steering Committee** will continue to serve as the Business Committee of the Board, with an increased emphasis on monitoring and developing partner relationships; regularly weighing up our involvement in different regions of the world; ensuring that timely and meaningful contact is maintained with all partners; facilitating a regular flow of relevant information to Assembly Committees on the wider context of each partner; continuing to ensure that visits by representatives of the Board are made by the right people to the right places at the right time. (Figure 1 shows the proposed new Board structure.)



Figure 1 – Proposed new Board structure

9. In taking a fresh look at the membership of the Board and its Committees, a number of factors have been taken into consideration, including the Business Board's desire to see a streamlining of ex-officio membership and the option of adopting a 50:50-breakdown between 'x'-line and 'y'-line membership. The Board continues to seek members who are enthusiastic, skilled and willing to take initiatives to enable its work to be done, also recognising the importance of the educational task with those who may come onto the Board with little prior knowledge of its work. Under the restructuring being brought to General Assembly for approval the total membership is 113, with over 50% coming from Presbyteries.

10. Early in 2006 the Resources Working Group tackled the issue of Board governance. This was born out of the desire to encourage more lively discussion and corporate decision making in the meetings of the Board and its Committees. A wide ranging report was received by the Board in March 2006. Topics explored included the Responsibilities of the Board; Board-Staff Relationships; Role Descriptions for Board and Assembly Committee Conveners; effective Board Management; Teamwork; the need for a Board Information System; a Cycle of Board Meetings; the Induction of Board members; and the preparation of a Board Manual. While much is already in place in this regard, new ideas surfaced and these will be introduced gradually from September 2006.

## ASIA

11. The remarkable response of our people throughout 2005 to the devastation caused by the Tsunami in South and East Asia is a matter of great encouragement to the Board and no doubt to the whole Church. The sum of £1.87million was raised and disbursed. Our Development partners Tear Fund and Christian Aid provided much-needed assistance in many areas, and the Board was also delighted to receive news of the practical, professional and focused relief work carried out by partner Churches in Asia and especially in India.

12. The more recent earthquake disaster in the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan again gave our members the opportunity to respond to the needs of others whatever their class or creed. Members did not disappoint. These crises, however, highlight the challenge the Board and our Church faces in trying to develop priorities and strategies in mission without losing the ability or desire to respond to immediate needs as they arise.

13. The Board also heard through the year of the enduring goodwill established through past personnel, their service and the many gifts sent to support often small Christian communities around Asia, as well as gifts offered to local people of other faiths, or none. While the Board is proposing to replace the direct regional focus of its Assembly Committees with a functional one, we nonetheless look forward to the diverse flavours of the challenge of mission in Asia being kept before the wider Church.

14. Our Partners in the region have again faced political instability, continuing struggles for freedom and justice for minority Christian communities, as well as the hardships caused by economic and climactic changes.

15. The Board's priority of Leadership Development encourages us to support and provide for training of leaders from Asian Churches who will in their turn 'prepare God's people for works of service'. **Pakistan** is one country where we believe this renewed focus will see positive results.

16. Rev Alan Martin represented the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) at the **Church of North India** (CNI) Synod in 2005 meetings in Ranchi, an interesting and challenging time for the Church there reflecting on their theme, 'Towards transformed and transforming community'. As Alan wrote, "*CNI is a body that includes great diversity of caste, culture and traditions. What should mark the Church is the ability to find unity in Christ despite the diversity and the disputes that inevitably occur. It is to be hoped that when there are disagreements, often over property CNI inherited from missionary bodies, these can in future be resolved without recourse to civil courts.*"

17. CNI has also been involved in protracted discussions with the Government of India about freedom of religion in India. Rev Enos Das Pradhan, General Secretary of CNI, writes, "*We are engaged in heavy lobbying with the Union and State governments to ensure our safety and security as we profess our faith in Christ...Today, it's a challenge for all of us to stand united to witness the Christ through our service.*"

18. As a Board we continue to share in the struggles fellow Christians and partner Churches face. The visits which Board staff and PCI members make to India, and the opportunity to receive Indian leaders in return, have deepened and strengthened our partnership in the gospel.

19. **Nepal** faces continuing difficulties. Relations between the main parties in Nepal continue to be uneasy with sporadic violence and general disquiet making life far from normal for local people and the many still working with the **United Mission to Nepal** (UMN). The Maoist ceasefire broke down in January 2006 and, while local elections were held, little progress was made and the hoped for peaceful settlement between the King, democratic political parties and the Maoist rebels has not yet been realised.

20. UMN continues to oversee its personnel and to progress its work as well as is possible in a very unstable situation. The Project Agreement allowing UMN to continue its work was finally agreed in November 2005; this is seen as a real answer to prayer. Jennie Collins (Executive Director of UMN) writing to partner Churches said, "*All the thanks and praise goes to God and I hope you will join us in rejoicing and at the same time praying that we will be worthy of the privilege and responsibility of serving the people of Nepal.*"

21. On behalf of the Board, visits have been made recently to several countries in Asia to assess living conditions and security. These are important considerations wherever our personnel are working and travelling. It also affords clear insights into the challenges faced by local Christian communities under threat from persecution.

22. A new venture for our Church, borne out of our review and renewed commitment to outreach, is the opportunity to explore and develop Christian witness in a challenging Islamic context in **Central Asia**. This requires the prayers of the whole Church.

23. Nigel Eves and Uel Marrs visited **Singapore** and **Indonesia** in August 2005 allowing fruitful discussion to take place about the Board's recent

review of Mission. Singapore has been a good training ground for PCI leaders in recent years as many international mission bodies have their headquarters there.

24. The Board continues to offer support to our partner Churches in Eastern Indonesia. The work of our missionaries in Sumba and in Timor is much appreciated. In both these situations we value the strategic role played as we see the work and witness of Christ's Church strengthened and local leadership built-up.

25. We recognise the courage and dedication of Christians in difficult situations in Indonesia as efforts are made to move from their troubled recent history to a more prosperous and equitable future together. The Board hopes to facilitate a consultation with Christian leaders in Eastern Indonesia in 2007 to discern the shape of our partnerships in mission.

26. Eukumindo (an umbrella organisation of European Churches and missions involved in Indonesia) continues to coordinate response and encouragement for this vast nation. Nigel Eves serves on this group and the Board will shortly be hosting an executive meeting in Ireland.

27. China remains open to receive workers who come to share in educational and economic development and this allows an important 'tent-making' ministry to develop alongside local Christians. PCI continues to support one such opportunity positively.

28. The Amity Foundation celebrated its 20th Anniversary at the end of 2005. It renewed its commitment to serve the poorer and less well developed regions in Western China. The accounts of Bible production and distribution through the Amity Press are encouraging. The China Forum received reports of the review of Amity's work, and Churches and agencies in the UK and Ireland are encouraged to continue to support all efforts made to strengthen the Church's witness in this vast land.

## EUROPE

29. Europe stands out today as the only continent where the membership of the Church is in decline. However, there is a great interest in spirituality and many are searching, unsure of what they are searching for. This major challenge is also an exciting opportunity and, relying on God's initiative, we are prepared to play our part in His purpose for the needy nations of Europe.

30. As well as seeking new initiatives the Board remains firm in its resolve to continue to work with our partner Churches for our mutual benefit and encouragement and the building up of the Church across Europe.

31. For the past 16 years we have had a Church-to-Church relationship with the **Église Réformée de France** (ERF) and have had PCI personnel serving in France up to July 2005. The way forward for our relationship with the ERF will shortly be addressed.

32. We continue to engage with the Free Faculty of Reformed Theology (FLTR), Aix-en-Provence. The College continues to face up to the various challenges of independence. Rev Dr Gordon Campbell has made two short visits back to the college to undertake teaching assignments. He has been awarded Associate Professor status, which is an endorsement of our partnership and is an

encouragement as we continue to engage with the college in leadership development.

33. Our relationship with Jews for Jesus in France has been through the Head of Station in Paris, Stephen Pacht, who has now been appointed UK Director. This move has highlighted the need for further thought to be given to our future relationship with Jews for Jesus and to mission amongst Jews in general.

34. In Germany, the Kirchenkreis would like the Congregation of the Jerusalem Church, Hamburg, formerly part of PCI's Jewish Mission, to join another local Congregation but the Jerusalem Church would prefer to retain their own identity. No final decision has been taken in this regard, and the Board continue to monitor developments.

35. Discussions took place early in 2006 on how our partnership with the **Iglesia Evangélica Española** (IEE) might be taken forward. This centred on the possibility of further outreach work in the Levante Presbytery. We have also sought to strengthen our relationship with Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología (SEUT), a united theological college located in Madrid.

36. It is planned that towards the end of 2006 we will have a missionary couple serving with Grupos Bíblicos Unidos (GBU) in the Bilbao area. GBU is affiliated to the International Federation of Evangelical Students (IFES). It sees itself as a branch of the Church, focused on encouraging its workers to engage in outreach in Spanish universities and colleges. In February 2006 discussions were held with the General Secretary, Francisco Mira. One of the executive staff of GBU, Enrique Mota, is a member of IEE.

37. We continue to maintain and encourage our relationship with the **Church of the Czech Brethren**. This relationship is strengthened by the continuance of a number of congregational twinnings. At present there is not a need in this area for long-term missionaries from Ireland although opportunities may appear for a short term role.

38. Professor Anne-Marie Kool from Papa University, Hungary, made a short visit to Ireland in March to meet with one of her students, Miss Nora Pinter, who is currently one of the Board's overseas bursars. This was an opportunity to learn of the work of the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest of which she is Director.

39. Our Partnership with the **Hungarian Reformed Church** (HRC) in **Romania** was strengthened by the visit of the Rev Ivan Patterson in December 2005, on behalf of the Board, to the Jubilee General Assembly of the Királyhágómellék District of the Church. Over the past year our relationship has been strengthened with the AKSZA Mission in the Cluj District of the Church.

40. We continue to look for the best way to strengthen links with the **Evangelical Reformed Church in Ukraine**. At present we support, by way of an annual grant, the work of the 'Right Way Project', which seeks to combat drug and alcohol abuse in the city of Rivne. However, further support is required as the project aims to develop a Christian Rehabilitation Centre for addicts. The Board is looking for a volunteer to co-ordinate arrangements for the visit of a choir from Ukraine which would help to strengthen links and raise funds for the 'Right Way Project'.

41. The Board continues to support the Bible Translation work of Church Growth Croatia and Bosnia which is progressing well and is now into the fourth year of an eight year project. In January 2006 four members of the translation team from Sarajevo visited the Mission Overseas Office. Oversight of the work is carried out by Wycliffe Bible Translators.

42. The **Evangelical Reformed Church in Poland** (ERCP) is a tiny minority in Poland, which is a predominantly Roman Catholic country and the home of the recently deceased Pope, John Paul II. The visit of Bishop Marek Izdebski to our General Assembly in 2005 was an opportunity to discuss ways that would encourage and mutually benefit both the ERCP and ourselves. The possibility of a Polish Pastor coming to Ireland to serve amongst the immigrant community from Eastern Europe was discussed, although the time was not right to take this initiative forward.

43. Four young people from PCI were to have joined a cross-cultural team to Lithuania organised by the ERCP. Lack of funding and staff changes at Birzai in Lithuania, where the camp was to be held, meant that our young people were not able to go.

44. The Board of Mission Overseas agreed in March 2006 to build relationships with the **Igreja Evangélica Presbiteriana de Portugal** (IEPP). This is a small denomination of some 2,000 members in ten Congregations. It was founded in 1838 through the preaching of a Scottish pastor and medical doctor, Robert Kalley. The IEPP have expressed a desire for new partners to stand with them as they face all the difficulties of being a tiny but influential minority in Portugal today. Following on from a visit to Portugal by representatives of the Board, a grant was provided to assist with the theological education of one of their students for the ministry. There is potential for developing the partnership in a number of areas in the coming years, including involvement in children's camps and the exchange of mission personnel.

45. Since 1992, a host of Presbyterians, young and old, have gone on numerous teams to Central Europe. Giving of their time and talents, and working in partnership alongside the Hungarian Reformed Church, team members have shared the gospel in word and action amongst Hungarian speakers in a variety of locations in Romania, Hungary and Ukraine.

46. History was made when a joint team from PCI; the Youth Movement, Reformed Church in Romania (IKE); and the Youth Movement, Hungarian Reformed Church in Ukraine (KREZ) went to Balazser, in Western Ukraine, from 16 to 28 July 2005. This was an opportunity for team members to share their faith and build cross-cultural friendships.

47. In the summer of 2006, the Board is sending two teams to Central Europe: one to Ukraine, the other to Romania. Several Congregations are also sending teams to Central Europe.

## MIDDLE EAST

48. George Sabra, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the Near East School of Theology (NEST), in Lebanon has written a paper entitled 'The Present Situation of the Evangelical Churches in the Near East' which will be a helpful document as the Board continues to look at a strategy for mission in the Middle East.



49. Evangelical Christians find themselves a small minority, strongly related to the West through partnership relations to the extent that it can lead to an identity crisis for some. Since the establishment and support of the State of Israel by the West, much embarrassment has been caused to the Evangelical Church in the Middle East, and it has been viewed with increasing suspicion. Any negative impact of the West on the region reflects badly on Christians, especially those viewed as originating from Western evangelism in the past. Political and economic pressure and persecution has led to significant emigration, not least from Lebanon. In Iraq, with little pre-planned post-war strategy, the situation seems to be becoming more depressing and catastrophic for evangelicals in the region.

50. The Board continues to support a number of ministries in the region by the provision of grants. These include a scholarship to Presbyterian students at NEST, and grants to the Bethlehem Bible College and SAT 7, an innovative satellite television service that provides culturally sensitive Christian programming for the Middle East.

## **AFRICA**

51. Despite huge natural resources and talented people, armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, uncertain weather patterns, a fragile environment, weak public governance and the failure of world leaders to keep their public pledges have been some of the factors that together have contributed to the ongoing destabilising of the continent of Africa. Drought and famine, in particular, have hit country after country over the past year and our partner Churches in Malawi, Kenya, and Southern Sudan have kept us informed of the unfolding tragedy this has meant for many. Our missionary personnel have encountered many additional challenges in their work this year as they have lived and served among even higher levels of poverty and desperation than normal. We must continue to pray for our personnel, our partner Churches and the suffering people of Africa.

52. Towards the end of 2005 the people of **Kenya** voted on a new constitution, tackled surfacing issues on corruption, and faced up to a hunger crisis especially in the North East. 2006 marks the fortieth year anniversary of the link between the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the **Presbyterian Church of East Africa** (PCEA). PCEA continues to be a valuable partner of our Church and we give thanks to God for all that has been achieved by working together down through the years.

53. Our missionaries serving in Kenya continue to be involved in a wide range of activities, including rural development work, Christian literature distribution amongst Church leaders and Sunday school teacher training. 2006 saw a new initiative in conjunction with Limuru Presbytery amongst the Masai. God is touching lives and bringing transformation in both practical and spiritual ways.

54. In November 2005, Helen Johnston (Personnel Officer, Overseas) and Dr Moreen Gordon (Pastoral Adviser) visited Kenya, spending valuable time with all our personnel and also with PCEA leadership. We continue to provide grants for various initiatives in the life of Church, particularly in fields of theological education and to combat HIV/AIDS.

55. Over the past year details have been finalised in relation to our support for Rev Edwin Kibathi and his family, who from a base in Camberwell Green United Reformed Church in London, will be working amongst East African expatriates. This new dimension to our partnership with PCEA will, God willing, be underway by the summer of 2006 as the final hurdle of the issuing of a visa has now been negotiated.

56. While hunger crisis has once again been headline news in **Malawi**, international partner Churches of the **Church of Central African Presbyterian (CCAP)** have continued to consult regarding a long-standing boundary dispute between Nkhoma and Livingstonia Synods, and to work for the sustainability of Zomba Theological College.

57. In November 2005 Rev Uel Marrs had the opportunity to attend a consultative meeting including the General Secretaries of the three Malawi Synods of CCAP and the Church of Scotland. As a result of this meeting, the Church of Scotland have been invited to send a mediation specialist to Malawi in March 2006 in the hope that the border dispute can ultimately be resolved and that a CCAP General Assembly can be held in August 2006.

58. Zomba Theological College (ZTC) has been facing a major financial crisis over the past year and international partners are in discussion with CCAP concerning the most appropriate role they might play in seeking to contribute to a sustainable future at ZTC. Each of the three Malawi Synods of CCAP would appear to have prioritised their own parallel theological colleges offering emergency programmes of theological education that are shorter, cheaper, albeit at a lower academic level of training. At the time of writing discussions continued to see if there was a viable way forward for ZTC beyond 2006.

59. Blantyre Synod is currently in the process of setting up a Blantyre Synod Development Commission to take forward all dimensions of the Synod's development work. In one year from now this will replace the Blantyre Synod Projects Office with which we, as a Church, have enjoyed a close association over the years. This has led to quite an upheaval within the Projects Office, with major staff changes and much concern amongst the international partner Churches and donor agencies as to what direction the development work of the Synod will take in 2007.

60. In a number of areas we provide annual grants in order to encourage theological education and Christian discipleship. Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), now under new leadership, has recently produced a strategic plan and budget through until 2008. We continue to seek to encourage and support the Student Christian Organisation in Malawi (SCOM); Scripture Union (SU), Malawi; and the Christian Literature Association of Malawi (CLAIM).

61. PCI personnel continue to be involved in chaplaincy work, theological education, rural development and specialised fields of nursing. Living in the face of high levels of poverty and HIV/AIDS, they face significant challenges on a daily basis. Warm tributes were paid recently, both in Malawi and Ireland, in respect of Rev Bill Jackson, PCI's first missionary to Malawi (1958 – 1969), who passed away on 7 March 2006.

62. In **Sudan**, while the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in January 2005, its implementation has proved another matter entirely.

The international community has struggled to support the implementation process and donor aid has decreased. As the Sudanese say, “we have smelled the peace, we have tasted the peace but we have not eaten the peace yet”. Progress in reconciliation among the ethnic and tribal groups has been slow. Returnees to Southern Sudan are finding that there are few provisions for them and the land they called “home” has often been occupied by other refugees. Much still needs to be done and much prayer still needs to be offered if the people of Sudan are ever to “eat” the reality of peace. The Board continues to support the ministry and mission of both the Akobo and Malakal Administrations of the **Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS)**, with a particular focus on theological education.

63. In Darfur the situation continues to deteriorate and, despite international efforts to end the conflict, ethnic clashes and banditry have increased. Peace talks in Abuja, Nigeria made little progress in the past year. More than 300,000 people have died since 2003, with some two million made homeless. Tensions on the Chad/Sudan border are heightening in an alarming way.

64. We are also aware that here in Ireland we have Sudanese refugees and the Board is seeking ways in which we could encourage support for them. This area of work must involve not only the Board of Mission Overseas but also Presbyteries, the Board of Mission in Ireland, the Race Relations Panel and local Congregations. As a Church we need to be increasingly aware that the world is shrinking, the ethnic face of Ireland is changing and we must have a coherent commitment and approach to helping and engaging overseas communities here in Ireland.

## **LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN**

65. The partnership agreement signed with the **Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB)** in July 2002 is currently working out in practical terms through our sharing in a new outreach initiative of the Casa Caiada Congregation near Recife in North East Brazil. In March 2006 Helen Johnston (Personnel Officer, Overseas) and Sheila Fell (PWA Central President) visited Recife.

66. In the past year the **United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI)** appointed a new General Secretary, Rev Collin Cowan. Last year it was reported that the United Church in Jamaica are keen to pursue reciprocity in mission and would be keen to send mission personnel to serve in Ireland, as and when suitable opportunities arise. This kind of initiative would not be carried out without full consultation with the Board of Mission in Ireland.

## **WORLD DEVELOPMENT**

67. *Long-term Development Work in 2005:* The generous support of the people in our Congregations for the first year of the Horizons of Hope appeal, enabled the World Development Committee to disburse £600,000 in the calendar year 2005 to fight the scandal of global poverty through support of grass-roots projects engaged in long-term development: £285,000 was allocated to Tearfund; £285,000 to Christian Aid; and £30,000 to be used at the discretion of the Board of Mission Overseas.

68. *Emergency Relief in 2005*: As a denomination, we responded to the need for immediate relief in disaster situations through our participation in a number of special Moderator-supported appeals: the Darfur/Sudan appeal was brought to its conclusion by dividing remaining funds (£10,000) equally between Tearfund and Christian Aid; £1.87 million was contributed to the Tsunami appeal and divided equally between Tearfund, Christian Aid and partner Churches of the Board of Mission Overseas; £580,000 has been donated to the Pakistan Earthquake/Southern Africa Food Crisis appeal, of which £506,000 has been disbursed, with partner Churches of the Board of Mission Overseas receiving £130,000, Christian Aid £180,000, and Tearfund £196,000. With the need for special appeals occurring with greater frequency, the mechanism for best handling them is presently under review.

69. Christian Aid is presently setting up two new companies in the reorganisation of its governance in Ireland. As part of the process, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been asked to nominate up to three people as Trustees/Directors. Current representatives on the Irish Committee of Christian Aid are Very Rev Dr Sam Hutchinson, Rev Dr Roger Purce and Rev Dr Mark Gray. These three names have been forwarded to the Nominations Committee of the new Christian Aid companies as the Presbyterian Church in Ireland nominees.

70. *Horizons of Hope Appeal Advent/Christmas 2005*: Following the second and concluding year of the Horizons of Hope campaign, by mid-February 2006 £536,000 had been credited to the World Development account, of which £250,000 has been sent to Tearfund and £250,000 to Christian Aid. This money, representing our commitment to the world's poor in Christ's name, will be used to empower people in Tearfund supported projects in Burundi and the Indian state of Bihar, and Christian Aid supported projects in Malawi and Israel/the Occupied Palestinian Territories to tackle issues impeding their development.

71. *Convener's Visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories*: Prior to the launch of this year's appeal, the Convener of the World Development Committee visited projects in Israel/the Occupied Palestinian Territories and was struck by the obstacles standing in the way of development. When it comes to development, land is life. If people have access to land, they can provide for their family and create a stable future for them, but if they do not, hardship grips and living standards collapse. Since 1948, the amount of land available to the Palestinian community has shrunk dramatically. What is on offer now is even less and considerably undermines the viability of a Palestinian homeland alongside Israel. Indeed, land for Palestinian use is still shrinking on account of Israeli settlements and the security wall, which often separates Palestinian farmers from their land. Key social and health indicators reveal alarming poverty.

72. *Looking Forward*: Looking to the future, the World Development Committee has decided to highlight Tearfund and Christian Aid supported projects in Honduras, Malawi and Sri Lanka for the forthcoming annual appeal on account of the way they integrate ecological/environmental concerns with good development strategy and practice. This decision follows discussion of a paper by Ralph Sheppard entitled, "The Environment and World Development".

The present global context indicates ecological factors will play an increasingly important part in sustainable development.

73. In its work, the World Development Committee seeks to play its part in bearing witness to the God of life, who through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, wills regeneration for all of creation and of whose generosity the Psalmist proclaims: “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.” (Ps 145:15-16)

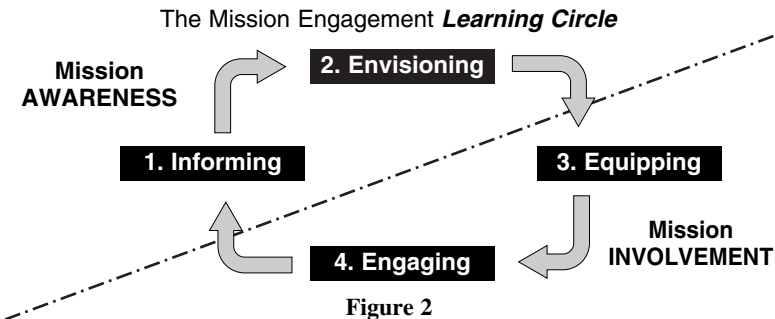
**MISSION EDUCATION**

74. The Board’s Mission-in-the-Melting-Pot review process clearly identified **Mission Engagement** as one of our priorities for the future. In considering how best to move forward after review, it became clear the Board would benefit from new structures. Hence the proposal on restructuring being brought to this year’s General Assembly (outlined elsewhere in this report).

75. Of particular interest here is the recommendation that the current Education Committee (a Board Committee appointed by the Board itself) be disbanded and effectively replaced by a new Assembly Committee to be known as the Mission Involvement Committee (MIC), responsible for developing strategies and monitoring performance related to the Board’s Mission Engagement priority.

76. Until now, through the Education Committee, our primary focus has been on *informing* and *educating*, thereby improving the overall awareness of overseas mission throughout PCI. Under the direction of the proposed new MIC, we aim to go beyond merely ‘raising awareness’ to equipping our members for active involvement (engagement) in mission in today’s world and, where possible, providing (or guiding them towards) ways in which they can become directly involved. Thus, a key question for the MIC will be: “What do we need to do to enable a greater number of people (and Congregations) within our Church become more fully involved (engaged) in mission overseas?”

77. The concept of a *Mission Engagement Learning Circle* (MELC) as shown in Figure 2 is helpful in understanding the various stages that people need to experience, or go through, in order to develop a healthy focus and involvement in global mission. Ideally, every member of PCI should have the opportunity to enter the MELC at one point or another and, in time, to move right around the circle.



**Figure 2**

78. The MELC can be divided in two (as shown by the diagonal broken line). On one side, *Informing* and *Envisioning* contribute to *Mission Awareness*; on the other, *Equipping* and *Engaging* are part of *Mission Involvement*. Under each of the four components, we believe our objectives and broad strategies should be as follows:

79. **Informing** *Objective: To enhance the means of both informing and reporting back to the Church at large, in ways that are effective and cover all areas of our Church's involvement in mission outside Ireland.*

**Strategies:** Development and targeted use of appropriate –

- Database of various 'target' groups
- Informational printed materials
- Multimedia materials
- Publicity and display materials
- Events appropriate to 'needs' at all levels within PCI
- Relevant research

80. **Envisioning** *Objective: To identify and envision for mission key leaders of our Church (Ministers, Deaconesses, Presbytery and Congregational mission agents, mission committee members, students for the ministry, etc.) so that they can effectively facilitate the engagement of others in mission overseas.*

**Strategies:** Development and targeted use of appropriate –

- Publications
- Training seminars and workshops for leaders
- Practical placement opportunities to gain experience, knowledge and insights
- In-service mission training for students for the ministry

Attention to be given to the biblical teaching on the mandate for global mission; stimulating and developing mission interest and involvement at congregational level; and balancing mission focus between 'home' and 'overseas'.

81. **Equipping** *Objective: To provide effective, appropriate training and orientation for all who are committed to engaging in the broad range of mission opportunities offered by the Board and other missionary societies or agencies working in an overseas context.*

**Strategies:** Development and targeted use of appropriate –

- Training manuals and guidelines
- Training workshops
- Training videos/DVDs
- 'Helpline' services giving practical support and advice (eg on travel, insurance, etc.)

82. **Engaging** *Objective: To develop a broad range of opportunities for involving people from every walk of Church life in the task of mission in an overseas context.*

**Strategies:** In addition to well established patterns of prayer and giving, to facilitate 'mission involvement' opportunities in a variety of ways including through –

- Overseas mission teams
- Placement of short-term mission volunteers (max 2 years' service)

- Placement of long-term missionaries (initially for 3 to 4 years' service)
- Accompaniment visits overseas
- Where appropriate, directing 'interested people' to consider service through other mission agencies
- Encouraging twinning with an overseas Congregation

83. In moving forward in mission involvement we are aware that how people begin to engage in global mission very much depends on their 'connections' or where the 'initial idea' came from. To some extent this will determine what support and/or training they may need 'before', 'during' and 'after'. Identifying what is needed, and what we can realistically provide, will take time. We are also conscious of the need to be aware of what is on offer elsewhere and to avoid setting up new programmes or services that may just be duplicating what is already very well provided for by other organisations.

84. The new MIC will clearly have a wider remit than the present Education Committee as it will be responsible for encouraging and facilitating mission involvement in addition to increasing *mission awareness* amongst PCI's members. Furthermore, given that many people are apparently only willing to take on clearly defined, time-limited specific tasks (or responsibilities), it is anticipated that, from time to time, the MIC will find it necessary to set up small working groups, or appoint individuals, to deal with specific tasks over a defined time period.

85. We highlight two events, which at the time of writing are up and coming, organised by the Board and aimed at furthering the priority of Mission Engagement within PCI. First, the Board's annual **residential conference** being held this year on 31 March and 1 April at Greenmount College near Antrim. Under the theme: '*Thinking Globally, Acting Locally*' and with seminars on '*Sharing in Sending*', '*Going in Teams*' and '*Money Matters*', the conference aims to challenge and enthuse congregational leaders, while also equipping them for more effective leadership of others seeking proactive involvement in world mission. The other event is the **training day** to be held at Belfast Bible College on 8 April, providing helpful advice and training for team members and individuals preparing to go overseas to engage short-term in mission.

86. Encouragingly, a number of Presbyteries continue to organise their own global mission events and activities, including overseas mission teams which are particularly beneficial to members of smaller Congregations who might otherwise not have an opportunity to be involved in this way. It is also gratifying to observe a greater awareness in some Presbyteries of the need to organise appropriate training for congregational leaders. Our vision is that all Presbyteries will become proactively engaged in encouraging and facilitating overseas mission involvement by an ever increasing number of Congregations within their bounds.

87. It cannot be overemphasised how important it is for **congregational leaders** to understand the key role they have in stimulating and developing an ongoing interest and involvement in global mission; and for the need to emphasise that mission engagement is for all ages and both genders. We continue to be heartened by the increasing number of Congregations where this is clearly happening and commend them for their commitment, enthusiasm and

imaginative ways in which they are engaging with the task of mission around the world.

88. Once again, we extend sincere thanks to all those who in the past year have so willingly and enthusiastically engaged in **deputation** speaking on behalf of the Board. The information, insights and challenges they have shared have undoubtedly contributed significantly to the understanding and commitment of our members to the work of mission around the world. We acknowledge the valued work carried out by members of staff in the Mission Overseas Office who handle the administration of deputation bookings with efficiency and diligence.

89. In the past year, there have been **mission tours** in Omagh, Newry, Down, Ballymena, Dublin & Munster, Coleraine and Derry & Strabane Presbyteries respectively. At the time of writing, tour dates for 2007 have not been fixed because, in February this year, the Education Committee set up a small working group to undertake a review of Presbytery mission tours (the last review was carried out four years ago). Any decision on tours for 2007 (and beyond) will depend on the recommendations made by this working group, which is due to report to the Board's Steering Committee by the summer of 2006.

90. **Overseas Prayerline** is a valuable aid to regular, focused prayer support for the work and needs of our missionaries and overseas mission partners, and is currently being sent to over 1,300 email addresses on Wednesday each week. We commend this key resource to all in our Church and thank those who use it faithfully week by week.

91. Taking place on Tuesday, 25 October, 'A Step further' was the theme for the Board's 2005 **celebration of global mission**, held for the first time in Carnmoney Presbyterian Church instead of the normal venue, Church House. Praise was led by Rev John Dickinson and musicians from Carnmoney, while Rev Uel Marrs provided 'links' throughout the evening, as speakers demonstrated how the Board is already engaged in and taking 'A Step further' in its four new priority areas: Leadership Development, Outreach Initiatives, Compassionate Ministries and Mission Engagement. The 'new venue' was judged to be excellent, attendance was good and all agreed it was 'an exceptional evening' with much to encourage and challenge.

92. Assuming that the proposed restructuring of the Board is approved by the General Assembly, the Board's Education Committee will cease to exist and its work subsumed by the new MIC. We therefore wish to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to **Maurice McNicoll** in his capacity as chairman of the Committee. Previously a member some years back, we were delighted when, after a number of years' service in Malawi, Maurice agreed to take on this role – one which he ably fulfilled, bringing a wealth of practical knowledge and experience to the task, as well as his infectious passion for wanting to help others to know about and engage in God's mission in the world.

## PERSONNEL, VISITS AND VISITORS

93. We give thanks to God and record our appreciation for the faithful witness and service of Paul and Anne Bailie (Kenya 1998-2003); Deborah Ford (Kenya 1996-2001).



94. We also praise and thank God for our missionaries who, during the past year, have continued to serve in many and varied settings. We rejoice with them for the times when they see fruitfulness for their labours for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom. Every effort is made to encourage and support those who persevere in the face of difficulties, frustrations, insecurity and opposition to the proclamation of the gospel. We thank them for their commitment to their calling to serve in cross-cultural settings outside the island of Ireland – see Appendix A.

95. We have been delighted to have the following bursars studying in Belfast over the past academic year:

- Rev Istvan Kenderesi from the Reformed Church of Transylvania, Romania, studying for a Masters degree in Theology at Union Theological College.
- Miss Mphatso Nguluwe from CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Ekwendeni School of Nursing, Malawi, studying for a Masters degree in Nursing Administration/Education at Queen's University, Belfast.
- Rev Eric Njuru from the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya, studying for a Masters degree in Church History at Union Theological College.
- Miss Nora Pinter from the Hungarian Reformed Church in Hungary, undertaking a second year of study at Union Theological College, including a congregational placement in Kilmakee Presbyterian Church.

96. In the past year the following visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by our partner Churches, and to offer pastoral support and encouragement to our missionary personnel:

- Nigel Eves, Stephen Lynas and John Callister to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 15 – 20 April 2005; and then with Rev Dr Ken and Mrs Valerie Newell to South India and Delhi, 21 – 28 April 2005, to visit tsunami affected areas, to see and hear how monies donated by members of PCI were being used by the Church of North India and partners of Tearfund and Christian Aid.
- Nigel Eves to Pakistan, 29 April – 6 May 2005, to visit leaders in the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan in Gujranwala and Lahore.
- Helen Johnston to Nepal, 21 April – 3 May 2005, to represent the Board at the UMN General Assembly, to visit one of UMN's new areas of work and to meet with Jenny Fell.
- Rev Uel Marrs and Nigel Eves to Singapore and Indonesia, 2 – 25 August 2005, to visit Trinity Theological College, Singapore and to meet with leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore; to meet with missionary personnel serving in Indonesia and with leaders of the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor (GMIT), the Christian Church in Sumba (GKS) and the Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera (GMIH).
- Helen Johnston to Livingstonia, Malawi, 26 September – 8 October 2005 for meetings with the Synod of Livingstonia and missionary personnel.

- Nigel Eves to Holland, 5 – 9 October 2005, to attend the 55th General Assembly of Eukumindo (an umbrella organisation of European Churches and missions involved in Indonesia).
- Helen Johnston and Dr Moreen Gordon (Pastoral Adviser) to Kenya, 6 – 26 November 2005, to meet with missionary personnel and leaders of the PCEA.
- Rev Ivan Patterson to Romania, 2 – 3 December 2005, to attend the Jubilee General Assembly of the Kiralyhagomellek District of the Hungarian Reformed Church.
- Rev Uel Marrs, Prof Bill Addley and James Cochrane to Portugal, 20 – 24 January 2006, to meet with the leadership of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal.
- Rev Uel Marrs to Spain, 8 – 10 February 2006, to meet with Grupos Biblicos Unidos leadership in Barcelona.
- Helen Johnston and Sheila Fell (PWA Central President) to Brazil, 21 – 28 March 2006, to meet with Naomi Keefe and the leadership of the Casa Caiada Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, Olinda.

97. During the year 10 new missionaries were appointed by the Board. Six were appointed as Volunteers in Mission and four as candidates for long-term service, in Malawi (2), Kenya (2), Romania (1), India (1) and Central Asia (2), Nepal (2) – see Appendix A. We thank God for these new missionaries and would encourage people to pray and support them.

98. In the summer months of 2005 three Board teams visited Ozd, Szilagycseh and Algyogy in Romania while one team visited Transcarpathia in Ukraine.

99. During the year we were delighted to receive the following visitors from our partner Churches:-

- Henry and Jenny Kirk, University of Livingstonia Foundation, 21 April 2005
- Mr Sudipta Singh, Church of North India, 18 – 22 May 2005
- Rev Samuel Muriguh, General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, 29 May – 11 June 2005
- Mr Petrus Pendanga (23 June) and Rev David Umbu Dingu (28 June) from Christian Church of Sumba, Indonesia, up to 11 July 2005
- Rev Dr Maqsood Kamil, Executive Secretary Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, 3 – 10 June 2005
- Bishop Marek Isdebski, Evangelical Reformed Church of Poland, 6 – 10 June 2005
- Rev Matiya and Mrs Mariya Nkhoma, General Secretary, Livingstonia Synod CCAP, Malawi, 1 – 3 June 2005
- Dr Douglas Lungu, from Malawi, 27 June 2005
- Mr Martin and Mrs Dharmika Christie, Gujarat Christian Service Society, India, 19-21 September 2005
- Rev Daniel Reyes, Clerk of Levante Presbytery, Spanish Evangelical Church, 3 January 2006

- Rev Tibor and Mrs Anna Nagy, from Romania, 26 January – 4 February 2006
- Dr Anne-Marie Kool, Papa College, Hungary, 9 – 13 March 2006

### THE HOME BASE

100. We convey our deep appreciation to our team of executive and administrative staff who work with great diligence and commitment in what continues to be a very busy office. At present the executive staff includes an Overseas Secretary, a Mission Education Officer/Asia Secretary and a Personnel Officer Overseas. The Administrative Staff is comprised of a Senior Administrative Officer (part-time), a Deputy Senior Administrative Officer with special responsibilities for financial affairs, and a Senior Secretary with special responsibilities for mission education. There is also a Junior Secretary (part-time), a Junior Secretary/Receptionist, and at the time of writing we are seeking to appoint a new Senior Secretary with special responsibilities for mission personnel.

101. Once again the Board of Mission Overseas is very grateful for the ongoing support of the **Presbyterian Women's Association** (PWA) whose office bearers and Executive Committee members continue to contribute faithfully to the work of the Board. In 2005 the Annual Grant made by PWA to the work of the Board was £220,000. We commend the PWA for their enthusiasm and commitment to the work of our Church in overseas mission, and thank the members of the Association for the manner in which they take to their hearts our overseas personnel, offering them prayerful and practical support.

102. Aside from the full-time staff in the Mission Overseas Office, many members of the Board willingly sacrifice of their time, energy and gifts to serve on the Board's four Assembly Committees or four Board Committees. A special word of thanks is extended to the **Resources Working Group** which, following the establishing of the Board's future priorities, has worked with great enthusiasm and commitment to develop the future structure, membership and governance of the Board. We are grateful to all who, on behalf of the Board over the past year, have attended consultations with partner Churches, visited missionaries in their country of service and spoken in Congregations of our Church about the work overseas.

103. While the General Assembly is still to consider resolutions relating to the future structures of the Board, and not wishing to be presumptuous, we wish to record our appreciation of those who have served as conveners of the present Assembly Committees.

104. **Maureen Patterson** has had a long-standing involvement with the Board of Mission Overseas, both as a representative of the Presbyterian Women's Association and, since 2000, as Convener of the **Europe and Middle East Committee**. Maureen brought to this convenership a growing experience of Church life in Eastern Europe, regularly sharing with the Committee helpful insights on mission in the European context. From time to time she represented our Church at partner Church consultations and conferences and was much appreciated for the encouragement she gave to our missionary personnel. We express our deep gratitude for all that Maureen has contributed to the overseas work of our Church as a Board member and Assembly Committee Convener,

not least in more recent times when she has been more than busy in her role as Acting Executive Secretary of the Presbyterian Women's Association.

105. Back in the early days of the Europe and Middle East Committee, two agents were appointed to assist with the building and maintaining of partner Church relationships. **Rev John Kirkpatrick** focused on Eastern Europe, and for a time was also involved in the European Area Committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). He was instrumental in helping numerous PCI Congregations to set up twinning arrangements. **Rev John Seawright** took special interest in the Middle East, extending to the work of Jews for Jesus in France and the ministry of the Jerusalem Church, Hamburg, much aided by his proficiency in German and French. We are indebted for the expertise and insights both of these agents brought to the Europe and Middle East Committee

106. Over the past two years, **Rev Stephen Richmond** has very regularly made the journey from Donegal to Belfast to convene meetings of the **Africa, Caribbean and Latin America Committee**. Stephen brought to this role a varied and growing experience of mission in cross-cultural settings, at one time having spent a year in Kenya, serving in Nakuru, Kenya with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. We express our deep gratitude to Stephen for the way in which he guided the Committee through its business and for his ongoing commitment to the work of the Board.

107. **Rev John Hanna** came to the convenership of the **Asia Committee** in 2002 with a rich experience of mission in Asia. John, together with his wife Joan, served in Singapore from 1982 to 1989 and in Timor, Indonesia from 1991 to 1995. John's interest in the overall work of the Board, and in particular on the continent of Asia, continued during his convenership as he drew on his overseas experience to guide the Committee in its decision making. John represented the Board on the British and Irish Amity Teachers' Group (BIATG), and as an observer on the China Forum, frequently travelling across the water to attend meetings. He has also been a key member of the team involved in the Board's recent review process. We express our deep gratitude for John's commitment to the overseas mission of our Church and we look forward to his future involvement in the life of the Board.

108. As we anticipate the work of the Asia Committee drawing to a close, we want to express our deep appreciation to **Nigel Eves**, who has combined his role as Mission Education Officer with that of **Asia Secretary** over the past ten years. In his previous employment in business, Nigel had many opportunities to travel, not least to East Asia. Over the years he has built an ever increasing knowledge of the area and developed meaningful relationships with partner Church leaders and offered pastoral support to missionaries serving in Asia. While Nigel's involvement in the Asian context will undoubtedly continue, we want to acknowledge with much gratitude the way in which he has served as secretary of the Asia Committee with faithfulness and diligence.

109. We continue to be indebted to the Board's Pastoral Advisers, Very Rev Dr John Ross and Dr Moreen Gordon, for the commitment, wisdom and experience that they bring to this role. The past year has seen the introduction and/or further development of a number of components of the Board's **Pastoral Care Model** for all mission personnel serving with the Board:-

- Refinement of both pre-departure and returning medical procedures for all mission personnel including teams and Volunteers in Mission.
- Introduction of pre-departure language learning, where appropriate teaching can be accessed either while candidates are still resident in Ireland or by sending candidates to a suitable language school outside of Ireland.
- Refinement of internal debriefing process to include all Volunteers in Mission on completion of assignment.
- Introduction of appropriate PECS or POCVA screening for teams travelling overseas during 2006.
- Expansion of the Training Day for Board of Mission Overseas Teams (and the wider Church) to include Health & Safety, Spiritual Wellbeing and Keeping Healthy, in addition to Child Protection in a Cross-Cultural Setting and Personal Security.

110. We continue to be encouraged by the ongoing commitment of our members to support the work of mission in a variety of ways. We record our thanks to individuals and Congregations that have very faithfully provided financial support through the United Appeal, and we appreciate all that the **United Appeal Board** does to ensure that the target of honour for the total appeal is reached each year.

111. The Board is glad to help individuals, Congregations and other mission boards and organisations to identify **special projects** from a wide range of partner Church activities. On the understanding that United Appeal targets have been met, the Board continues to offer the service of channelling funds from 'extra mile' giving, ensuring that, where appropriate, a refund of tax paid by the donor is received under the Gift Aid scheme. Once again, we express our appreciation to those who organised and contributed to:

112. **The PWA's Birthday Thank Offering 2004/2005** which took a combined home and overseas focus raising a total of £52,827 for the extensive refurbishment of missionary residences. Even before all the funds were collected this work was able to move ahead quickly and is now completed. To date the 2005/2006 Birthday Thank Offering has raised £12,000 for the theological training and family support of two Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan, and for the Women's Ministry Programme at Zomba Theological College.

113. **The Young Women's Group's project** In 2004/2005 the Young Women's Group's Home Project raised £7,000 as it shared with the PWA in the refurbishment work on the Board's missionary residences. Their overseas project raised a further £7,000 for the support of student nurses and also the Safe Motherhood Programme at Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi. The 2005/2006 project has raised £5,000 for the Darfur region of Western Sudan and funds will be handed over to Christian Aid at the YWG's May conference.

114. The Youth and Children's project, which in 2004/2005 was entitled 'Helping Hands', focused on the expansion of the Church's social ministry in Healthcare and to support Sunday School and Youth work in the Christian Church in Sumba (GKS), Indonesia. It has raised £88,710. The 2005/2006 'Yes!

Tak! Da!’ Project, in partnership with Scripture Union, will help to develop two centres for children and young people, one in Ukraine and the other in Russia.

115. **The Junior Boys’ Brigade Appeal** for 2004/05 which was entitled, ‘Get Well Soon’ raised £20,000. £3,000 will go to support the work of five Presbyterian Hospitals in Malawi, with £5,000 being given to the International Extension work of the Boys’ Brigade. The Junior Boys’ Brigade Appeal launched for 2005/2006 will be to help the Evangelical Church in Halmahera (GMIH), Indonesia to replace two motor boats destroyed in communal violence. These will be used for reaching remote areas and isolated Christian communities. The boats will cost £8,500 each, with a further substantial donation going to the international work of Boys’ Brigade.

116. The Board of Mission Overseas ended 2005 with a surplus of £176,289 on its current account, compared with the accumulated surplus of £113,284 at the end of 2004. We are once again indebted to the Board’s Finance Officer Overseas, Mervyn Whittle, for his ongoing commitment to monitoring income and expenditure, and finalising budgets and accounts. We also express our thanks to the staff of the Financial Secretary’s Office for their support and guidance, and pay special tribute to Stewart McCullough who in 2006 resigned from the role of Convener of the Finance Committee. Stewart brought to this role a wealth of experience in matters of both mission and finance. We are indebted to him for his long and devoted service to the Committee.

117. Our membership of Global Connections enables us to keep abreast of new thinking and initiatives in world mission. In the past year we have been represented at a number of their forums and conferences examining a broad range of mission related issues. Additionally, we continue to attend as observers at forums of the Churches’ Commission on Mission (CCOM). As members of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS) we are provided with further opportunities to reflect upon mission.

118. In conclusion, we give all praise and thanks to God for guiding and sustaining the Board over this past year as we have sought to glorify God through serving our Church as it engages in mission beyond the shores of Ireland.

## APPENDIX A

In the main report most of the names of missionaries have not been mentioned but their names, spheres of service and years of commissioning are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

### BRAZIL

James & Heather Cochrane	1996	IPIB National Mission in Cruzeta and Natal – on home assignment
Naomi Keefe	2000/2004	Outreach programme, IPB, Casa Caiada, Olinda

### CHINA

One missionary

**INDIA**

Linda Jackson 1996 Woodstock School, Mussoorie

**INDONESIA**

Mervyn McCullagh 1998 Educational and Community Development,  
GKS/STIE, Sumba

Barry McCroskery 2004 International Partner Relations & Youth Ministry, GMT, Timor

**KENYA**

Stephen & Angelina Cowan 1985/9 Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Tuum

Naomi Martin 1991 Children's Ministry, PCEA, Kambui

Derek & Linda Roulston 1998 Outreach & Development work, PCEA, Galana, on home assignment

Andrew & Clerah Clenaghan 1999 Outreach & Development work, PCEA, Zombe

Gary & Mary Reid 2000 Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Limuru Presbytery.

**MALAWI**

Margaret Young 1995 St Luke's Hospital, Malosa

Diane Cusick 1995 Women's Ministry, Zomba Theological College

Clare McIntyre 1997 Karonga Girls' Secondary School – on home assignment/study leave

Stephen & Ruth McCracken 1999 Zomba Theological College

John & Rosemary Hanson 1999 Chaplain, CCAP - Blantyre Synod

Shirley Stronge 2002 Ekwendeni Nursing School

David & Maggie Steele 2002 Parish Ministry/Chaplain, CCAP Livingstonia Synod

Maureen Stevenson 2002 David Gordon Memorial Hospital, Livingstonia

Michelle Evans 2003 Bandawe Girls' Secondary School – on home assignment

Andrew & Debbie Soye 2003 CCAP Blantyre Synod Projects Office

Robin & Helen Quinn 2004 Lay Training Centre, Ekwendeni

**ROMANIA**

Csaba & Ilona Veres 2001/1993 Youth and Children's Ministry, Cluj

Richard Lynas 2002 Bonus Pastor Foundation, Cluj.

**FRANCE**

Gordon & Sandra Campbell 1989 Free Faculty of Reformed Theology, Aix-en-Provence, on home assignment

**GREAT BRITAIN**

Christopher & Nivedita Macwan 1989 Ministry among Asians in Wembley, London

Short term missionaries serving for a minimum of two years, are supported in overseas locations. Their names and spheres of service are as follows -

**JAMAICA**

Heather Lennox 2002 Cornwall Area Council of the United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

**KENYA**

Norman & Pauline Kennedy 2000 Christian literature distribution, in co-operation with Africa Inland Mission

**MALAWI**

Alistair McCracken 2004 Henry Henderson Institute Secondary School (HHI), Blantyre

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

Susan Clarke 1999 Women's Ministry, Prague, on home assignment

**SPAIN**

Derek & Jane French 2000 Evangelism & Christian Training, IEE, Valencia

Volunteers in Mission serve for a minimum of six months and for up to two years. Their names and spheres of service are as follows -

**KENYA**

\*Grenville & Georgina Hopkinson 2005 Outreach & Development work, PCEA, Galana

**MALAWI**

\*Jim & Ruth Campbell 2005 Acting Dean/Lecturer at Livingstonia Theological College and nursing at Ekwendeni Hospital



**NEPAL**

Jenny Fell 2005 Kathmandu International Study Centre

**ROMANIA**

\*Jenny Hamilton 2005 AKSZA Mission, Cluj

**INDIA**

\*Clara Anderson 2005 Archivist in Gujarat  
James & Willi Barton 1996 Education and Counselling  
1988/2004

Candidates for long-term service:

**NEPAL**

#Joe & Janet Campbell

**CENTRAL ASIA**

#Graham & Pat Connor

\*Appointed 2005/2006

#Received missionary call March 2006

**APPENDIX B****PARTNER CHURCHES & MISSIONS**

We work together with partner Churches and United Missions and we list below those in leadership with their respective positions:

**BRAZIL**

Rev A Pereira President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev C de Lacerda Executive Secretary, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev S Silveira Vice-President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev R Brasileiro President, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

Rev L B Morias Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

**CHINA**

Rev S J Cao President & General Secretary (Acting), China Christian Council

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

Rev P Cerny President, Church of the Brethren

Mr K Fojtik General Secretary, Church of the Brethren

Rev P Smetana Moderator, Synodical Council of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

**FRANCE**

Pasteur M Manoel President, Eglise Réformée de France (ERF)  
 Pasteur B de Cazenove General Secretary (ERF)

**HUNGARY & ROMANIA**

Bishop G Bolcskei Presiding Bishop, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary  
 Rev B Tamas International & Inter-Church Relations, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary  
 Bishop G Pap Transylvanian District of the Reformed Church of Romania  
 Bishop L Tokes Kiralyhagomellek District of the Reformed Church of Romania

**INDIA**

Most Rev J V Mal Moderator of the CNI Synod  
 Rev Enos das Pradhan General Secretary of the CNI Synod  
 Rt Rev V M Malaviya Bishop of the Gujarat Diocese CNI  
 Rt Rev S R Cutting Bishop of the Agra Diocese, CNI

**INDONESIA**

Rev Dr A Ranoh Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor  
 Rev M Karmany General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor  
 Rev L P Duan Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera  
 Rev M D Boediman General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera  
 Rev D Umbu Dingu General Secretary, Christian Church in Sumba

**JAMAICA**

Rt Rev Dr R Hewitt Moderator, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands  
 Rev Colin Cowan General Secretary, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

**KENYA**

Rev Dr D Githii Moderator, Presbyterian Church of East Africa  
 Rev S Muriguh Secretary General, Presbyterian Church of East Africa

**MALAWI**

*Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)*  
 Rt Rev Dr F Chingota Moderator, CCAP General Assembly  
 Rev Y A Chienda Secretary General, CCAP General Assembly  
 Rev M M Banda Moderator, Synod of Livingstonia  
 Rev H M Nkhoma General Secretary, Synod of Livingstonia  
 Rev M Kadawati Moderator, Synod of Blantyre

Rev D Gunya	General Secretary, Synod of Blantyre
Very Rev C Chimkoka	Moderator, Synod of Nkhoma
Rev Dr W Kawale	General Secretary, Synod of Nkhoma

**MYANMAR (BURMA)**

Rev Dr Demgthuama	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Myanmar
Rev Dr Lalengzauva	Administrative Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Myanmar

**NEPAL**

Ms J Collins	Executive Director, United Mission to Nepal
Mr G Hafvenstein	President, Board of Directors, United Mission to Nepal

**PAKISTAN**

Elder S F Khan	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev S Alam	Vice Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev H David	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev Dr M Kamil	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

**POLAND**

Bishop Marek Izdebski	Evangelical Reformed Church in Poland
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**PORTUGAL**

Mrs Eunice Leite	President, Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Portugal
Dr David Valente	General Secretary, Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Portugal

**SPAIN**

Mr J Cortés	President, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church
Rev A Abad	Secretary, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church

**SUDAN**

Rev J K Dung	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Malakal
Rev S O Awow	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Malakal
Rev P M Nyak	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Akobo
Rev O L Daky	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Akobo

**THAILAND**

Rev Dr S Kimhachandra	General Secretary, Church of Christ in Thailand
Rev P Juanchaipoom	Director, Lamp of Thailand

**ZAMBIA**

Rev L Nyirenda

Acting General Secretary, CCAP Synod of Zambia

Rev L Nyirenda

Moderator, CCAP Synod of Zambia

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly approve the new structure for the Board of Mission Overseas as outlined in paragraphs 1 to 8 of the report.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the signing of the Project Agreement in November 2005 that opens the way for UMN to continue its work in Nepal, and continue to pray for the Nepali Church serving the people of Nepal in their search for a peaceful settlement between the King, democratic political parties and the Maoists.
4. That the General Assembly acknowledge the importance of supporting our partner Churches in minority Christian communities in Asia who often experience persecution, especially in India, Pakistan, Indonesia, China, Thailand and Myanmar.
5. That the General Assembly give thanks for new initiatives in Spain and Portugal, while continuing to develop existing relationships with partner Churches across the Continent of Europe.
6. That the General Assembly recognise the need to become more fully aware of the economic and political pressures and persecution suffered by Christians in the Near and Middle East and recommend that the Board works to encourage Christian witness in the region.
7. That the General Assembly continue to urge the Irish and British Governments to strive for real and lasting peace and reconciliation in Sudan and encourage our Church to support prayerfully and practically the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS) as it seeks to make basic provision for those returning to their homes in Southern Sudan.
8. That the General Assembly, recognising 2006 as the fortieth anniversary of our partnership with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, give thanks to God for all that has been achieved in this and our other long-standing partnerships with the Church in Malawi and Sudan.
9. That the General Assembly, giving thanks that we have opportunities to share in and learn from the outreach initiatives of the Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB) are ready to explore further what it means to pursue a policy of reciprocity in mission with the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.
10. That the General Assembly give thanks for the continued generous support of the World Development Appeal and the development work it enables.
11. That the General Assembly give thanks for the generosity of members of our Church to the Special Appeal in response to the Pakistan Earthquake and the widespread food crisis in Africa and commend Christian Aid, Tearfund and our partner Churches for their efforts in meeting both the immediate and longer term needs of those affected.
12. That the General Assembly encourage the Board to continue its development of 'mission engagement' strategies and the provision of

appropriate resources that will enable congregational leaders to encourage more of their members to be actively and effectively engaged in the task of mission overseas.

13. That the General Assembly recognise the ongoing work of the Board to develop its Pastoral Care Model, including the introduction of more effective screening, training, medical, and debriefing procedures for all its mission personnel.

14. That the resignations of the Conveners of the outgoing Assembly Committees – Rev John Hanna (Asia); Rev Stephen Richmond (Africa, Caribbean and Latin America); Mrs Maureen Patterson (Europe and Middle East – be accepted and that they be thanked for their services.

15. That the Rev Stephen Richmond be appointed as Convener of the Outreach Ministries Committee.

16. That the Rev Dr Gordon Campbell be appointed as Convener of the Leadership Development Committee.

17. That the Rev Peter Lyle be appointed as Convener of the Mission Involvement Committee.

18. That the Rev John Hanna be appointed Convener of the Board of Mission Overseas with effect from 8 June 2007.

19. That the Board of Mission Overseas, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 279 of the Code as follows:

### **OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**

#### **Anent Pars 61(c), 97(c), 115(1), (2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 61(c), 97(c), 115(1), (2) of the Code the words “Overseas Board” be deleted and the words “Board of Mission Overseas” be substituted in their place.

S JOHN DIXON

### **OVERTURE TRANSMITTED**

#### **Anent Par 279(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 279(1) of the Code be deleted and that the following be substituted in its place: “The Board shall consist of the Moderator and Clerk of the Assembly, the Convener and Secretary of the Board, the Personnel Officer (Overseas), the Finance Officer (Overseas), four Presbyterian Women’s Association Office Bearers, the Convener of the Church Relations Committee, the Deputy Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry, one Board of Mission in Ireland representative, one Young Women’s Group representative, one Youth and Children’s Ministry Board representative, together with three persons, including at least one woman, nominated by each Presbytery, seven representative members of the PWA Executive Committee and the Assembly Conveners and members of working committees under the supervision of the Board.”

# BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND (BMI)

Convener: Rev Dr G CONNOR

Secretary: Rev JH ROBINSON

1. A crossroads is a dangerous place to stand or remain parked for any length of time. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has largely been standing at such a place for the last decade and more. The two roads ahead are sign-posted “maintenance” and “mission”. We have repeatedly taken the choice to march along the “mission” road, yet, for many of us, remaining at the crossroads has seemed the safest option.

2. The reports you read under the aegis of this Board contain serious steps to help PCI begin the journey of faith on the mission road. It is true that some Congregations have been pioneers on this road for many years, but BMI is taking seriously the General Assembly’s call for us to be the lead Board in mission in Ireland. We are delighted that other relevant Boards of our Church stand alongside us in this and that a number of Presbyteries have shown their willingness to be part of this new adventure during a time when we shall be intentionally missional. Our partnership with Presbyteries is crucial, and we were happy again to send to Presbyteries part of the Home and Irish Mission report, thereby encouraging serious consideration in the courts of our Church prior to the Assembly. As we listen to feedback from Presbyteries we are helped in seeking the way forward for mission in Ireland.

3. This year BMI has been looking at a number of issues reflected in the report. As promised we bring this year to the Assembly a more detailed report concerning our future strategy at congregational level throughout Ireland, along with resolutions fleshing out the skeleton strategy report received last year. We hope there will be serious debate on this at this year’s Assembly. This is to be seen alongside the development plan in the Dublin and Munster Presbytery, where we are severely under resourced.

4. The five Panels under the direction of the Committee on Congregational Life are now up and running. They are beginning to produce material which we hope will be of service at congregational level. Again we appreciate feedback on the material distributed to Ministers or found on the website. We continue to want to offer an important service to the vibrancy and effectiveness of our Congregations.

5. We have been spending time with our “field” staff in relation to the working environment. We are also beginning to roll out the priorities in last year’s report within our own staff in BMI.

6. Our Urban Mission Panel continues its work in relation to Urban Mission Congregations and Development Moderators. One of the great challenges and opportunities in Ireland today is the urbanisation of our island. PCI needs to be ready to meet those challenges and we believe resources should follow missional opportunities in the large urban communities on our island.

The Shankill Road area is one such Urban Mission opportunity. We are currently working alongside the relevant Presbyteries to develop a missional plan for that large community. We are also pleased that the current Nightlight team has been enlarged and that many local Congregations are doing a similar work in their towns and cities.

7. The Board thanks all those who are working in the field in its name or indirectly through its grants – Deaconesses, Home Mission Ministers, Irish Mission Workers, Urban Mission Workers and others. It asks the Assembly to continue to pray for all those in the front line of mission. We are greatly indebted also to our administrative and personnel support staff, they have shouldered a huge burden in the last two years in helping us begin to work together as a new Board of the Church.

8. On a personal note, I am greatly indebted to all those who work for the Board. I have found the last two years to be stimulating, exciting, challenging, frustrating, but above all I have appreciated the great privilege in serving alongside others who have caught the vision again of being sent into Ireland as the Father sent the Son.

*The Rev RA Patton writes:*

The Board of Mission in Ireland records its profound gratitude to the Rev Dr Graham Connor for his committed and visionary leadership over the last two years. His conviction that, as a church, we must be a people in ‘mission’ rather than in ‘maintenance’ mode has been at the heart of our work. Dr Connor has made a very significant contribution at all levels and has shown his deep personal interest in all the work connected with the Board. His input to the strategic thinking cannot be overestimated – it will shape the future direction of our work for many years to come. We thank him for the commitment of time and energy as well as his many gifts of heart and mind in the service of the Church. We pray God’s blessing on him and his wife Pat in the new and challenging situation that lies ahead of them.

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

*Mrs Irene Young reports:*

1. The Committee has been acting on behalf of the Board on Personnel matters relating to the Board staff, including Deaconesses, Home and Urban Mission Ministers and Irish and Urban Mission Workers.

2. The Committee has reviewed and updated application forms for new Deaconesses and Irish Mission Workers. It has produced guidelines for application for In Service Training and Sabbatical Leave.

3. The Committee has produced policies for Board personnel on the following:-

- Compassionate Leave
- Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
- Grievance Procedures
- Maternity Leave
- Sick Pay Scheme

4. The Committee has produced Guidance for Congregations seeking an Irish Mission Worker.

5. **Personnel**

Home Mission Ministers:

The Rev William Hayes was ordained and inducted as Minister in Tullamore and Mountmellick Congregations on 22 October 2005;

The Rev Stephen Rea was inducted as Minister to the Congregation of Enniscorthy and Wexford on 25 March 2006;

The Rev Brian Savage will be inducted as Minister to the Congregations of Kells and Ervey on 28 May 2006.

Irish Mission Workers:

Mr Tom Dowling commenced studies at the Irish Bible Institute in September 2005 and will be available for service in June 2006;

Mr Stephen Wilson commenced service as an Irish Mission Worker alongside the Rev Stephen Lockington in Mullingar in August 2005;

Mr Jonathan Reid commenced service as an Irish Mission Worker in the Glens of Antrim in February 2006. Jonathan is serving alongside the Rev George Johnston in Newtowncrommelin and Carnlough/Cushendall.

Two applicants for work with the Irish Mission are progressing through the application procedure.

6. **Pastoral Care:**

The Director for Personnel, in his pastoral role, has been meeting with Home and Urban Mission Ministers and Irish and Urban Mission Workers.

7. The Joint BMI/PWA Home Personnel Committee did considerable work during the year on a long-overdue update of the General Guidelines for Service of Deaconesses (see Appendix D), together with the various policies closely based on those currently relating to Church House staff (note references to same in Appendix D). Drafts of the documents were produced, circulated to Deaconesses and the Ministers with whom they serve and amended in the light of subsequent consultations.

The BMI/PWA Home Personnel Committee brought to this important exercise a number of considerations, some of which did not always easily sit together. These were chiefly:

- A pastoral concern for the Deaconesses. In this regard, the Committee enhanced the previous provision of pastoral support and will continue to keep it under review.
- A balancing of two principles and priorities of the BMI, namely the further resourcing of busy, vibrant Congregations, which are clearly “on the move”, and the placing of personnel in situations where local resources are minimal but where opportunity and need are immense. This difficult balance will remain hard to achieve, but will be facilitated through the personal development of Deaconesses, through in-service training and sabbatical leave and through the scheme of Review and Placement as outlined. Ongoing monitoring will be necessary by the Committee, with adjustments, no doubt, being made from time to time.



**8. Thanks:**

The work of the BMI Committees depends on the dedication and good will of the Office Staff under the leadership of Nehru Dass. Thanks are expressed to Mandy, Evelyn and Elaine for their hard work and dedication.

**BMI/PWA HOME PERSONNEL**

*Mrs Maureen Patterson, Acting Executive Secretary, reports:*

**Deaconess Training**

1. Three Deaconesses, Miss Michelle McCauley, Mrs Amanda Cooper and Miss Margaret Robertson completed their training in June and received calls to serve in Ballygowan, New Row and Gardenmore, respectively.

Two Probationary Deaconesses, Mrs Josephine Montgomery and Mrs Julie Peake, are on placement in First Saintfield and Waringstown Congregations and will complete training in June 2006.

Miss Sonya McCullough commenced a one year course and Miss Larissa Mawhinney a two year course at Union Theological College in September 2005.

**Congregation Applications for a Deaconess**

2. Two applications were circulated again in March. Three Congregations were asked for further information to enable their applications to be processed.

**General Information and Policies for Serving Deaconesses**

3. A document – ‘General Information for Deaconesses Serving in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’ was agreed by the Board of Mission in Ireland on 1 March.

**Personnel Up-Date**

4. Mrs Carole O’Hara, formerly Deaconess in Duncairn and St Enochs, was appointed to cover sick leave and study leave at Royal Group of Hospitals Trust and at Belfast City Hospital Trust.

**Study Leave**

5. Miss Muriel Cromie completed a pilot scheme of the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Programme. Muriel is to be congratulated on being selected for this Programme.

**Leave of Absence**

6. Miss Kathleen Spence was granted a year out from September 2006 – September 2007 to serve on the Logos II Ship.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

*Mr Douglas Cowan, Convener, reports:*

1. During the year the committee has sought to organise the Board finances in the best way to provide the necessary structures to meet the Board's agreed objectives. We are pleased that the accounting system is now easier to understand.

2. Since 1 January 2006 the Board has been responsible for paying salaries of Deaconesses. We have had helpful discussions with representatives of the PWA Executive in order to standardise salaries and conditions for all Board staff members. Dialogue about the PWA contribution to BMI will continue on an annual basis and we are also looking at the contributions made by Congregations towards the cost of Deaconess salaries.

3. We are involved with other Board committees in setting five year and ten year plans for staff numbers and capital developments so that we can build these agreed projections into our financial budgets.

4. We are looking at different ways to finance major capital developments and have had regular discussions with the United Appeal Board on this important issue for the development of the Board's long term strategy. From 2006 we have agreed to be financed with a block grant from the United Appeal as we believe this will give us more flexibility to arrange our finances.

### **PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY LIMITED**

*Rev Sidlow McFarland, Chairman, reports:*

1. The Directors are pleased to report another very satisfactory year's progress in the work of the Society. The number of members has increased to over eight thousand and new investment exceeded £56 million during this financial year bringing the total assets to £190 million.

2. An increase in the volume of lending together with a strong rental income from our commercial property investments enabled the Society to produce a gross profit of almost £10 million. This enabled a dividend of 6.0% to have been declared on all shareholdings for the financial year ended 31 March 2006.

3. Congregations and individuals continue to make use of the very competitive borrowing facilities available for a wide range of purposes from car, house and land purchase to business expansion and bridging finance.

4. We conclude with our thanks to God for all that He has enabled us to achieve over the past year and pray for His continued blessing in the future.

### **PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

*Mr Brian Knox, Convener, reports:*

1. In addition to the stated meetings of the Committee, sub-groups from the Property Committee, using the varying experiences of its members, have visited numerous Church properties and met with many congregational representatives over the past year.

2. The following is a brief resume of the work of the Committee, since reporting to the 2005 General Assembly:

**Belfast Area***Taughmonagh*

3. Following consideration of costings which would be involved in attending to numerous maintenance/upgrading works which need to be carried out to the existing buildings at Taughmonagh, budget costings were obtained for new building on the site. It was agreed that the most appropriate way forward would be to construct a more compact and manageable new building. Upon clarification of strategy of South Belfast Presbytery, Board approval was given to proceed with this new building project.

4. Statutory Planning Approval has been issued and it is anticipated that construction work will commence in late summer 2006.

**Coleraine***Ballysally*

5. Essential upgrading of electrical installation, etc, has been completed. Discussions are ongoing regarding the proposals to provide additional storage areas, more appropriate toilet facilities and more welcoming entrance arrangements, together with works in respect of requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

**Carrickfergus**

6. Land Registry mapping problems, which had been the cause of delay in proceeding with the agreed auction in respect of land which had originally been purchased for possible Church Extension building at Marshallstown Road, have been resolved. This enabled arrangements for auction of land to proceed.

**Dublin***Mullingar*

7. Proposals are being considered regarding the possibility of providing meeting rooms and ancillary accommodation, linked to the existing Listed Church building, which is located in the centre of Mullingar. Discussions with Conservation/Planning Officers from local Council are ongoing.

**General**

8. The Committee continue to be supportive in respect of property matters throughout the work of the Board, and discussions are ongoing regarding numerous matters including Maynooth; Manse property in Tullamore; Nun's Island, Galway; Kells; Howth Manse and Church; Drogheda; Drum Manse, Cootehill; Arklow; Wexford Church and Enniscorthy Manse; Irvinestown Church; Smithborough; Waterford Church.

9. The co-operative interaction of various relevant Committees within the Board has been most encouraging for those involved in property matters.

### URBAN MISSION PANEL

*The Rev WJ Orr reports:*

1. The Panel has begun to implement the policy adopted by the Assembly in 2005 (Reports 2005, p 156 and Appendix A, p 162). The Congregation of Strand has been adopted as a pilot project, and the Panel is working with the Minister and Congregation to shape an appropriate approach to mission.

2. A guideline has been prepared to help Presbyteries assess applications from Congregations seeking 'Urban Mission' status.

3. Steps are being taken to draw up a job description etc for the post of 'Development Moderator' prior to seeking applications for the calling. Associated with this, the Panel will be exploring suitable sources of training for those called to serve in urban mission areas.

4. It was felt necessary to increase membership of the Panel, and additional names are being considered.

5. A number of members of the Panel undertook a helpful fact finding visit to innovative schemes operating under the auspices of the Church of Scotland.

### NIGHTLIGHT

*Mr John Luke, Director, reports:*

1. The street outreach work of NIGHTLIGHT is continuing in the entertainment areas of Belfast. A team of volunteers, working on rota, show Christ on the streets on Thursday night from 8 pm to 12 pm, and Friday and Saturday nights from 11 pm through to 3, 4 or even 5 am.

2. The volunteer team are committed Christians of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds who have a burden for the work of NIGHTLIGHT and who have experienced clear direction from God to become actively involved. New team members go through an application, vetting and interview process and then receive "on the job" training. The team is constantly changing as individuals' personal circumstances alter and it is always encouraging to welcome new people on board.

3. NIGHTLIGHT is based at the Kinghan Church in Botanic Avenue where team members can meet for prayer before and after the work on the streets and it also provides somewhere to bring anyone in need of help and counselling. A regular Saturday and Sunday morning (12 am to 3am) Tea Table takes place on the footpath outside the Church and this has become a great contact point.

4. Mr Luke continues to receive numerous invitations to speak to Congregations and this reflects on the high level of support and interest shown by the Church in general. In March 2003, Miss Linzie Stewart was appointed as Development Officer and has concentrated on team development and contact follow-up with the volunteer team in the Golden Mile area. Mr Brian Simons was appointed in September 2005 to "head-up" a new team working in the Odyssey Complex. Mrs Catherine Dalzell continues as Part-time Resource

Worker and in that role she has been able to produce Prayer Letters, Information Packs and Leaflets and other resource material as well as co-ordinating deputation.

5. Recent years have seen the establishment of Nightlight style teams in Magherafelt, Newcastle, Newtownards, Ballymena, and Bangor, and in Belfast with Fisherwick, Alexandra and Fitzroy Presbyterian Churches. These teams are overseen and supported at a local level and have been a great encouragement to all involved in PCI Nightlight.

6. The Nightlight Executive Committee, in consultation with Mr Luke, oversees the work of NIGHTLIGHT.

## HOME AND IRISH MISSION COMMITTEE

1. The Home and Irish Mission Committee has a clear focus on strategy, working it through at various levels and in many different areas. This year, in consultation with other appropriate 'mission' Boards, we have sought to implement the agreed principles and priorities as set out in the report "Towards a Strategy for Mission in Ireland" adopted by the 2005 General Assembly.

2. The Report 'Towards Vibrant Communities of Christ, Serving and Transforming Ireland' seeks to plot the course ahead and to recommend ways in which, as a denomination, we can implement our agreed principles and priorities. (See Appendix A – Towards 'Vibrant Communities of Christ Serving and Transforming Ireland', and Appendix B – '5-year Mission Strategy Plans at Presbytery and Congregational Levels' and Appendix C – 'Guidance for Congregations in formulating a Mission Plan'). We recognise that all of this calls for high levels of commitment at both Congregational and Presbytery level. Furthermore, we believe that the proposals are necessary if we are serious in moving beyond simply being aspirational to truly becoming outward looking and missional in focus. We are convinced that mission must be at the heart of our Church's life, embedded within our structures and that each local Congregation needs to be encouraged and resourced to engage in mission.

3. **Dublin and Munster Presbytery Strategy:** The Committee set up a Joint Working Group with the Strategy for Mission Committee of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery. We are both excited and challenged by the opportunities for mission that currently exist within the bounds of this Presbytery and we believe that now is the time to be seeking to move into new phases of development. Together we pray for the rising up of 'vibrant communities of Christ, serving and transforming Ireland'.

No two areas are the same and each will require its own approach and plan. Each church plant will be expected to eventually become self-supporting such that it grows from being a receiving church to a sending Church.

Among the Board's priorities reported to the 2005 General Assembly was "going out to be with people where they are". "Where people are" in the Republic of Ireland is in the Greater Dublin Area, the East Coast, then the cities of Cork, Limerick and Galway.

4. On this basis therefore, we propose that in the next 2-3 years we will explore development in the following areas:

**Cork area:** We propose a ministry team with the remit of exploring a Church plant in this city, the next largest to Dublin in population.

**North County Dublin:** This area has grown significantly and we believe that there is real opportunity to develop a Church plant.

**Greystones/Arklow:** With the continued development and growth of Greystones town and potential in the Wicklow/Arklow area, we propose that the union of these two Congregations should be dissolved. We recommend that Greystones becomes a separate charge and that Arklow is permitted to call a Minister who will also have the responsibility to assess the needs and potential for development in the area.

**Limerick:** We propose helping with additional staff in Limerick.

5. In the medium term we see other locations – Sligo, Dublin, Navan, Portlaoise, as well as Galway - as areas for development.

6. In citing these, we nevertheless realise that, under the hand of God, other opportunities will arise in the next 10 years. We recognise that the proposals agreed between the Board and the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster do not exclude other possibilities at all; rather, these are the areas that we presently discern will be ripe for development.

7. **Shankill Road area:** Appreciating the particular challenges that the Church faces in this area, representatives of the Board met with representatives of the Presbyteries of North Belfast and South Belfast and the local Congregations. Some principles and options have been set out. At the time of writing, these principles and options are still to be considered by the Presbyteries and local Kirk Sessions.

8. **Alternating Ministries Committee/Mission Partnership Forum:** The Committee accepted a recommendation that the Presbyterian/Methodist Alternating Ministries Committee be renamed ‘The Mission Partnership Forum’ and that its brief be widened to explore all areas of potential co-operation in mission between the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland. (See Appendix E).

9. The Alternating Ministries Committee also initiated a fact-finding event between the Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian Church in the Connaught area with a view to resourcing the work as effectively as possible in the area. The serving of small rural Congregations, the possibility of working more closely together in Ballina and the potential for growth in Sligo town were among the issues that arose.

10. The Methodist Church in Ireland requested that a representative from our Church sit on its Church Development Board. Mrs Cherry Poynton was appointed as our representative.

11. The Home and Irish Mission Committee expresses thanks to all who have helped with its work during the past year. In particular, we thank Rev Dr Graham Connor and Rev Harry Robinson for their contributions to the development of strategy. During the next year, the Committee wishes to progress the work in different directions, including the training of those involved. The prayers of the whole Church are sought for the days to come.

ROY PATTON, Convener

## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

1. Among other things, the five panels are working on material relating to the training of worship leaders, Church membership, ways to facilitate fellowship, evangelistic materials for use at weddings and funerals and the encouragement of every-member ministry.

2. The Committee has taken over responsibility for Divine Healing matters and the Ministry Panel has asked that the person designated by them to look after this area of work be made a member of the Congregational Life Committee. A resolution is appended.

3. The study booklet "Is Your Church Alive and Well?" is now available and it is hoped it will be a widely used. It will be especially useful in a small group setting. It is hoped to make as many materials as possible available through the BMI website.

4. An information-gathering questionnaire has been sent out to three Presbyteries (East Belfast, Dublin & Munster and Tyrone). The information received is being analysed to see if a profile of the whole church can be extrapolated from it.

### DIRECTOR FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

*The Rev David Montgomery, Director for Congregational Life, reports:*

This first year has been one of responding, observing and learning: responding to the many and varied invitations as they come in; observing the different stages Congregations are at in terms of developing their corporate witness; and learning from the sheer variety of contexts in which our PCI Congregations are placed. I have visited 56 different Congregations and covered a further 33 through various regional conferences and events, in 17 of the 21 Presbytery areas. Four Congregations have so-far undertaken the Natural Church Development Audit as part of a longer-term envisioning process, and much of my work has been, in line with the Board's Strategy, encouraging Congregations to become increasingly focussed on mission and to draw up a mission plan whereby they can set out priorities for the future.

I am finding the work enjoyable, challenging and rewarding, involving many dilemmas, many laughs and many, many miles. I have grown in my admiration and respect for so many of my colleagues dealing day and daily with the joys and heartaches of leading God's people. In the first year it has been impossible to prioritise, but now that I have a flavour for the work, I am in more of a position to start to 'practise what I preach' and set my own goals for the years ahead. With that in mind, I would like Congregations who think they may want to use me in the near future to contact me as soon as possible, and to be patient as it may involve scheduling in time some months in advance. I want to be of use for Congregations who are at a particularly significant time of development, and therefore would prefer to come for a sustained period rather than just do 'one-offs'.

I would draw your attention to the possibility of any of the following, where I may be of use, if they are organised as part of an ongoing process of vision-casting and change:

- Undertaking a Spiritual Audit of the Congregation
- Session Conferences
- Congregational Weekends
- Special Leaders' Meetings

Usually the best way to begin is with a series of conversations, so feel free to contact me at the BMI Office.

In addition, I continue to work alongside the five panels of the Committee as we seek to both research the resources and materials which are out there, and start to produce relevant and appropriate resources of our own.

A visit to several Church of Scotland parishes in January was useful in observing different models which may be of help here.

I want to thank the Conveners for their help, the Revs Harold Boyce, Dr Graham Connor and Harry Robinson for their ongoing advice and wisdom, and I continue to value the prayers of the church as this role develops.

HAROLD BOYCE, Convener

## EDUCATION AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

1. In the past year, the Committee has continued to seek effective ways to encourage and support PCI members around the island to become “vibrant communities of Christ” and to reach out to those around them with the good news of the Gospel of Salvation. The Committee has developed the channels already in place to communicate more directly the Board’s vision for mission, the work of its Committees and Panels and also to give information about mission-linked events and situations in Ireland.

2. The former Home Mission Prayerlink has grown into Prayerfocus which provides monthly information for prayer in relation to mission and outreach in Ireland. Prayerfocus is available on the new website at [www.presbyterianireland.org/bmi](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/bmi)

3. Pending a decision by the General Board on Church publications, it was decided for 2006 to continue to publish *The Christian Irishman* bi-monthly, with a more descriptive title, ‘Reachout’, and a more reader-friendly format. The publication now focuses on the whole work of the Board of Mission in Ireland and includes articles to encourage PCI members to engage in mission in their own locality.

4. The Committee has decided to develop a series of short DVDs on various aspects of mission in Ireland. The first of these on May Street’s urban mission has now been completed.

CHERRY POYNTON, Convener



## SHANKILL ROAD MISSION

1. The Rev Bill Campbell continues to head up the work of the Mission in an area with more than its fair share of the common problems of the inner-city: the malign influence of the paramilitary organisations, drug and alcohol abuse, one-parent families, teenage pregnancies, high unemployment.
2. The Mission continues to operate a popular all-day cafeteria serving nutritious meals and snacks at a reasonable price; Christian literature is on display. There are also men's and women's second-hand clothing shops.
3. The Mission's Outreach Worker, Albert Lofthouse, resigned on health grounds in December. We thank him for his work. The Committee is currently considering what kind of worker to appoint for the future.
4. The Committee believes the time has come for change. A number of radical proposals have been discussed. However, it is recognised that any new initiative must be carried through as part of an overall strategy for the Shankill Road area and in co-operation with the other Presbyterian Churches. Accordingly representatives of BMI have been in discussion with the Kirk Sessions of all six Shankill Road Congregations and also with the two Presbyteries regarding plans for the future.

IAN HART, Convener

### APPENDIX A

#### TOWARDS "VIBRANT COMMUNITIES OF CHRIST SERVING AND TRANSFORMING IRELAND"

##### The Vision:

Imagine a local Church which had become a legend in its own lifetime; a topic of conversation in the local community; known for its interest in the lives of non-church-goers; admired for its concern for their issues; famed for being a group of ordinary everyday people who have time for others and who care enough to drop their masks and tell of their trust in Jesus Christ.

Imagine a local Church which cuts back on its ambitious building project so as to employ a Family Worker to serve and reach the missing generation.

Imagine a local Church cancelling all its mid-week recreational activities for believing adults, thrusting them into local clubs and societies in order to enjoy the company of unconverted neighbours and earn the right to speak to them of Jesus.

Imagine a local Church whose Congregational Committee is uncomplaining at the cosmetic collateral damage incurred by hosting a Youth Club aimed at the unchurched.

Imagine a local Church with no building (and no plans for one!), reaping the rewards of meeting in a venue that outsiders can enter with ease and sit in comfort in cushioned chairs.

These could be some of the results of local Churches becoming "vibrant communities of Christ serving and transforming Ireland".

This vision of vibrant communities of Christ serving and transforming Ireland was placed before and endorsed by last year's General Assembly. Only 8 words, but if taken to heart and acted upon our Church would change and keep on changing until it truly was the salt, light and leaven it was always intended to be. Fittingly, the word "Christ" comes at the centre of the statement, reinforcing the fact that the Church is Christ's not ours; to be ordered by his priorities rather than our preferences; to go where and in the way he commands not constricted by an agenda we find comfortable and convenient. First comes the expressive word "vibrant", with its resonances of life, vitality, energy and growth. Last but not least is "Ireland", reminding us that our missional priority is to our own island, an island changed beyond recognition in regard to its gospel opportunities and challenges in our generation, but rebuking us for being extravagant with our resources in the North East, yet absent from many expanding towns in the South, East and West.

For some, the vision of their local Church becoming a vibrant community of Christ serving and transforming Ireland is a desire they have held in their hearts for as long as they can remember. For others, this is a nightmare scenario, destroying the church they have known, loved and served all their lives.

The conviction of the Strategy Steering Group is that local Churches must, simply must, become outward-looking and missional in focus, for these reasons at least:

Christ, the Head of the Church, has entrusted his Body with the privilege and obligation of going "into all the world". Less will not do.

Churches whose focus has become the meeting of the needs and preferences of those "within" will inevitably dwindle and die as those "within" age and depart.

Further, Congregations need to reorientate towards those "outside" some years before they are staring closure in the face; while there are sufficient numbers and resources to make an impact.

For these reasons, the Steering Group brought to last year's General Assembly the vision of "vibrant communities of Christ serving and transforming Ireland" and set out some of the principles and priorities necessary to make that vision a reality. These included:

- those presently outside taking precedence over those inside
- people taking precedence over plant
- teams taking the place of solo artistes
- leadership becoming truly corporate and courageous
- going out to be with people where they are
- proclaiming God's Good News with sensitivity, courage and confidence
- a preparedness to be flexible
- an insistence that resources – human and financial - follow priorities
- studied outworking of the principle of the strong supporting the weak

The Steering Group was heartened by the debate leading to the Assembly's formal approval of its proposals as speaker after speaker acknowledged the impact they would have and the changes they would necessitate if worked through at every level.

### **Implementation – An Overview**

Since last Assembly, the Steering Group has turned its attention to implementation, acutely aware that examples abound of exciting, Biblically-based principles being adopted by the Assembly but little or nothing altering as a result.

For instance, back in 1994, at the instigation of the Strategy for Mission Committee, the General Assembly stated its belief, “that since the fundamental unit of the PCI is the Presbytery each Presbytery should have a strategy for mission within its own bounds” (Minutes of General Assembly, 1994, p 78). The Steering Group, quite independently of the 1994 Report, arrived at the same conclusion, convinced that each Presbytery has to find more efficient mechanisms for dealing with routine business, thereby freeing up time for consideration of matters which are both urgent and vitally important, including the devising and reviewing of a Presbytery-wide strategy for mission. Therefore, some 12 years later, we reiterate the 1994 aspiration, but propose further that a strategy for mission be required of each Presbytery within a realistic timeframe, say, by March 2008.

Further, in 1994, and in response to the same Report, the General Assembly also agreed, “that since every Congregation is unique it should work out its own strategies for mission to the particular community in which it is situated in consultation with the Presbytery and should present this strategy to the Presbytery and account for its fulfilment” (Minutes of General Assembly, 1994, p 78).

Again, working independently, we find ourselves drawn to the same conclusion and propose that this be required of each Congregation within an achievable timeframe, say, by March 2009. (Appendix B gives details as to how a local Congregation can draw up and implement a 5-year strategic plan.)

Clearly, the strategic thinking of each Presbytery must mesh with that of the local Congregations who comprise it and vice versa. Anything other would result in chaos and confusion. (We offer in Appendix C a mechanism for achieving a co-ordinated approach.)

### **Implementation at Presbytery level**

The Steering Group envisages a Presbytery 5-year strategic plan as a short document (not a “tome” to cure insomnia!) and sees its drawing up as a liberating ‘gospel’ exercise in working collaboratively rather than a burdensome duty, fraught with dilemmas and difficulties, producing a few winners and many losers. Certainly, some clear, reasoned choices will have to be made. Everywhere cannot be a priority! ‘If everything is a priority, nothing is a priority.’ Identification of situations where need and opportunity are greatest and where there is currently over-resourcing and under-resourcing will have to be made. Some Presbyteries will have within their membership the knowledge and skills necessary to undertake this task. Others may lack these resources and we suggest that in those Presbyteries suitable members be identified for training in a scheme run under the auspices of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

### **Implementation at Congregational level**

Again, some Congregations/Charges will have within their leadership those skilled and trained to devise and implement strategic plans (as per, or similar to, that set out in Appendix B). For those not having such a resource to hand, we are suggesting that each Presbytery should identify some people with the required latent skills who can be further trained if necessary.

### **Necessary Skills for facilitation**

Since this is not an exercise in imposing management techniques upon a spiritual endeavour, those who could assist Presbyteries and Congregations should not necessarily come from the arena of management or management consultancy. Above all, they should be noted for their active trust in Christ, their warm adherence to the local Church and their long-held desire to see Christ's name known and honoured in the local community and beyond. Clarity of thinking and the capacity to assist others to think with equal clarity are the additional essential attributes. To such members tools and training may be given so that clear, concise and coherent 5-year plans emerge.

### **Merging the Vision at Presbytery and Congregational Levels**

#### **We see this being achieved in 3 ways:**

(1) Presbyteries will require each Congregation/Charge within its bounds to draw up and submit for approval its strategic plan for mission, by not later, we suggest, than March 2009.

(2) Presbytery will thereafter hear from each Congregation/Charge as to how its initial 5-year strategic plan (and subsequent 5-year plans) has developed, what insights and gains have been achieved and what may comprise the next 5-year strategic plan.

Clearly, few Presbyteries, if any, could sustain this programme alongside the current processes of 'Consultation'. We therefore suggest that a review of the 'Consultation' process be undertaken, giving consideration to converging the two procedures in such a way as to be (a) non-threatening, (b) not cumbersome, and (c) consciously focused on the mission and service of the Congregation/Charge.

### **The role of the Union Commission**

The Union Commission will resource ministry, taking account of the overall missional strategy for Ireland approved by the General Assembly. Accordingly, it is expected that the Union Commission will normally only give Leave to Call to Charges with Presbytery-approved, 5-year missional strategy plans. (It would follow from this that in Presbyteries where no overall Presbytery-wide strategy is devised and agreed, no Leave to Call would normally be issued to any Congregation/Charge within its bounds until such strategy was in place and compared with that of the vacant Congregation/Charge.) In its role, the Union Commission should resource Congregations/Charges which can demonstrate a track-record of innovative missional activity, together with a vision for continuing same. The same

considerations should inform decisions in regard to unions, amalgamations and dissolutions.

### **WHY are these proposals being presented?**

First and foremost, we are convinced that we are not asking Congregations or Presbyteries to do anything outside or beyond their fundamental Divine vocation. The Church was, is and always will be on earth for mission.

Second, we do not view the setting of measurable goals and the adopting of 5-year strategic plans, etc, as techniques for extending God's Kingly rule. Only God, in His time and by His Spirit, can advance His Kingdom. However, we are his co-workers; stewards who should always be in a position to give account. Working accountably to one another assists us to work accountably to Him. Thereby we avoid easy, clichéd answers to the vital question, what are we compelled to become and do for Christ's sake over the next five years?

Third, given that we are largely reiterating proposals accepted by the General Assembly 12 years ago, but noting with dismay that few Presbyteries and Congregations have begun to think and work strategically, we believe that we must recommend more than helpful ideas and exciting ideals. Our Church must insist that its Presbyteries and Congregations work at mission intentionally and accountably rather than incidentally. That is, they must embrace mission and engage in mission strategically.

To summarise, we must put mission at the centre of our denomination's life, embed it within our Church's structures, encouraging and resourcing every viable Congregation to engage vigorously in mission and asking serious questions of (and ultimately denying resources to) those Congregations who limit themselves to the felt-needs and comfort zones of those already within.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **5-YEAR MISSION STRATEGY PLANS AT PRESBYTERY AND CONGREGATIONAL LEVELS**

#### **Rationale:**

1. Presbytery strategy plans will have to be finalised prior to those of individual Congregations/Charges so that the latter can be compared with, and, if necessary, adjusted in the light of, the former.

2. Presbytery strategy plans will have to be based on and informed by outline information from Congregations/Charges, otherwise they risk being detached from reality.

3. Outline information from Congregations/Charges would include: (a) trends in membership and attendance at morning worship in the last 15 years; (b) changes in the local context in the last 15-20 years; (c) any projected changes in the local context; (d) a brief outline of what the Kirk Session perceives as (i) the possible opportunities for mission in the next 5 years, and (ii) the main obstacles to mission and hindrances to the vibrancy of the Congregation/Charge.

**Process of Implementation:**

3. On the basis of the outline information received from Congregations/Charges a Presbytery 5-year missional strategy plan is devised and approved.

4. Individual Congregations/Charges are informed of the Presbytery's 5-year missional strategy and are invited to draw up their own detailed 5-year missional plan with reference to that of Presbytery (see Appendix II for step-by-step guidance to Congregations/Charges).

5. Congregational 5-year plans are submitted for Presbytery's comment and approval, beyond which (perhaps through the revamped 'Consultation' process) Presbytery offers ongoing guidance, encouragement and accountability.

6. Missional plans at both Presbytery and Congregational levels should be reviewed annually and radically reassessed every 5 years.

**Timeline for Initial Implementation:**

7. June 2006: proposals put to General Assembly.

8. September 2006 – June 2007: identification and training of facilitators at Presbytery level, if required (2-3 per Presbytery or as required) + outline information sought and received from Congregations.

9. September 2007 – March 2008: Presbytery 5-year missional strategy plans devised and agreed + identification and training of facilitators at Congregational level, where required (3-4 per Presbytery or as required).

10. March 2008: Copies of Presbytery missional plans lodged with Board of Mission in Ireland for comment and transmission to the Union Commission.

11. September 2008 – March 2009: Congregational 5-year missional strategy plans devised and submitted to Presbytery for amendment and approval.

12. From June 2009: Only Congregations/Charges with Presbytery-approved, 5-year missional strategy plans will normally be granted Leave to Call.

**APPENDIX C****GUIDANCE FOR CONGREGATIONS IN FORMULATING A MISSION PLAN****Please note:**

The guidance document sent to Congregations will contain fuller explanatory notes, aware that for some this will be a new exercise and one that doesn't fit easily into their pattern of 'being' and 'doing' Church to date. The further notes encourage them to see that that which is being asked is "founded on and agreeable to the Word of God" and dovetails with the strategic thinking being done at Presbytery and denominational levels.

The elements of formulating a 5-year strategic plan are as follows:

## WHAT does a Mission Plan look like?

### 1. Charting the Territory

This is about understanding the context into which God has placed us as a Church. Researching the demographics and trends within our neighbourhood may not appear a terribly spiritual thing to do, but it is no different from Paul's quick survey of Athens in Acts 17, and also enables us to follow the apostle's principle in 1Cor 9:20ff, and to be fully incarnated into the community in which we are placed that we might "by all means win some". This research will also help to ensure that the goals and objectives we have set are appropriate and even unique to our setting, and not simply adopted from elsewhere. If for example (as one recent survey of a PCI parish showed) the majority of housing was single-resident elderly, then the establishment of a parents and toddlers group would not be an immediate short-term goal.

#### Questions to ask:

- What is the approximate population of our parish area?
- What is the age profile?
- Are there different and distinct sections within our parish area (in terms of socio-economic index, age profile, ethnic groups, size of housing, industrial / rural /town or village areas)?
- Are there areas of particular need?
- What are the other main facilities/institutions in our area (eg Schools, leisure facilities, shopping centres, social clubs, halls)?
- What other Churches are in the area? How strong are they numerically?
- How many of them would be of a broadly similar ethos (not the same as being of the same denomination) to ours?
- What activities/organisations/projects are they involved in individually or together?
- What other religions or ethnic groups are represented?
- Has anyone undertaken a community-needs questionnaire (either of the whole parish or of a representative group)? What were the findings? – (*An example will be provided*).
- What changes in population, planning, transport, business or industry are projected in the next decade? Is there, for example an urban plan, or rural development plan which will have implications for our area? Are there likely to be redundancies from a major employer in the district?
- What other networks of people are represented within our Congregation? (eg Sports clubs, professional groups, interest & hobby groups, school connections). Given that our 'community' may refer not only to our geographical area but also to those people with whom our members spend significant time, how might these networks be reached effectively?

Resources: Census figures, Development plans, Socio-economic indices etc available from

<http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/>

<http://www.planningni.gov.uk/>

<http://www.cso.ie>

## **2. A Congregational ‘Check-up’**

How healthy is our church? How can we gauge its spiritual temperature? How can we identify our strengths and weaknesses, so that we can consolidate our strengths, identify where the gaps are and move towards establishing some priorities. Various outside helps are available to assist in this process:

- PCI’s Director for Congregational Life, and Presbytery Facilitators.
- Evangelical Ministries’ (EM) “Clearing our Vision” Programme
- Natural Church Development Survey (this is also available through PCI and EM above)
- TEAR Fund’s “Church Community and Change”
- CTBI’s “Mission Accompaniment Programme”
- Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland (formerly ECONI)
- Initially, we can spend time internally performing a simple SWOT (or SWOC) analysis (consulting each other regarding the Church’s respective Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (or Constraints))
- Here are some of the questions that would need to be faced as part of this process:
- What are the current trends in membership? Is there already noticeable growth, has recent growth plateaued, or has there been an ongoing decline?
- To what extent has Congregational giving increased in recent years?
- The worship attendance and age profile of the Congregation, as of the last PCI census, is enclosed. How has this changed in the years since?
- How many different people, approximately, would be on the Church premises in a given week? How has this changed in the last ten years?
- What are the trends in “missionally significant statistics” ie New Communicants (especially adults), worshipping Congregation, children’s and youth ministry; as opposed to marriages, nominal membership.
- Does the Church reflect a good cross-section of the community in which it is located?
- What groups are un-/under-represented?

## **3. Finding God’s way forward**

### **Interpreting the data**

Having surveyed the Church and the community, it is important that this data is put to good use. Again an outside advisor may be able to help in



transferring this raw data into something meaningful so that the Church can act upon the results of its research.

### Composing the Plan

- (i) First of all we need to remember and be able to articulate our calling as a Church: what do we exist for, and what do we wish to become in Christ? This will be our Vision Statement (or some other phrase we may deem to be more appropriate). Vision Statements work best when they are short and memorable.

A common danger is to think of what we are already doing and try to fit the vision statement around that, rather than starting with what Scripture asks us to be as a Church and fitting our activities around the resulting vision.

We must not rush this. These phrases, when composed, should be visible on literature, letterheads, website, noticeboards etc, so it is important to get it right. On the other hand, we don't want to waste a lot of time agonising over minute details. It is likely that a number of phrases will convey what we are trying to say equally well.

- (ii) When we have agreed these, we go on to define our objectives. How might this vision be given flesh in the areas of:

- Worship
- Fellowship
- Discipleship
- Ministry
- Mission

We are free to add others to this list, but these form a good basis with which to start.

- (iii) With this complete, the Mission Plan is only given teeth when we progress to establishing a series of goals for the coming years. This helps our Congregation, Presbytery, and wider Church to see exactly what all of these words will mean in terms of our local community.

Short, medium and long-term goals should be set for each objective of our vision. Medium and long-term goals cater for the need to have something on the horizon for which to aim, and ensure that our biblical aspirations are never compromised. Short-term goals are important so that the Church can move quickly towards achieving these or else the credibility of the whole process will easily be undermined.

It is also important that goals can be quantified and evaluated. For example, a Discipleship objective might be "to encourage members to be more committed to Jesus Christ", whereas a challenging goal would be "to double the number of people actively involved in corporate bible study by the end of 2007."

An example of a short-term mission goal would be "to establish an evangelism working group by the end of the year"; a longer term goal would be "to have, within five years, an evangelistic course attended by unchurched people taking place each term."

#### **4. Envisioning the Congregation**

This process is not about fine-sounding statements, still less about fulfilling Church-imposed bureaucratic requirements. It is an opportunity for the Kirk Session to give the leadership they were ordained to provide, and in God's strength and by the guidance of His Spirit, to envision the whole Congregation to be the people they were called to be.

Therefore, the process does not so much end with the formulation of the plan, but rather begins with it. The real process of obedience and transformation gets underway when the whole people of God are mobilised to walk in His way and do His will. With this in mind it is particularly important that Session give thought as to how they will communicate the Mission Plan and the vision to the rest of the Congregation.

However it is done, the following should be considered:

- A special event to "launch" the Mission Plan; perhaps at a Congregational Meeting or a dinner or a residential weekend.
- Three or more Sundays devoted to vision-casting and preaching on the essentials of Church life.
- Since vision always "leaks", a reaffirmation of at least one aspect of the vision should take place from the pulpit every six months or so.
- A "summit" meeting of all those in an area of leadership within the Congregation to share the vision with them and motivate them to ensure that their particular ministry's objectives and goals are in line with those of the whole Church.

### **APPENDIX D**

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR DEACONESSSES SERVING IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

*"A Deaconess in the Church is one who has, under a call from God, pledged herself to the special service of Jesus Christ and his Church; and who has been received, trained and commissioned thereto, in conformity with the doctrine and discipline of the Church." Code, Par 303(1).*

#### **1. PASTORAL CARE**

- 1.1 The Board of Mission in Ireland and PWA, in co-operation with Presbytery, will offer appropriate pastoral care to a Deaconess, including visiting in situ.
- 1.2 A number of people are also available as a valuable 'listening' resource to offer support and care (see Contact List – Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Once per year the PWA/BMI Home Personnel Committee will meet with the probationary and serving Deaconesses on a mutually suitable date.

#### **2. AREA OF SERVICE**

The Board of Mission in Ireland in consultation with PWA will be responsible for determining the area of service of Deaconesses in the light of

their particular gifts and available opportunities for service usually in Congregations but occasionally in specialised ministries. An initial review will be conducted at the end of three years and an in-depth review at the end of six years when special consideration will be given to the future. While the in-depth review is designed to provide a natural opportunity for a Deaconess to move to a new area of service, due consideration will be given to the possibility of a Deaconess undertaking her next appointment in the same location.

### **3. HOURS OF WORK**

- 3.1 The nature of the work makes it impossible to lay down standard hours as these may vary from day to day. Normally two-thirds of each day will be a working day, beginning at place of work, leaving one-third (morning, afternoon or evening) for private time.
- 3.2 Work carried out during the two-thirds period of each day should include the following:
  - attendance at various meetings of Congregation and Courts of the Church
  - preparation, including that required for deputation
  - deputation and attendance at conferences and in-house training
- 3.3 One full day in seven should be taken as a day off each week.

### **4. SALARY**

- 4.1 Salaries are paid monthly in arrears, and are based on a percentage of the Basic Ministerial Minimum (see Appendix 3). The incremental date is 1 January each year. Salaries are paid directly from the Financial Secretary's Office, Church House.

### **5. EXPENSES**

- 5.1 It is expected that the level of expenses paid by the Congregation should normally be 50% of the recommended Minister's expenses.
- 5.2 The level of expenses paid to Deaconesses working in other contexts will be as agreed by the BMI/PWA.
- 5.3 Where expenses are not fully paid by the Congregation the following expenses can be claimed from PWA using the monthly Deaconess Expense Claim Form supplied by PWA Office:
- 5.4 A basic car allowance at rates determined by the Financial Secretary's Office.
- 5.5 A telephone allowance, at a rate determined by the Financial Secretary's Office.
- 5.6 Travelling expenses incurred during deputation will be paid by PWA.

### **6. HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT**

- 6.1 Annual Holidays
  - One month plus one week at Easter and one week at Christmas.

**7. ATTENDANCE AT THE DEACONESS ASSOCIATION**

- 7.1 It is recognised that the Deaconess Association provides a valuable opportunity for Deaconesses to meet together and have fellowship. Attendance at a meeting of the Association will therefore be regarded as a one-third session of the working day.  
As with all aspects of service attendance will be subject to the Line Manager's approval (see Code Par 306, 2).

**8. DEPUTATION**

- 8.1 A Deaconess is expected to undertake up to two deputations per month, if requested. However, no deputation is permitted during the probationary period, for twelve months following and the first twelve months of a new placement, and during sabbatical leave. All bookings should be made through PWA Office and agreed in consultation with her Minister.

**9. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 9.1 In-Service Training: This is intended to provide an opportunity for a Deaconess to devote the equivalent of one week per year to enhance her own personal potential for ministry.
- 9.2 Sabbatical Leave: This is designed to complement in-service training by providing additional opportunities for personal development and is also allocated on the basis of one week per year. However, whereas the in-service training week cannot be carried forward into the next calendar year, sabbatical leave may be 'banked' from year to year up to a maximum of seven years.
- 9.3 Sabbatical weeks would normally accrue for Deaconesses with 21 years of service or more from Year One of the scheme, for Deaconesses with 14 to 21 years from Year Two and for Deaconesses with service of 2 to 12 years from Year Three (see Appendix 5).
- 9.4 In-House Training: PWA/BMI Personnel Committee provide in-house training as and when required. This is designed to complement training received at Union College and through in-service training and sabbatical leave.

**10. INITIAL REVIEW**

- 10.1 After a period of three years members of PWA/BMI Personnel Committee will meet with the Deaconess to review her current appointment. This will be done in consultation with the Minister or his/her equivalent.

**11. IN-DEPTH REVIEW**

- 11.1 This review will take place at the end of six years. If in an in-depth Review a Minister and Deaconess desires the next appointment in the same location the Presbytery would be asked for comment on where the Congregation and its context lie within the mission priorities of the

Presbytery and on how the continuance of the appointment of the Deaconess would contribute to this. (See Appendix 4).

## **12. REMOVAL EXPENSES**

- 12.1 Accommodation is not provided but a grant towards removal expenses and fabric, plus telephone installation charge, where necessary, will be paid.

## **13. UNIFORM**

- 13.1 The Deaconess uniform is a navy jacket with skirt/trousers worn on 'formal' occasions with a blue striped blouse and at other times with a white or cream blouse.
- 13.2 A uniform may be obtained either:-  
From a supplier recommended by the PWA, logos will be included on the items of clothing, and the supplier will invoice the PWA directly.  
Or,  
purchased by the Deaconess from a retailer of her choice – reimbursement can be obtained by completing the Deaconess Expense Claim Form and attaching receipts.
- 13.3 The maximum sum available for purchase of the first uniform is £250 and the maximum available towards renewal is £100 biannually. These maximums apply irrespective of how the uniform is obtained. The uniforms are the property of the PWA irrespective of how the uniform has been obtained.

## **14. COMPASSIONATE LEAVE POLICY See Appendix 1.1**

## **15. SICK PAY SCHEME POLICY (Under Discussion) See Appendix 1.2**

## **16. MATERNITY LEAVE POLICY See Appendix 1.3**

## **17. DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURE See Appendix 1.4**

## **18. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (Under Review) See Appendix 1.5**

## **19. PENSION & LIFE ASSURANCE**

- 19.1 PWA/Overseas Board/Irish Mission operates a Retirement & Death Benefit Scheme in co-operation with a Life Assurance Society. Further details can be obtained from the Financial Secretary's Office, Church House.

## **20. RETIREMENT**

- 20.1 The normal retirement age of a Deaconess shall be sixty but her appointment may be extended with the approval of the PWA/Board of Mission in Ireland.

- 20.2 The intentions of a Deaconess to retire or seek approval for the extension of her appointment should normally be made to the PWA/BMI at least one year before the date of her 60th birthday.

## 21. FORMAL CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

- 21.1 “The appointment of Deaconesses shall be as decided by the Board of Mission in Ireland, after consultation with the parties concerned; and any Congregation or Board of the Church wishing for the services of a Deaconesses shall make official application to the PWA Secretary.” Code Par 305(1).
- 21.2 “A Deaconess is responsible to Presbytery for her life and doctrine; and at visitations enquiry should be made about her work.” Code Par 306 (1).
- 21.3 “Immediate responsibility for the direction and supervision of her work shall rest with the Minister or Board having charge; while the PWA shall exercise a general responsibility.” Code Par 306(2).
- 21.4 “Deaconesses are appointed on the provision that after at least a three year period or other term as agreed with the Board of Mission in Ireland they may apply for or be offered a transfer to another appointment.” Code Par 305(4).
- 21.5 “In the event of a vacancy in the pastorate of a Congregation in which she is serving, one month’s notice offering resignation shall be given upon the installation of a new Minister though, upon the request of Minister and Session and with the consent of the Deaconess, the appointment may be renewed by the Board of Mission in Ireland. In the event of the appointment not being renewed, the Deaconess shall be retained on the records of the Presbytery and her income continued from central funds, for a period of not longer than one year or, if sooner, until she becomes eligible for retirement, receives another Call or is placed in other work by the Board of Mission in Ireland.” Code Par 305(5).
- 21.6 “An appointment as a Deaconess may, after twelve months’ service, be terminated by mutual agreement, or by two months’ notice given by the Deaconess, the Minister of the Congregation, the Session (or in the case of a Deaconess in special work by the PWA/Board of Mission in Ireland Personnel Committee) subject to the approval of the Presbytery and of the Board of Mission in Ireland.” Code Par 305(8).

22. This sheet is for general information only and does not cover recruitment, training, appointment, commissioning, induction and conditions of service that are contained in the Code as follows:

*Par 303 Deaconesses [cf Code Par 114(2), 304, 305, 306 & 307].* Reference is also made to the guidelines covering “Applications for the Office of Deaconess and Terms of Deaconess Service” that appear on pages 160-162 of the 1995 General Assembly Reports.

## APPENDIX E

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTION FOR “MISSION PARTNERSHIP FORUM” FORMERLY “ALTERNATING MINISTRIES’ COMMITTEE”**

The Alternating Ministries’ Committee came into being in the 1970’s to monitor and support the Alternating Schemes in Limerick, Sandymount, Galway, Waterford and Wexford/Enniscorthy and Gorey. During the past 2 years, the present members have been involved in a review of how the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Ireland can most effectively develop the present schemes, promote fresh mission in new ways and work in a spirit of co-operation.

Alternating Schemes have been largely successful during the 30 or so years of their existence. The Committee has been kept informed and problems as they have arisen have generally been worked through by the Convener of Home Board and Secretary for Home Missions.

It is acknowledged that the schemes were established at a time of entrenchment and a perceived need to maintain our particular Reformed traditions in areas of numerical weakness. Survival rather than mission dictated the policies followed. Much has been learned during the passing years and we are grateful to God that we seem now to have moved into a period when both Churches are seeking the extension of the Kingdom of God in many areas of Ireland.

**Realising the call and prayer of Jesus Christ to unity in mission; recognising that the Methodist Church is in Covenant with the Church of Ireland; acknowledging that we have some differing emphases in undertaking God’s mission; the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches are resolved:**

- to form a Mission Partnership Forum (MPF) to replace the Alternating Ministry Committee
- to keep one another fully informed of appointments, particularly in the Republic of Ireland, in areas where both PCI and MCI have Congregations and encourage their co-operation
- to consult one another prior to embarking on any new area or revisioning of old ones
- to commission the MPF to explore, promote, and regulate (according to the practices of the respective governing bodies of PCI and MCI) new areas of mission in Ireland.
- to ensure that existing and new schemes that involve both Churches, either in name or in practice, have a **regular review** and to facilitate on a regular basis the aims, and logical next steps in unity in mission
- to report annually to the General Assembly and the Methodist Conference each of which shall appoint two representatives to the MPF

The Mission Partnership Forum comprises:

The Officers of the Presbyterian Board of Mission in Ireland and the Methodist Church Development Board.

The Deputy-Clerk of the General Assembly and Secretary of Methodist Conference.

Two representatives each from PCI and MCI appointed by the General Assembly and the Methodist Conference.

A Church of Ireland observer appointed from the Covenant Council.

Appointed members would serve for up to five years.

The MPF has power to co-opt one additional member from each Church and to consult as necessary.

The MPF will normally meet three times a year and one meeting should normally take place at a venue where a scheme is operating, or a new one being considered.

Members of either Church attending the other in an area where their own does not exist are to be regarded, for the period of their association with that Church, as full members of that Church, with the full voting and membership rights ascribed by that denomination.

Appointments of ordained persons to Alternating schemes should take place with the full knowledge and as far as possible, the involvement of the Forum, or its officers.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

### **Towards “Vibrant Communities of Christ...”**

2. That the General Assembly accept, in principle, the structure and timetable set out in Appendices A – C, being a mechanism for achieving in practice the principles and priorities accepted by last year’s Assembly.

3. That as per Appendix B, each Presbytery be asked to agree a 5-year missional strategy plan, based on the outline information submitted by its Congregations/Charges, and to lodge same with the Board of Mission in Ireland for comment and transmission to the Union Commission by March 2008.

4. That, as per Appendix B, each Congregation or Charge be required by March 2009 to submit a 5-year missional strategy plan to Presbytery for amendment and approval.

5. That the General Assembly note the recommendation that the Union Commission after June 2009 will normally only give Leave to Call to Congregations/Charges with Presbytery-approved 5-year missional strategy plans, and that the Union Commission will consider the further recommendation that after June 2009 no Leave to Call will normally be given to any Congregation/Charge within the bounds of a Presbytery which has not agreed its own 5-year missional strategy plan.

6. That the General Board be instructed to set up a Panel to review the consultation process in the light of (a) the experience of its outworking to date and (b) the role and responsibility of Presbyteries in respect of 5-year missional strategy plans.



**Presbyterian Mutual Society**

7. That the General Assembly congratulate the Directors of the Society on its continuing success and encourage Congregations and individuals to avail of its lending facilities.

**Nightlight**

8. That the General Assembly note that the Nightlight Executive Committee has become a Panel under the Board of Mission in Ireland, normally reporting to it through the Board's Urban Mission Panel.

9. That the General Assembly commend the valuable ministry of Nightlight, under its Director, Mr John Luke, and encourage volunteers to offer themselves for service.

**Congregational Life**

10. That the payment of £250 for each of the years 2004, 2005 and 2006 to the Churches' Council on Healing be approved.

**Convener of the Board**

11. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Graham Connor as Convener of the Board of Mission in Ireland be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Roy A Patton be appointed in his place.

**Convener, Home & Irish Mission Committee**

12. That the resignation of the Rev Roy A Patton as Convener of the Home & Irish Mission Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.

**Mission Partnership Forum**

13. That the General Assembly approve the constitution of the Mission Partnership Forum (Appendix E, and formerly the Alternating Ministries Committee), and that the following be appointed to the Mission Partnership Forum for the ensuing year: Conveners of the Board of Mission in Ireland and Home & Irish Mission Committee, Deputy Clerk, Mrs C Poynton, Rev S G Anketell.

14. That the Board of Mission in Ireland, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:

**OVERTURES TRANSMITTED****Anent 300(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 300(4) of the Code that the words "and is no longer required for the purpose it was intended to serve" be deleted.

**Anent 300(5) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 300 of the Code a new sub-paragraph (5) be added as follows:

“(5) No programmes of refurbishment, development or purchase, the total expenditure of which is greater than the prevailing Ministerial Minimum, or employment of additional personnel, may be undertaken by a Home Mission Congregation without the prior consent of the Board of Mission in Ireland.”

And that the subsequent paragraphs be re-numbered.

G CONNOR

**MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED**

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 5th day of June, 2006.

**The Memorial of the Interim Kirk Session of Ballysally Church Extension Charge Respectfully Showeth:**

That the Church Extension Charge of Ballysally was begun in October 1977.

That God has prospered and sustained the work through many difficult days and there are now 145 families claiming connection and 99 communicant members.

That the ministry of the Congregation is expressed by individuals at a personal level and through Sunday School, Bible Class, Girls' Brigade, Youth Club, Homework Club, Youth Fellowship, Youth Discipleship Group, Adult Discipleship Groups, PWA, Prayer Triplets, Senior Citizens group, a Pastoral Care Team and an Addictions Support Group.

That the Congregation's Youth & Community Project has been able to gain access to grant aid, employ additional staff and provide programmes which are enabling it to respond in a relevant way in Jesus name to the social and spiritual needs of Ballysally.

That the Specified Sources income for 2005 was £28,939.

That there is a great need for a strong Christian witness to continue in Ballysally. That it would be very beneficial to the people of Ballysally to have their own Kirk Session and that there are among the membership those who are well qualified for the work of the eldership.

That the established Congregation would still require financial assistance for the maintenance of the Ministry and intends, with the support of the Presbytery of Coleraine, to seek appropriate status under the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly to authorise the Presbytery of Coleraine to establish the Charge of Ballysally as a Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, under that name, on a convenient date after 30th June 2006, and to place them in the Secession Synod.

And Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Adopted by the Interim Kirk Session at its meeting on 27th January, 2006

JOHN COULTER, Moderator  
GEORGE McINTYRE, Clerk

Licensed by the Presbytery of Coleraine, meeting at New Row Church, Coleraine on Tuesday 7th February 2006 and transmitted to the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine with the strong recommendation that the prayer of the Memorialists be granted.

ROBERT S McMULLAN, Moderator  
W IVAN HUNTER, Clerk

Transmitted by the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine at its meeting in Dervock on 14th March 2006 with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

JH THOMPSON, Moderator  
JOSEPH J ANDREWS, Clerk



# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Central President: Mrs SHEILA FELL  
Acting Executive Secretary: Mrs MAUREEN PATTERSON

## **Theme for the year: ROOTED IN CHRIST**

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Board of Mission in Ireland and the Board of Mission Overseas.)

1. The theme, **Rooted in Christ**, has reminded members that if lives are firmly rooted in Christ, He will be the source of their spiritual nourishment and growth, resulting in lives which produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

2. Much of the time of Executive Committee over the past year has been spent on looking at the 'Way Ahead' for PWA. The Association has contributed much to the Church's mission, not least through prayer and financial support and continues to do so.

3. The PWA still has a membership of over 13,000 but, in common with the Church as a whole, has experienced a decline in membership. Executive Committee recognises the seismic shifts that have occurred in society, particularly for women, and has to discover a style which engages with our contemporary culture. The Committee has to get to know the needs of women today and how to meet them for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

4. This process of change has begun at Executive level. Part of the monthly meeting is given over to prayer and group work which allows for a freer exchange of ideas relating to the revitalisation of PWA. Presbyterian Committee, another part of our structure, has been looked at and as well as a suggested change of style for the meetings this Committee has also been given a new name – PWA LINK.

5. A Conference has been planned for 9 September which will deal with best practice in the branches and help members rethink their effectiveness in leading the PWA and women's ministry forward.

6. Over the past year the administration and other needs of PWA were reviewed. This led to a number of new appointments. Mrs Charlotte Stevenson has been appointed as PWA Development Officer, Miss Fiona Bingham as Senior Secretary in PWA Office and Mrs Caroline Hawthorne as General Secretary. Executive Committee welcomes these new office-bearers and prays God's blessing on their endeavours.

7. We give thanks to God for all that He has enabled us to do over the past year and pray for His continued blessing in the future.

## **8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2005/6**

### **Office Bearers:**

Central President: Mrs Sheila Fell (Derry & Strabane)

Home Vice-President:	Mrs Maureen Weir (Templepatrick)
Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Joan Hanna (Newry)
Treasurer:	Miss Zena McAllister (Down)
<b>Committee Members:</b>	
Mrs Marie Catherine (Ards)	Mrs Pat Colvin (Dublin & Munster)
Mrs Eileen Greenlee (Armagh)	Mrs Violet Miller (Foyle)
Mrs Lorna Brown (Ballymena)	Mrs Valerie Stewart (Foyle)
Mrs Dorothy Marshall (North Belfast)	Mrs Anne Harbinson (Iveagh)
Mrs Jean Clarke (South Belfast)	Mrs Nan Bradford (Monaghan)
Mrs Winnie Moffett (East Belfast)	Mrs Jean Donald (Omagh)
Mrs Zoe Vallely (Carrickfergus)	Mrs Barbara Thompson (Route)
Miss Elizabeth Smyth (Coleraine)	Mrs Sandra Fleck (Tyrone)
Mrs Georgina Hunter (Donegal)	Mrs Valerie Tweedie (YWG Ex Officio)
Mrs Hilary Jess (Dromore)	Mrs Anthea Harrison (Editor Ex Officio)
Mrs Phyllis Spence (Dromore)	Mrs Maureen Patterson (Ex Officio)

**9. New Member of Executive Committee 2006/7**

Mrs Janice Paul (Carrickfergus)

**10. Office Bearers to be installed at Annual Meeting on 4 May, 2006**

Central President: Mrs Maureen Weir (Templepatrick)

Home Vice-President: Mrs Valerie Stewart (Foyle)

**11. Events 2005/6**

- The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 14 April, 2005, in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Sandra Fleck.
- The Annual Meetings were held on 5 May, 2005, in the Assembly Hall. The Guest Speaker was the Rev Mairisine Stanfield.
- Prior to Executive Committee in September 2005 Rev Dr Joseph Fell conducted a Communion Service.
- PWA Executive and General Committee Annual Conference was held on Saturday, 10 September, 2005, in Stormont Presbyterian Church. The programme focused on the "Way Ahead" and the speakers were Mrs Deirdre Humphreys and Mrs Lynn Murray.
- The Deaconess Carol Service was held on Friday, 9 December, 2005, in the Kinghan Church.
- General Committee met on Thursday, 2 February, 2006, in the Minor Hall, Church House.

12. PWA Executive Committee continues to appreciate the support and advice given by the Clerk of the General Assembly, Rev Dr Donald Watts and the Deputy Clerk and Executive Director of the Board of Mission in Ireland, Rev Harry Robinson. This was particularly appreciated this past year as we reviewed the administration and other needs of the Association.

13. The Committee also records its thanks to Rev Uel Marrs, Secretary to the Board of Mission Overseas, for his help and expertise.

### **South Belfast Friendship House**

14. The House situated at 1-11 Blythe Street, Sandy Row, is a place of Christian Witness where there is fellowship and support available. The use of the House is expanding and the After School Club, the Young Mums Group and the Older Peoples' work, are all working to improve the quality of life for this area of South Belfast. PWA Executive Committee records grateful thanks to Mrs Eunice Moore, Project Leader, and Mrs Menita Cheesman for their continued faithful service and commitment to the work of South Belfast Friendship House.

15. Miss Lynne Ferguson, Assistant Chaplain of Derryvolgie Hall, and a group of volunteers have continued their involvement in the work at South Belfast Friendship House and the Committee appreciates all that they have given of their time and talents.

16. PWA Executive Committee values the partnership with the Board of Social Witness and records their thanks to Mr Lindsay Conway, Director, for his support of the staff and volunteers.

### **Finance**

17. PWA Executive Committee is very grateful for the ongoing support of PWA members and commends them for their enthusiasm and commitment to the mission of the Church at home and overseas.

18. PWA gave a grant of £350,000 to the Board of Mission in Ireland to support in part 26 Deaconesses serving in Congregations, the Community and the Hospitals and two Deaconesses in their Probationary year.

19. PWA also gave the Board of Mission in Ireland a Training Fund of £35,000 and from this Fund two Deaconesses are being trained at Union College.

20. PWA Executive Committee was pleased to give a grant of £220,000 to the Board of Mission Overseas.

### **Birthday Thank Offering Fund**

21. The total amount for Refurbishment of Missionary Accommodation was £57,197.22.

22. At the time of writing the Birthday Thank Offering (2005/6) for Sunnyside House/Sudan/Malawi was £12,526.53. The Account closes December 2006.

### **Bequests**

23. PWA Executive Committee acknowledges with thanks the following bequests:

Rev J McAllister	£800
Ethel Margaret Wright	£1,000
Maud McWhirter	£2,000
Bayna Wilson	£2,000

### **Wider World**

24. Wider World has a readership of over 22,000. PWA Executive Committee records sincere thanks to the Editor, Mrs Anthea Harrison, Mrs

Valerie Stewart who compiles the children's page, the Editorial Committee and all who contributed to the magazine and its promotion.

25. Over the past year some changes have been made to the magazine. The size is now more user friendly allowing also for better layout and use of photographs. Each issue now has a different theme, widening the interest and effect of the magazine. While being the PWA magazine, it is for all Presbyterian women whatever age.

26. Selected extracts from Wider World continue to be available on audio tape for those who are blind, partially sighted or who have difficulty holding a magazine.

### **Young Women's Groups**

27. The 2005/6 theme, **Rooted in Christ**, was shared by YWG and PWA. YWG held a Conference on Saturday, 7 May, 2005, in Stormont Presbyterian Church halls. The theme was Moving On, and speakers were Carol Herron and Clare McIntyre. Cheques were handed over towards the refurbishment of missionary accommodation in Belfast and to provide a safe motherhood programme and student nurse training at Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi.

#### **28. Office Bearers 2005/6**

Chairperson:	Mrs Valerie Tweedie
Secretary:	Mrs Carol Wilson
Treasurer:	Mrs Gwen Wakefield
Newsletter Editor:	Mrs Sharon Shannon

The YWG Home Project for 2005/6 is supporting the work of the Vine Centre, Crumlin Road, Belfast. The YWG Overseas Project for 2005/6, in conjunction with Christian Aid, will provide aid for the people in the Darfur region of Sudan.

### **RESOLUTION**

1. That the Report be received.

# BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev R VALLELY  
Secretary: Mr L CONWAY, OBE

1. **PIONEERS:** Elise Sandes was one of a number of pioneers in social witness following the 1859 Revival. As a young girl she attended with her father a service in Tralee Presbyterian Church where they were converted – *“he a man of fifty and she a child of ten, tremblingly ventured to trust Jesus”*. In her spiritual zeal to reach others for her Saviour, Miss Sandes had a deep concern for young soldiers away from home. Her mission began with a young drummer boy invited to her home and he became the first of many who found a homely welcome in Sandes Soldiers and Airmen’s Centres. A recreation room, a reading room and some hospitality provided a social setting used to lead many to know the Saviour.

2. In social witness we give thanks for many pioneers who in their zeal to bring people to Jesus Christ used social settings and situations to demonstrate God’s love for individuals. Our Board continues that Christian witness with a pioneering spirit which seeks to provide facilities for those who need social services. Such units supported by the prayers of the Church are centres of witness to God’s love in Jesus Christ.

3. **REACHING OUT:** As the whole concept of Social Evangelism, Social Outreach, Social Witness and a Social Ministry develops, it is clear that one size does not fit all situations. The urban versus the rural, new versus old, average age of the Congregation, number of young families, youth organisations (both uniformed and non-uniformed) – all these factors and more impact on the profile of a Congregation and all must be measured if we are to audit their individual needs.

4. One of the main platforms for reaching the un-churched and in re-churching people is Social Witness. The fact that the majority do not attend family services must be seen as a major challenge. At other times in our history we responded by providing appropriate organisations, most being formed in the mid to late 19th or early 20th century. We must respond to the challenge of today by:

- Reaching out to people – where they are at!
- Challenging and Campaigning – having the voice of the Church heard!
- Filling the Gaps – providing services and facilities that are needed!
- Witnessing in a Christ-like way!

5. Eugene Peterson, in *“The Message”*, gives us a refreshing and challenging translation to those well known words in James 2:

*“For instance, you come across an old friend dressed in rags and half starved and say, “Good morning friend! Be clothed in the love of Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit! And walk off without providing so much as a coat or*



*a cup of soup – where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that GOD-TALK without GOD-ACTS is outrageous nonsense?"*

6. **EXPANSION CONTINUES:** The work of the Board is expanding and responding to the needs of the wider Church. Our re-organisation has greatly assisted the promotion of our core tasks.

- Sunnyside residential home in Bangor is now open, providing 45 beds with modern facilities.
- Willow Brook, in Coleraine, has recently been extended with the provision of bungalows for the physically disabled.
- The Board has entered into partnership with the Currie Community at Dundonald to oversee residential, day care and respite care for individuals with severe learning disability resident in Aaron House.
- The Chaplaincy Centre at Queen's University has been expanded and refurbished with the café widely used, under a franchise agreement.
- Carlisle House is now exploring the possible use of accommodation in the former Duncairn, St Enoch's Church.
- The expanding PCI Counselling has rented premises at New Forge Lane.
- The Board has accepted responsibility for the Presbyterian Family Holiday.
- The General Assembly may request the transfer of University Chaplaincy under the Student Services Committee.
- The "Taking Care" policy now requires a full-time Trainer and Co-ordinator and the Board is indebted to the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society for partnering this initiative.
- POCVA arrangements also require extra administrative staff.
- Enquiries come from various areas inviting us to investigate new projects both at Congregation and Board levels.

7. The Board is conscious of the need to review staffing levels in view of continued expansion.

8. **POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults):** Almost one thousand checks have now been requested by Congregations, for new leaders volunteering to work with children and young people within PCI. We are greatly encouraged that many Congregations are now conscious that this practice is going some way to protecting children, young people, volunteers and Congregations. There are many excellent examples of good practice, which clearly illustrate that Congregations can employ good recruitment and selection processes. It does, however, concern us that a large number of Congregations have not requested checks for any new leaders since the implementation of the General Assembly's Resolution in 2004. The Bichard Report into the tragic deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman will recommend further changes to procedures which will impact on our Church.

9. It is now necessary to look closely at how we as a Church implement the other part of this important piece of legislation relating to vulnerable adults. Within the context of the Church it is difficult to have a universal definition of what constitutes a vulnerable adult – much of this will be defined either by

disability, medical condition or age. Guidelines will have to be drawn up for congregational use, ensuring that we comply with all legal requirements.

10. **SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT:** Work in the South continues to respond to a growing need. The Board is conscious that there is a developing expertise in the whole area of Asylum Seekers, Immigrant Workers and the growing numbers of foreign nationals coming to live and contribute to the culture and life of another country. This work has recently been recognised in our joint discussions with the Race Relations Panel. Important work is developing and there are many examples of innovative practice.

11. Monaghan Presbytery has renewed their contact with the Board with a view to building a residential unit in the Border Area. The unit would promote and preserve the Presbyterian tradition.

12. The Board recognises that we need to establish a "Taking Care" committee in the South.

13. **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:** The Board's new structure is operating under – SOFA - Specialist Ministries, Older people Services, Family Services and Adult Services. A Business Committee meets monthly and Panels from the Committees plus Board Committees meet regularly. The Board is indebted to the Conveners and members who have given much understanding over the introduction of the structure. There has been some resistance to change, but the Board has endeavoured to reach a compromise and agreement.

14. **PERSONNEL:** The Board is indebted to all who serve Christ through its various units and facilities. Additional personnel and the expanding work of the Board require a major review. The Board gives thanks for the professional expertise and commitment of the Director of Social Service, Lindsay Conway, the Residential Services Manager, Linda Wray, the administration overseen by Ellen Wilmont and the Board office staff, the Personnel Officer, Eileen McClenaghan and her staff, the Finance Officer, Clive Knox and his staff, and Harry Orr and the "A Team".

15. **THANKS:** The work of the Board is dependent on funding from many bodies. Thanks is extended to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; Health and Social Service Boards and Trusts; the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland. The United Appeal Board of our Church continues to give vital funding to many areas of our work.

16. The Board continues to be grateful to all who in any way support the work of social witness. The professional support from statutory bodies and the partnership in building and other projects, the administration in all departments of Church House, the prayerful support and encouragement of the whole Church and the dedicated work of employed staff, committee members and volunteers.

17. **CONVENER:** The Board wishes to thank Rev Norman Cameron, the first Convener of the Child Protection Monitoring Group, for his valuable work in the whole area of Child Protection. He has brought both a legal mind and that of a congregational Minister to this ever developing work, culminating in the production of "Taking Care", the third edition of the Church's child protection guidelines.

**FUNDING:**

18. Total income for the year 2005 was derived from the following sources:

Income from services	£4,520,000
United Appeal	235,000
Donations and Bequests	368,000
Grants	66,000
Other	279,000
	<hr/>
Total Income	5,468,000
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Total expenditure for the year 2005 was as shown below:

Older People	£3,882,000
Addiction and Education Services	488,000
Work with Offenders	321,000
Student Accommodation	309,000
Unemployed People	3,000
Deaf Community	83,000
Learning Disabled	148,000
PCI Counselling	23,000
Publications	4,000
Chaplains	6,000
Management Costs	216,000
	<hr/>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>5,483,000</b>
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19. **DISABILITY:** The new structure of the Board has legislated for the establishment of a Disability Committee. This Committee with its different sub-committees will deal with all areas of disability.

20. Recently the Board has held discussions with the “Through the Roof” Foundation with a view of working together in the promotion of Disability Awareness. Congregations are now more aware of the adaptations that are required in connection with the Disability Discrimination Act. The Board’s video and DVD “May I Come In” and the Church Access Guide produced by the William Keown Trust have been invaluable to many Congregations

21. Three new purpose built bungalows have been added to the Willow Brook site, providing accommodation for those with physical disability. This exciting development expands the Board’s work in this important area.

*Rev Jim Waring reports:*

22. **LEARNING DISABILITY:** “With a little thought and consideration the local Church can make a meaningful difference in the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families.”

23. So begins the leaflet on Learning Disability that has been produced by the Committee and distributed throughout the Church for the guidance of Ministers and other Church leaders.

24. The Committee continues to work towards the goal of encouraging and enabling the Church to make a difference in the lives of some of our most vulnerable members.

25. The supported housing project at Willow Brook provides valuable accommodation and personal support for nine tenants. The Project Manager, Mrs Ann Campbell, and her staff are exemplary in caring for the daily needs of the tenants. The Friends of Willow Brook, drawn from members of neighbouring Churches, give great encouragement to the staff and provide much needed support and Christian friendship to the tenants.

26. Plans have been drawn up to build a sun-room on the premises. Following an approach from a Christian group who are already involved in this ministry, careful consideration is presently being given to the possibility of establishing another similar supported housing project.

27. The Committee is glad to report that final agreement has been reached on a timetable for the Board to assume responsibility for the work of Aaron House, Dundonald, a project that cares for those with more profound learning disability.

28. The Committee is most grateful for the prayerful and practical interest in our work by many individuals and Congregations throughout our Church. Please continue to pray for those to whom we seek to reach out to in the name of Jesus Christ.

*Rev Bobby Liddle reports:*

29. **SOCIAL ISSUES:** With changes to the structure of the Board of Social Witness, Social Issues and Resources has now become a Panel of the Board. This new structure will hopefully provide the opportunity to draw on specialist knowledge in targeted issues. In the past year the "Journey towards healing" resources on managing trauma have been widely distributed and appreciated. Work is ongoing with regard to Civil Partnerships and Teenage Sexuality. The panel is investigating the possibility of a new Challenging Issues Bible Study guide relating to the media. It was recognised that the work of this panel overlaps or touches on the work of a variety of other boards and committees, therefore part of our new remit will be to seek a joint approach in the production of resources.

*Mr Hubert Martin reports:*

30. **STUDENT SERVICES (incorporating War Memorial Hostel):** The new **Chaplaincy Centre** in Elmwood Avenue which was completed on programme within agreed costs, was opened and in operation for the new term in September 2005. The Committee is grateful for the professionalism and dedication of the building contractor, the architect and other consultants as they worked in association with the Chaplaincy team to produce a quality building which is now providing one of the best Chaplaincy Centres anywhere.

31. The Centre, with a café/restaurant and drop-in centre on the ground floor, is a hive of activity and is complemented by offices, counselling rooms, conference centre and student study centre on the other floors. It provides an excellent base, right at the heart of the University, for University staff and students to meet the Chaplain and his team in a relaxed, Christian atmosphere.

The operation of the Café is now franchised, thus removing the dilemma of the old Bush Café running at a serious deficit.

32. **Derryvolgie Hall** continues to provide a student community home for 88 young people, surrounded by quality friendship, fellowship and fun, together with a varied and exciting programme of events for all. Worship and teaching sessions continue each week as well as other study and social evenings. Plans are now well advanced for three groups (totalling over 70 students) to go to South Africa in the summer of 2006 to work as part of a Habitat for Humanity project and to learn more about fair trade, social justice and conflict resolution issues.

33. The Committee thanks Rev Steve Stockman and his staff and volunteers whose hard work, commitment and enthusiasm continue to have a noticeable Christian influence on all those who come into contact with them.

### **Minister in Recognised Service**

*Rev Doug Baker, Mediation Northern Ireland, reports:*

1. Until it ended in November 2005 I was co-leader of Partners in Transformation, a joint initiative of Mediation Northern Ireland and The Irish School of Ecumenics. The aim of this project was to “*enhance, nurture, and support the capacity of Churches and faith communities in their calling to be peace-builders and agents of transformation.*” This involved facilitating dialogue amongst leaders within and between various denominations on the ways Churches might contribute to a peaceful shared future.

2. My training activity during the 2005-06 year has included PCI Licentiates, Methodist Probationers, second year students at the Church of Ireland College, and the ISE Dispute Resolution Certificate Course.

3. I continue to serve on the Conciliation Panel and assist with supervision of casework. I also continue to serve as Convener of the PCI Peace and Peacemaking Panel.

## **SPECIALIST MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**

1. Ministry in special situations has its own unique opportunities which deserve the prayers of the Church.

- Ministry to those in the Armed Forces especially in difficult situations like Iraq;
- Ministry in the silent world of the hearing impaired;
- Ministry to people in the crisis situations of illness or being in prison;
- Ministry to understand and help those with addiction difficulties.

2. This Ministry is to people who are loved by God and need the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

*Rev James Gordon reports:*

### **CHAPLAINS**

3. At the General Assembly in June the existing Chaplains' Committee was dissolved and replaced by a Panel under the aegis of the Specialist Ministries Committee. The Panel, in consultation with Presbyteries, has at present the oversight of our Chaplaincy provision in both Hospitals and Prisons.

4. Further complications arose during the year with regard to the provision of a Presbyterian Chaplain in HMP Maghaberry, as the Northern Ireland Office continues to examine ways in which it believes Chaplaincy services may best be provided in this situation. Since meeting with representatives of the prison authorities, however, it has again been possible to advertise the position of Chaplain for Maghaberry, such advertisement appearing in the Presbyterian Herald in February 2006.

5. Members of the panel are aware of the responsibility held by Presbyteries for the provision of pastoral care and oversight of those providing Chaplaincy services within their bounds, and would again draw attention to the requirement for part-time Chaplains to report annually to their respective Presbyteries, 'for transmission to the Board or appropriate Committee'. Full-time Chaplains report directly to the Board or Committee (Code Par 272 (5) (c) (6): (i) and (ii)). At present the Panel is drawing up a pro-forma to assist Chaplains and Presbyteries with regard to such annual returns.

6. Legislation enacted in December 2004 has enabled individual Hospital Trusts to have a greater input into the appointment of Chaplains in the NI context, if they so choose. This has resulted in a small number of anomalous situations. The matter is on-going.

7. At the invitation of the NI Hospital Chaplains' Association, it was agreed by the Panel to nominate the Rev Paul Erskine to serve on the Executive Council of the Association. A conference will be held in May to bring together those involved in Chaplaincy services, especially in the hospital context, to provide opportunity for Chaplains to meet together and learn of recent developments in some aspects of their general field of service.

*Rev Purvis Campbell reports:*

### **FORCES**

8. The Forces Committee continues in its role of providing a point of contact and pastoral care for Chaplains, and keeping the life and witness of the Chaplains in the minds and prayers of the Church. This is important as the Armed Forces are under increasing pressure of deployments to hostile environments.

9. The following Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland are serving as regular chaplains:

- Rev David Edgar (Royal Air Force).

- Rev Jonathan Wylie (Royal Air Force).
  - Rev Norman McDowell (Army).
  - Rev Philip Patterson (Army).
  - Rev Dr Paul Swinn (Army).
  - Rev Stephan van Os (Army)
  - Rev Mark Henderson ( Army)
10. The TA Chaplains and Officiating Chaplains are as follows:
- Rev Prof Patton Taylor
  - Rev David Latimer
  - Rev Ian Mairs
  - Rev Joseph Andrews
  - Rev Derek Weir

11. We are grateful to those organisations which support the Christian witness of the Chaplains: The Sandes Homes; the Officers' Christian Union; the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association; the Naval, Military and Air Force Bible Society. Members of these organisations are available to speak at midweek meetings.

12. Each year the support of the Church is sought for The Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force 'Wings Appeal', and the Royal Irish/UDR Benevolent Fund. In the past Congregations have supported these with generosity and we trust that this will continue.

*Rev Simon Henning reports:*

### **KINGHAN MISSION**

13. The work of the Kinghan Church has been ongoing since its inception by Rev John Kinghan in 1857. Next year Kinghan celebrates its 150th anniversary. Much has to be celebrated, especially the work of its former Minister, the Rev Dr George Grindle, whose dedication and influence continues to be felt even today. The present Minister, Rev Simon Henning, is seeking to build on Dr Grindle's work. With the able assistance of Mrs Anne Rodgers, he continues to provide spiritual support to those Deaf people who need it.

14. As with many Churches the Kinghan suffers from a lack of younger people. While this is a problem affecting many Congregations it is felt more keenly in a small one like Kinghan. Attempts are being made to attract a younger deaf person to become involved in the day to day work and we pray that God will provide us with the right person to fulfil that role.

*Mrs Wendy Bristow reports:*

### **ADDICTION SERVICES**

15. The important area of addiction is now being discussed in the context of its own Committee. As part of the re-structuring of the Board it has been separated from the management and running of Carlisle House and Gray's Court. This development will heighten the profile of this area of work.

16. The Committee dealt with our Church's response to the "Liquor Licensing - The Way Forward" Review and made comment on the following -

17. “Drinking behaviour among young people in Northern Ireland – Secondary analysis of alcohol data from 1997 to 2003” – Jointly published by the Health Promotion Agency and the Irish Temperance League during the period of the consultation was a timely and invaluable resource. The study confirms the negative impact of the media and marketing on the drinking patterns of young people. It also states that there is a significant change in the age profile of when children start drinking – that age is getting younger, as young as 11 in a percentage of cases. The most disturbing fact is that young female drinking patterns have more or less caught up with young male drinkers. The increased drinking amongst girls brings with it a range of high risk behaviours, including anti-social behaviour, criminality and unwanted pregnancies.

18. The Committee welcomed the review – “Liquor Licensing – The Way Forward” - and the opportunity to respond to the consultation. It commends the Minister and the Department for the style, content and presentation of the report. This has greatly assisted in the overall dissemination of its contents and has greatly assisted the subsequent discussion and debate.

19. In his Foreword, David Hanson MP, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, writes:

*“It has rightly been said, many times – alcohol is no ordinary commodity. It is a powerful double-edged sword which our society must handle with care. It is a source of pleasure to many and anathema to some. It can brighten our leisure, bolster our tourist trade and generate profit, revenue and employment. It can also wreck lives and families, destroy health and well-being and place burdens on our police and other public services. It has been a focus for criminal activity, helping prolong conflict in our community and undermining economic stability. As a responsible society we have a duty to manage both the elements”.*

20. The review goes on to acknowledge “*More young people are drinking at an earlier age. Some are drinking more and some are drinking more irresponsibly*”. Equally it should be acknowledged that many young people take a very responsible attitude towards their drinking, many choosing to abstain on health grounds or as part of a fitness regime

21. **The Licensing System** must be more accountable and Licensees must acknowledge that they have an important role to play in the protection of individuals and communities. The response argues that the granting of licences should remain with the courts and not be transferred to District Councils.

22. **Opening Hours:** There is ample proof that increased availability leads to increased consumption. There is no doubt that responses influenced the debate with regard to 24 hour opening. This was removed as an option from the consultation document and replaced with a modest extension. The Committee do not accept that existing opening hours have a detrimental impact on the tourist trade or the business world.

23. The document frankly acknowledges the problem of Underage Drinking. “*To do nothing – this would ignore statistical evidence showing the significant numbers of children and young people who have had an alcoholic drink, the number who drink regularly and the number who have been drinking more than once.*” (p21).



24. It is encouraging to read *“The PSNI regards underage drinking as a key enforcement issue and has requested powers to help them gather evidence of illegal sales to under 18’s”*.

25. The response urged the Government to strengthen the hands of the Police in every way possible to *“protect our children from harm”*.

26. **Children and Young People:** The review acknowledges the problem of Underage Drinking and its impact on society. The behaviour of young people while under the influence is seriously affecting family life, performance in school and seriously damages their health and fitness levels. Children’s Certificates should be enforced and not abolished, as recommended by the review.

27. The response urged the Government to consider legislation to encourage “proof of age” and not to rely on voluntary codes.

28. There is ample legislation already in place to protect children. The Children Order has powers to protect children wherever they are. There is a clear lack of evidence on the impact of parenting on alcohol misuse and the increase in children and young people having access to alcohol at home, many experiencing their first drink at home or from a member of the family.

29. **Enforcement:** There is a clear need for additional powers to be given to the Police in the whole area of the licensed trade and registered clubs. It is regretted that Off Licences are not being subjected to the same review.

ZOE VALLELY, Convener

## OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. We give thanks to Almighty God for His hand of blessing upon this work of social welfare and outreach. Without Him our labour would be in vain.

2. The work of the Presbyterian Residential Trust now falls within the remit of the OPS Committee, but our *raison d’être* and aims remain that of providing a high standard of residential and nursing care and sheltered housing accommodation, within a spiritual environment, for elderly members of our own Church and other denominations.

3. The staff in all of our units are a most valuable asset to the work and are to be commended for the very professional and caring manner in which they look after all the needs of the residents.

4. The administrative staff in Church House, under the Residential Services Manager, Mrs Linda Wray, provide an efficient central management structure to assist and encourage those who work in our homes and we are deeply indebted to them.

5. The replacement home for Sunnyside House in Bangor is now fully operational and we express thanks to all those involved in the project. The residents and staff are settling-in well to their new environment, it is a modern and pleasant place in which to work and live. Like the new Corkey House, this is a project of which the whole Church can be proud and we gratefully acknowledge the providing hand of our God in its planning, construction and occupation.

6. The financial burden of the work continues to generate deep concern within the Committee. The accounts for 2005 again show an alarming deficit and our reserves are being eroded annually. Issues such as shortage in Government funding, under-occupancy of homes and the recruitment and retention of staff allied to the need for expensive agency staff make the task of living within our means very difficult. The Committee will continue to meet this challenge in our revenue account by investigating means of reducing these serious shortfalls.

7. We are dismayed that the United Appeal no longer contributes directly to the work in our homes. The United Appeal Board has agreed to meet with the Committee with a view to taking forward our concerns in connection to our financial arrangements. If the desire of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is to show its commitment to care of the elderly as a ministry of the Church then it has to realise that such work comes with a premium necessary for its continuance.

JA NOBLE, Convener

## FAMILY SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. As a Church we recognise the changes in family life and the stresses and pressures which family members face on a daily basis. Under the new structure we hope to address some of these issues and encourage members of our Church to seek help. The Family Services Committee currently is made up of Child Protection, PCI Counselling, South Belfast Friendship House and Presbyterian Family Holidays. A panel focusing on Infertility and Childless Issues is currently in the process of producing a series of leaflets that will be available to the wider Church.

2. As a Committee we hope to identify further ways in which we can help deal with the real issues. We would value your prayers as we seek to serve God in these practical ways within our Church.

*Rev Norman Cameron reports:*

### TAKING CARE

3. The Child Protection Monitoring Committee has a new name – “Taking Care” – reflecting the name of the new edition of the Guidelines issued in 2005 and a more positive presentation of our work.

4. A very successful “Taking Care” Conference was held in Church House, Belfast in September 2005 with five hundred people attending. The conference was addressed by Nigel Williams, the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People. He stated: *“The Church needs to recapture its belief in children and its belief of children. It needs to promote the best practice of current child protection policies that have been put together like “Taking Care”. I commend the work that the Presbyterian Church has done on this issue right from the first guidance in 1995, and the excellence of this new resource.”* It is hoped that this will be a biennial conference.

5. A further conference was held in Adelaide Road, Dublin on the 19 November 2005 the Keynote speaker on this occasion was Gearoid o Maoilmhichil, Child Protection Co-ordinator, The National Youth Council of Ireland.

6. Child protection, and awareness training in particular, is a growing area. The Committee is in the process of advertising for a Taking Care Development and Training Officer who will greatly assist in this expanding work. This post has been partly funded by the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society.

7. The office has been dealing well with the increased number of applications for vetting through the new POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults) legislation (formerly PECS). We are pleased with Congregations' co-operation and that the turn around time for checks is now about two weeks.

8. The Committee was delighted that a vetting system is soon to be introduced in the Republic of Ireland. The Youth Council of Ireland has already asked us to quantify our number of leaders.

9. The Committee has launched, in partnership with the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society, a credit card size information leaflet for children reassuring them that the Church cares for them and providing contact details if there are any particular concerns that they wish to communicate. The provision of the Fact Sheet for all volunteer leaders in a small wallet size version is also being considered.

10. This will be my last Report as Convener and I wish to record my thanks to the Committee for their help and guidance over the past twelve years. My thanks to the various Directors and Board Conveners under whom I have served. Last, but by no means least, my thanks to Ellen and Jenny in the office who have fortified me with coffee and biscuits and immense patience as we laboured together in the preparation of the three editions of the Guidelines.

*Mrs Rosemary Simpson reports:*

### **PCI COUNSELLING**

11. PCI Counselling has increased the number of counsellors by 100% from five to ten in response to the demand on our services. The team deal with various problems including marriage breakdowns, sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuse, depression, bereavement, sexual orientation and relationship problems.

12. Counselling takes place at various centres throughout Northern Ireland with many Churches kindly providing premises during the year. This ensures clients are seen as near to their home as possible.

13. Supervision is provided on a monthly basis to give guidance and support to counsellors to ensure the best service for the clients.

14. The counsellors give their time generously and voluntarily and work with dedication and professionalism. Their work is greatly appreciated by the Committee. Donations given by clients are also gratefully received and go towards regular training.

**Referrals:**

Minister	32%
Word of mouth	23%
Yellow pages	21%
Phone Book	8%
Business cards/poster	5%
Herald	5%
Other (UK directory of counselling, Church Family Worker, Church House, Internet, Deaconess, Points for Prayer)	6%

**Average age**

Female	41
Male	46
Couple	36

**Presenting Problem**

Relationship difficulties	
Marital "drift"	10%
Adultery	12%
Lack of communication	9%
Domestic Violence/abuse	7%
Depression	10%
Sexual Abuse	8.5%
Debt	7%
Bereavement	7%
Not coping	7%

(Other issues: low self-esteem, alcoholism, sexuality, anger, obsessive compulsive disorder, eating disorder, anxiety.)

15. The Remarriage Panel continues to give a valuable service to Ministers and couples. The Committee appreciates the voluntary work of the panellists.

16. Thanks are given to all the staff for their work in this valuable Christian service.

*Rev Stuart Finlay reports:*

**PRESBYTERIAN HOLIDAYS**

17. The PCI Family Holiday takes place each Easter at the Share Centre, Lisnaskea. An average of 45 families from across the Church, including families sponsored by the Orphan and Children's Society, enjoy five days of varied activities. The Share Centre offers its usual mix of outdoor activities - canoeing, sailing, banana skiing, go-karting, climbing, archery etc. There are also trips to the Marble Arch Caves and Enniskillen. Our own Youth Team organise games and activities for the children.

18. Every morning begins with a short time of worship for all ages before the day's activities begin. In the evening there is an "Adults only" spot for

deeper study and reflection. Meanwhile the young people have their own group times with the Youth Team.

19. The week of fun, inter-action and learning together passes only too quickly. “That was brilliant! I can’t wait until next year”, someone invariably comments.

LYNDA GRAHAM, Convener

## ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. This recently formed Committee is responsible for the work in Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray’s Court. It is the privilege of Committee members to support and encourage the staff teams working in these centres, providing such a valuable ministry to people whose lives have been blighted and fragmented by difficulties which they could not surmount alone. For some of these people, their experience of the love of Jesus Christ encountered in our centres, has not only changed their lives, it has saved their lives.

2. The Adult Services can bear testimony to the power of the Gospel as expressed by the apostle Paul to the Colossians –

*“all the broken dislocated pieces of the universe – people and things, animals and atoms – get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross, ... Christ brought you near to God’s side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence.” (From Colossians 1, The Message).*

3. **CARLISLE HOUSE:** Unfortunately the level of addiction continues to highlight very starkly the need for centres like Carlisle House. This residential facility offers a service to people who want to deal with their addiction problems. Residents encounter staff who combine Christian compassion with a high degree of professional competence. While the ethos of the centre is one of genuine care, the programme itself is deeply challenging. The whole package has been developed and honed by the staff to make Carlisle House one of the most effective centres helping people with addictions.

4. Throughout 2005 Carlisle House continued to have a high referral rate, many of these being self-referrals. The work remains complex and demanding, requiring not only professional expertise from the staff, but also great resilience and stamina. It is our hope in the incoming year that the newly formed Carlisle House Local Support Committee will be able to bring an added support and encouragement to the staff as they minister on behalf of our Church.

5. **GRAY’S COURT:** Gray’s Court continues to provide a valuable move-on facility for those leaving Carlisle House. Support is given in this vulnerable, transition period to enable tenants to eventually find permanent accommodation and employment or training. The need for this facility and its continual effectiveness is evident throughout the past year. However, recruiting and keeping staff remains a challenge.

*Rev Dr Jackson Buick reports:*

6. **THOMPSON HOUSE:** A Bible study is held regularly by a member of the Local Support Committee, Bryan Marshall, and is usually attended by four residents. The residents attend on a voluntary basis and ask very searching questions.

7. Mr Bryan Marshall continues to engage residents in woodwork classes each week. It is the relationships built in this class that is one of the biggest contributors to residents attending the Bible study.

8. As drug use is increasing in Northern Ireland we have seen an increase in drug use by residents and an increase in drug related offences. Residents quite often come from disturbed family backgrounds and turn to drugs as a way of coping with difficulties they have experienced. It is against this background that staff seek to address offending behaviour and share the love of Christ.

9. As the staff seek to share the love of Christ with the residents – patience, sensitivity, caring and understanding are essential. We would appeal for the prayers of the whole Church as we minister to a very needy section of our society today.

10. Thanks are due to the Local Support Committee for their faithfulness, interest and commitment. Staff and the Committee are planning to visit Hydebanks Wood, the Young Offenders' Centre and Women's Prison to gain a greater understanding of residents' backgrounds.

11. We thank the staff for their dedication and hard work over the year. There have been staffing shortages and all staff have willingly worked extra hours, sometimes at short notice, whenever required.

12. Thompson House is very grateful for the support and prayers of the wider Church.

TOM WILSON, Convener

## OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

1. The Directors report that, during the last financial year which ended 31 December 2005, 97 beneficiaries (31 in the Old Age Fund, 50 in the Women's Fund and 16 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.

2. The Changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

Beneficiaries	Old	Presbyterian	Indigent	TOTAL
Receiving Quarterly Grant	Age Fund	Women's	Ladies Fund	
			Fund	
At 1 January 2005	28	47	15	90
New Grants Provided	2	2	—	4
Deaths	(1)	(5)	—	(6)
	(1)	(2)	—	(3)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
As at 31 December 2005	28	42	15	85

Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	1	1	1	3
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	2	7	—	9
No of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	33	50	16	97

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £81,707 (£25,435 from the Old Age Fund, £41,784 from the Women's Fund and £14,488 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. An annual grant of £740, paid quarterly, was sent to Beneficiaries during the year (2004: £680).

5. A 'Special Gift' of £185 (2004: £170) was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

6. During the year the Directors responded sympathetically to various problems which had been brought to their attention. They gave one-off donations, as needed, to assist in particular cases where immediate financial aid was more appropriate than annual grants. Ministers are asked to bear in mind the possibility of help from these funds in similar cases connected with their own Congregations.

7. The Directors assure that Church that all monies that come to the Funds are carefully and wisely spent.

8. The Directors of the Funds deeply appreciate the kindness and thoughtfulness of those who have remembered the work of the Funds either by gift or bequest, and hope that their example may encourage others to support this vital aspect of the Church's outreach.

9. The Directors of the Funds wish to thank the Staff for the sensitive and sympathetic way in which they carried out the efficient administration of the Funds during the year.

WPH ERSKINE, Honorary Secretary

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly welcome the proposed plans for a vetting system, similar to that provided by the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Scheme, to be available in the Republic of Ireland.
3. That the General Assembly commend the ongoing work of the "Journey Towards Healing" programme and thank the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister for their ongoing support and encouragement.
4. That the General Assembly welcome the recent report of the Suicide Taskforce, and encourage the Church to take every opportunity to become involved in the support process.
5. That the General Assembly commend the Police Service of Northern Ireland for the setting up of a taskforce in response to the increasing number of

attacks against the elderly and call upon everyone to be vigilant regarding the safety of elderly relatives, friends and neighbours.

6. That the area of work carried out by Students Services be placed under the Specialist Ministries Committee.

7. That all work in relation to disability be placed under the Family Services Committee.

8. That the customary grants made by the Board of Social Witness, up to a total of £3,000, be met from the Incidental Fund.

9. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 281 of the Code as follows:-



# BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Convener: Rev EDWARD J HYNDMAN

Director: Miss ROSALIND STIRLING

Deputy Director: Rev IAN T McKEE

1. Following the integration of youth and children's work, the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry has continued to develop its strategy over this year, appointing its Strategy Committee to select areas for future development. The nine areas agreed by the Board are:

Internal to the Board:

- To ensure that at the heart of our projects, events, strategy, policy and procedure there is Biblical teaching, prayer and faith in Christ Jesus;
- To ensure that our ministry is grounded in Scripture, founded in relationship building and aimed at making disciples who live in obedience to God.

Beyond the Board:

- Ensure that ministry to and with children and young people is appropriately resourced and profiled;
- Help local Churches find programmes appropriate to their context, together with suitable resources and structures for children's and youth ministry;
- Encourage Congregations to carry out good practice in employing and supporting workers in children's and youth ministry;
- Develop good relationships and effective communication with Congregations and local leaders in children's and youth ministry;
- Support parents and families in their task of leading children and young people to become disciples of Christ and live out their faith;
- Build clear lines of communication between our Board and other organisations involved in children's and youth ministry;
- To understand the world of children and young people, and gain better insight into that which shapes their culture.

These nine areas have been delegated to the appropriate Committee.

2. The Board commends and encourages parents, Sunday School teachers, organisational leaders, volunteers, full and part-time workers for their dedication, which is the heartbeat of our denomination's ministry to children and young people. Let us embrace the opportunity we have to pray for and encourage them.

3. The Board is grateful for the work of the Youth and Children's department staff: Roz Stirling (Director), the Rev Ian McKee (Deputy Director), Miss Lois McIlrath (Administrative Officer), Mrs Claire Child, Mrs Janet

Maxwell, Mrs Valerie Moore, Miss Pamela Patton, Mrs Donna Thompson and Mrs Marianne Trueman. The dedication and enthusiasm they bring to their work is deeply appreciated.

4. The Board wishes to thank Graeme Thompson who as Youth Development Officer for Northern Ireland continues to bring support and training to many Congregations. The Board welcomes the appointment of Barbara McDade as Children's Development Officer and thanks her for the good work she has begun, delivering training and support in the area of children's ministry. We encourage Kirk Sessions and Congregations to make use of the training and resources these two members of staff offer.

5. The Board is appreciative of the ongoing work of Mrs Helen Bruce, Volunteers' Co-ordinator, for the pastoral care, co-ordination and encouragement that she brings to all involved in the SWIM (Servants Working in Mission) programme and the Year Team.

6. The Board is in the process of appointing a new Preparing Youth for Peace Programme Officer, and hopes to make an announcement by the time of the Assembly.

7. The Board wishes to thank Mr Lawrence Walker for his work as Centres' Director and for all his support to the Centres Panel which will report under the General Board. We extend our thanks and appreciation to Mrs Gillian Brownlow (Guysmere), Mr Jonathan Henry (Rostrevor) and Mr Kenny Morrison (Lucan) for their work in facilitating the ministry of the centres.

8. The Board thanks Miss Ruth Mitchell and Mrs Jill Condell, Regional Youth and Support Workers for Donegal and Monaghan Presbyteries respectively, for the encouragement that they have brought to many youth groups and the support that they have been able to give to leadership teams in these regions.

9. The Board wishes to thank all those who support the Youth and Children's Projects. The magnificent sum of £88,710 was raised for the *Helping Hands* Project 2004/05. The Board would wish to thank all Sunday Schools and Youth Groups who worked so hard to raise this money. The current Youth and Children's Project 2005/2006, *Yes! Tak! Da!* is being well supported and the final figure will be reported next year.

10. The Board is indebted to the Church for the finance received through the United Appeal allocation. The Board deeply appreciates the effort required by Congregations to meet their targets, permitting its work to continue and seeks to use this financial assistance with great prudence.

11. The Board records its gratitude to the Rev Desi Paul for the sterling service he has offered over the past seven years convening both the Youth Home Mission and Ministry Opportunities Committees. His passion, wisdom and attention to detail have been invaluable to the work of the Board.

## **RECOGNISED MINISTRIES**

*The Rev David Bruce, Regional Director of Scripture Union in Britain and Ireland, reports:*

1. Scripture Union has begun work in Israel. This new project is part of my regional responsibilities, in addition to the former Soviet Republics. There

are early signs of real encouragement and a part time staff worker has been appointed to train volunteers, promote the work of Sunday School in Churches and run three holiday camps.

2. In the former Soviet Republics, I have been able to visit SU work in Ukraine, Armenia, St Petersburg, Moscow, Siberia and Tajikistan during 2005/6. In each place my role has been to help our senior staff with planning, conduct training events for staff and volunteers and encourage helpful relationships with Churches. It has been especially encouraging to see the Yes! Tak! Da! Project launched during the year and to plan towards the building of a sports hall in Ukraine and a camp centre for street kids and others in St Petersburg. This partnership with PCI will extend to a visiting camp team, led by the Rev David and Mrs Gwen Montgomery in July/August 2006. Scripture Union International is profoundly grateful to PCI for this support.

3. In Britain and Ireland, where SU has been established for almost 150 years, there continues to be signs of deep growth – especially in our work to engage with the Bible and encourage unchurched and de-churched young people and children to do the same. In this respect, we have conducted two major pieces of research (one in Australia and the other in the USA) to help us understand how the use of the Bible is changing. We are planning to host a Europe-wide Forum in November 2007 to synthesise the outcomes of this research with reflection on the situation here. This will be attended by editors, writers and practitioners alike, and will help to inform our decisions about the next generation of Bible resources produced in English by the movement.

4. The Assembly should know that I am a member of the Council and Board of Evangelical Alliance (UK) and in Northern Ireland. Following the highly successful Kingdom Come event for Christian leaders from around Ireland held in Belfast in January 2006, I warmly commend membership of the EA to PCI Congregations, as an expression of evangelical unity and a credible voice of faith on many issues in the public square.

*The Rev George McClelland, National Director of the Boys' Brigade, Northern Ireland, reports:*

1. The Boys' Brigade has a unique place within our community. It is the oldest Christian uniformed organisation for young people. It continues to bring a challenge to young people today by providing a vibrant programme. The Boys' Brigade has a place within the wider Youth Sector of the Community. The challenge is to stand with other youth organisations, faith-based or otherwise, and tell the great story of our work which is going on in our society - a work carried out by so many volunteers, week by week, month by month and year by year.

2. There are approximately 16,000 boys in the Boys' Brigade, and this presents the challenge to all our leaders to be trained, equipped and to know how to develop the BB method and programme so that the boys will get the best from it all. We want all our boys to have the best experience in their BB life. Above all we have the challenge to tell the boys of Christ and that He has come to bring life and life to the full.

3. I have the great privilege of being part of this work day by day in administration, in my contacts with a variety of other youth bodies, of

encouraging boys, officers, leaders and chaplains as I meet them at Anniversary Services, Enrolment Services, Inspection and Display evenings and at other times throughout the year.

*The Rev John Peacock, Youth Project Officer for Youth Link: NI, reports:*

1. Youth Link: NI's renewed vision is to support Churches working together to develop excellence in youth work and ministry, enabling young people and youth practitioners to be agents of transformation in a divided society. We seek to do this by working together with Church bodies and youth organisations to encourage and equip young people to participate in Church and society and in the building of a shared future together, to facilitate strategies for the development of youth ministry within the Churches and to integrate the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into all aspects of policy and practice in youth work and ministry.

2. My specific role within Youth Link is to work with Churches to provide opportunities for young people to be involved in active citizenship, peace building and reconciliation strategies.

The key elements of my work over the past year have been:

- the completion of the Kairos resource material. The Kairos programme is an opportunity for young people from different traditions and cultural backgrounds to come together to develop mutual understanding, tolerance and respect and to work on a reconciliation project together. 20 facilitators have been trained to run the Kairos programme;
- training young adults through the Education for Peace programme to be active Christian citizens and giving them the opportunity to do this at Summer Madness and Streetreach;
- facilitating conflict transformation programmes for young people in areas of disadvantage and social exclusion;
- as chairperson of the Youth and Children's Ministry Board's Reconciliation Working Group I have worked closely with the Deputy Director on the oversight of the Preparing Youth for Peace (PYP) programme, the recruitment of a new PYP officer and with a small committee on the full revision of the PYP manual.

3. In the coming year I look forward to:

- working with further groups of young people who have completed the PYP programme and would like to continue, by way of the Kairos programme, a journey of understanding with young people from different backgrounds;
- exploring models of working with young people in the formal education context to promote peace building, reconciliation and Christian citizenship;
- supporting the new PYP officer and working on the training of new PYP facilitators, based on the new manual.

4. I wish to thank the Presbyterian representatives on the Board of Youth Link for their encouragement and all who have supported the work through their prayers.

*The Rev David Stanfield, Training and Development Officer for Youth Link: NI, reports:*

1. Youth Link exists to serve the four largest denominations in Ireland through supporting and encouraging the development of Youth Ministry in local Congregations. My work on behalf of Youth Link continues to be both encouraging and rewarding.

2. My role in Youth Link is to work primarily with the Youth departments of the three largest protestant denominations in the provision of training and support in ways that they deem appropriate. This year I have led workshops at Summer Madness and Autumn Soul, provided training for ordinands at the Church of Ireland Theological College, worked with the Professor of Practical Theology at Union Theological College and the Convener of Training for the Board to improve the quality of the modules in Youth Ministry offered on the BTh Degree. I also co-ordinated and lectured on the Youth Ministry Certificate Course offered at Union Theological College and have been part of the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for the review and revision of the PYP programme facilitators' manual.

3. The accessibility of the new accredited courses in Youth Ministry has led to an exponential increase in demand across Northern Ireland with over 300 leaders achieving the required standard of competence in the past 12 months. I have been involved in the delivery of courses at Diocesan level and in local Churches, as well as in Belfast Bible College where the accreditation forms the core of the module in Youth Ministry on the Diploma course.

4. Through Youth Link I am delighted to be able to continue to play a part in the development and delivery of training that is Christian in its ethos, theological in its underpinning and professional in the assessment of the competence and skills required to enable those whom we entrust with the faith development of our young people to be more adequately equipped for the task. I wish to thank you for your prayers and encouragement over the past year.

## **TRAINING COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee thanks God for his guidance and blessing on the Committee and the working groups during the past year.

### **Certificates in Youth Ministry:**

2. The Youth Ministry Certificate Course has again been run at Union Theological College. This year the course has taken place on Tuesday nights with over 30 in attendance. A residential weekend has again been central to the implementation of the course.

3. The Children's Ministry Course ran at Union Theological College with 29 attending, from September to November 2005 and from January to March 2006 at Dromore Presbyterian Church in Omagh with 25 attending. The Committee is delighted with both the excellence and success of these courses.

**Development of Youth Ministry Modules as part of BTh Degree at Union College:**

4. No modules have been facilitated this year at Union Theological College. The two modules will be offered in the next academic year (2006-2007).

**Development of Youth Ministry Degree through Oxford Brookes:**

5. Discussions regarding the implementation of a Youth Ministry Degree continue, but at a slow pace due to problems regarding funding. This would be a BA Honours Degree in Youth and Community work and Applied Theology, professionally endorsed by Joint Negotiating Council (JNC), validated and awarded by Oxford Brookes University and run by the Centre for Youth Ministry under their Director, the Rev David Howell.

**‘Building Blocks’ Conferences:**

6. The two conferences, held on Saturday 12 November 2005 at St Patrick’s College of Education, Drumcondra, Dublin, and on Saturday 19 November 2005 at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown, were once again very successful. Wendy Strachan was the keynote speaker at both events. This year’s conferences will take place on Saturday 18 November 2006 in Jordanstown and on Saturday 25th November in Dublin. The keynote speaker will be Marlene le Fever from Colorado, USA. Marlene is Director of Educational Ministries for Cook Communications Ministries, and perhaps best known for her two books - Learning Styles and Creative Teaching Methods.

**Youth Ministry Summer School:**

7. The dates of the Summer School are 20–24 August 2006 at Loughry College, Cookstown. We are delighted to have a number of excellent youth ministry specialists teaching us, including Professors Duffy Robbins and Chap Clark. In addition, we will also have Dee Clark, Maggie Robbins, Andy Hickford and Heather Morris.

**Youth Link**

8. Youth Link continues to support and complement the work of our Board and we are grateful to its representatives for their input into our working groups and Committee.

CRAIG MAWHINNEY, Convener

**RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

1. The work of the Research and Education Committee this year has largely focused on the devising, production, distribution and analysis of the Sunday School and Bible Class questionnaire, together with the Kirk Session survey.

2. In addition, two working groups have been set up. One is tasked to identify the information which is already in the public domain, relating to aspects of youth culture which have recently been, or are currently being, researched. The second is tasked to draw up a proposal which seeks to examine and critique Church culture – with particular emphasis on how this shapes youth and children's ministry.
3. The Committee continues to seek God's guidance as it prioritises research tasks and communicates subsequent findings.

HEATHER LYLE, Convener

## MINISTRY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee and its various working groups have had a busy year. It is grateful for the hard work of the various working groups and gives thanks to God for his help in enabling it to play its part in the wider ministry of the Board and the Church. During the year additional staff appointments have been made - Barbara McDade, Ruth Mitchell and Jill Condell. All three have contributed significantly to the work of both the Committee and its working groups. The Committee are very appreciative of the work done by all our full and part-time staff. It recognises that as new projects or ideas are brought forward they add to an already heavy workload and thanks staff members very sincerely for all their practical support.

### **The Website:**

2. The websites are a very valuable resource provided by the Board. Its working group meets regularly throughout the year under the convenership of the Deputy Director. The launch of two new sites -<pciyac.org> for Ministers, youth and children's leaders, and <pciyouth.org> specifically for young people, have been well received and are both being well used. The domain name for a children's site has also been purchased and it is hoped soon to start work on what will undoubtedly be a major challenge. The development of these sites further underlines the advanced nature of the integration of youth and children's work. Youth and children's leaders are encouraged to register on our websites so that they can receive regular email information.

### **The YAC Project:**

3. The *Yes! Tak! Da!* Project in partnership with Scripture Union working in Russia and Ukraine has been well received. Once again the project has been greatly aided by the production of DVD material for use by Congregations. The help of David Bruce from Scripture Union has been invaluable in pulling all the information together. The proposed YAC Project for 2006/07 will support the work of Ilona and Csaba Veres in Romania in the provision of accommodation in Cluj for young adults.

**Youth and Children's Workers:**

4. The Board continues to provide support for those in full time youth work within our Congregations by arranging training days and retreats throughout the year. We welcome the appointment of the first full time congregational children's worker in Hamilton Road, Bangor and trust that this may inspire others as they consider a vision for children's work in their own Congregations. Graeme Thompson, who is particularly involved in this support work, also provides Churches with vital information and support when considering whether or not a youth worker is appropriate for their situation. Barbara McDade works alongside Graeme with respect to giving advice regarding the appointment of children's workers. Under consideration at the moment is a new manual to complement the material from 'Peninsula'. It is hoped that this new document will help Congregations think through the ministry implications of employing a full time youth or children's worker.

**Youth Centres:**

5. The Youth Centres' Review Panel, under the auspices of the General Board, has continued its work this year and has consulted widely on any possible future provision. There is an ongoing revenue problem and a considerable deficit has accumulated over the last number of years. Lucan, however, has been turned around and in 2005 showed an operational profit. Operational costs for Guysmere continue to break even while Rostrevor, due to a decline in bookings, operated at a deficit.

**Preparing Youth for Peace:**

6. The revised PYP manual is at an advanced stage. A copy of the revised manual has been forwarded on PDF format to Presbytery appointed representatives of the Board. The PDF file has also been sent to the manual working group and the Reconciliation working group. A special meeting of the Board has been called for April 6<sup>th</sup> when it is hoped that the final format for the revised manual will be agreed for publication. It is hoped that the manual will be published by the end of May.

7. David Smith worked extremely hard in training facilitators for PYP and the Committee appreciate all the work that he has done. His post is now vacant and steps are being taken to fill that post. The Committee welcomes the appointment of Mrs Laura Coulter as the adult peacemaking officer and appreciates the contribution she has already made in the revision of the PYP manual.

**Resources Production and Promotion**

8. In conjunction with the Board of Mission in Ireland it is hoped to begin work on a new Youth Discipleship Course aimed at teenagers. It is also proposed that the Committee examines the resources currently available to help parents in their responsibility to pass on the Christian faith to their children. It is hoped soon to be reviewing and recommending material to Congregations and parents.

GRAEME KENNEDY, Convener



## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

1. The Ministry Opportunities Committee continues to seek to provide opportunities for young people and others in our Church to serve in as wide a range of activities as possible, developing the idea of 'every member ministry'. New ideas will always be welcomed and considered.

### Summer Outreach Teams:

2. Teams this year are being sent to Newry, Carlow, Lucan, Bailieborough, Donemana, Lowe Memorial, Lisnabreen, Conlig, Tobermore, Letterkenny, Kilcooley, Woodvale, Mountjoy and Ballycastle. These teams are of great benefit to members and Congregations alike. More Congregations are showing interest in receiving teams but the number of teams can only increase if the numbers of volunteers increase.

### Year Team and Volunteers:

3. Year Team: The current Year Team is made up of three young people and they are serving in the Congregations of First Magherafelt, Kilfennan and First Coleraine.

Volunteers: They are now known as SWIM volunteers (Servants Working In Mission). Six volunteers currently serve in Ireland, with two in Kenya. Again, both those who serve and the receiving Congregations benefit greatly from these schemes.

4. The working group is currently reviewing the whole process with consideration being given to amalgamating the two schemes in Ireland and moving to a slightly different method of working. It is hoped that this will develop in the current year.

### Camps:

5. The popularity of the summer camps remains high. All six camps are being repeated this year. Discussions continue to identify ways to include more individuals with special needs.

### Overseas Teams:

6. Last year's teams proved very successful, however an incident on the Brazil team raised great concern when it came to light that part of a roof collapsed during construction. The work had been checked and approved by the on-site architect as well as our team leader who was an experienced builder. It was decided to put additional measures in place to ensure greater safety by providing training in building site safety to European standards for all team members, as well as having an experienced builder leading the team.

7. Subsequently, due to the inability in identifying a suitable and available leader, as well as a lower than normal number of applicants, it was decided not to send the team back to Brazil to continue this project.

8. The Working Group have now been asked to liaise with the Board of Mission Overseas and other appropriate bodies to determine if this Board should send teams on building projects in the future. It is hoped that the working group

will be in a position to report its recommendations to the October meeting of the Board.

9. Teams organised for Ukraine and Wembley will continue as planned.

#### **Concorde Fund:**

10. This trust fund continues to be managed according to the terms of the trust. It aims to provide a small travel grant to Presbyterians doing short term missionary service which they have organised themselves.

#### **Work on the Ground:**

11. Tribute must again be paid to all the staff and volunteers who work so well as a team to make all the arrangements come together. Without their dedication it would be impossible to organise such a worthy programme of events to benefit both individuals and Congregations.

DESI PAUL, Convener

## **MINISTRY EVENTS COMMITTEE**

1. The Ministry Events Committee continues to oversee the major events of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. The Fun Day takes place in May, two Youth Nights take place at the end of the General Assembly each year, the Bible Conference Route 66 (for ages 17+) is held in August and the MAD weekend in October. We look forward with great expectation to what our God will do through these events in the coming year.

#### **Fun Day:**

2. The 'Yes! Tak! Da!' Fun Day will take place on Saturday 13 May 2006 at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra. This event hosts the largest gathering of Presbyterians – regularly between 8,000 and 10,000 attend – and it therefore requires considerable planning and effort in order to take place each year. One hundred and fifty volunteers are needed to staff the event. It is planned that this event will be held bi-annually from now on - the next Fun Day taking place in 2008.

#### **Youth Night:**

3. The Youth Nights still gather thousands of Presbyterian young people from every part of Ireland – North and South – for fellowship and to hear the life changing message of the gospel. The Youth Night dates are 9 and 10 June 2006.

#### **Route 66:**

4. The Bible conference held at Loughry College continues to fulfil its remit to provide high quality and relevant Biblical teaching for our young people. The conference aims to cross the whole terrain of scripture over a three-year period, providing a thorough base for Bible understanding. This year, as has been the practice in previous conferences, we are tapping into Biblical

knowledge from far and near. The main speakers are Duffy Robins and Gary Millar and the dates for the Conference are 25-28 August 2006.

**MAD:**

5. The purpose of the MAD weekend remains the same – to create a format of a youth weekend for youth groups to attend, so removing the organisation from leaders and allowing them to work on relationships and evangelism with their own young people. After eight years the event continues to be oversubscribed each year. Through the keynote speaker we present an evangelistic message, with numbers of young people coming to a living faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The dates of the weekend are 27-29 October 2006.

**Future Events:**

6. There is great enthusiasm as the children and youth elements of the Board's ministry work well together. We are continuing to explore new ventures and events for younger children.

JONATHAN MOXEN, Convener

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That a grant of £8,240 be paid from the Incidental Fund to Youth Link NI.
3. That the General Assembly approve the Youth and Children's Project 2006-7, to support the work of Ilona and Csaba Veres in Romania in the provision of accommodation in Cluj for young adults.
4. That the resignation of the Rev Desi Paul as Convener of the Ministry Opportunities Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev John Flaherty be nominated in his place.
5. That the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed as follows:

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev ROBERT HERRON

1. In the past year the main foci of the Board of Education, through its two Assembly Committees of State Education and University Education, have included: representing the Church in the process that will result in new arrangements for educational provision in Northern Ireland; Presbyterian Patronage in National Schools in the Republic of Ireland and University Chaplaincy.

*Mr Jim Caves*

2. The Board was saddened to be informed of the death of Mr Jim Caves, Convener of the State Education Committee. Jim was appointed Convener of the State Education Committee at the 2004 General Assembly and he brought to his convenue a lifetime of educational experience and a wealth of knowledge of the public sector. He served two terms as a Transferor Representative on the Belfast Education and Library Board and in June 2005 was appointed by the Minister of Education to serve a third term but a sudden deterioration in health prevented him from taking up the appointment. He was a Presbyterian Representative on the Transferor Representatives' Council and represented the Transferring Churches on various departmental working groups including the Strategic Implementation Group on Post Primary Education in Northern Ireland. Jim had a passionate concern for the provision of an education system that centres on the development of every child and his contribution to the work of the Board was greatly valued by the Church.

## STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### **Reconstitution of Boards of Governors**

1. Towards the end of 2005, the Boards of Governors of schools in Northern Ireland were reconstituted. Many members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have accepted the responsibility of serving as a school governor for the next four years. The Church is particularly grateful to those 800 members (approximate number) who are now serving as Transferor Representatives and working in partnership with others in Controlled schools.

#### **Governor Training**

2. The Board encourages governors to make full use of the training offered by the Education and Library Boards. With the help of officers who have responsibility for governor support and training in the five area Boards, the

Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) has been arranging training sessions for Transferor Governors. This training coincides with the launch of the TRC's ethos document *'Moving Forward Together: Core values in Controlled Schools in Northern Ireland – Transferors' Perspectives.'* The TRC encourages school governors and others to promote this document when considering the ethos of Controlled schools.

### **Review of Public Administration**

3. The Secretary of State has made announcements about the future of Public Administration in Northern Ireland. The proposals for new structures for education include a single Education Authority, to replace the five Education and Library Boards, and a new statutory Education Advisory Forum. At the time of writing this report there has been no information from the Department regarding the size or membership of the new Education Authority. As there is uncertainty about the shape or location of educational service provision throughout Northern Ireland reassurances need to be given to those who feel they will be far from the centre, either because they will be excluded from the decision making processes or they will discover they live at a distance from the location of the headquarters of the new Education Authority.

4. In the new arrangements the Education Advisory Forum will include representatives of the Transferors and Trustees as well as Integrated, Irish Medium and Voluntary Grammar Schools. The Education Advisory Forum will provide on-going advice to the Department.

5. In December 2005 the leaders of the three Transferring Protestant Churches met with Angela Smith, Minister of Education, and raised concerns regarding the position of Transferors in the new structure. The point was stressed that the TRC is under-resourced and does not have the capacity to adequately represent the views of the Controlled sector to which it is organically linked. There are some 1800 representatives of the Churches serving on the Board of Governors of Controlled schools.

6. The Churches have sought clarification regarding the new process for the appointment of principals and vice-principals to Controlled schools which will replace the Teaching Appointments Committees of the Education and Library Boards.

### **Education Funding**

7. The method and level of funding of education in Northern Ireland continues to be a challenge to those who are delivering the service. Some schools are able to end the financial year with a healthy balance in their account while others are struggling to survive and are being forced to make staff redundant. That pupil numbers have a direct impact on the amount any school receives is something that might be expected, however, the fact that some schools are not compensated when they have extremely high staffing costs because their staff are all at the top of the pay scale hardly seems a fair system.

8. It is recognised that the Minister of Education must argue a case for education resources from a finite Northern Ireland budget, however for a second year all five Education and Library Boards have been put in the situation where

they are asked to make substantial savings on the services they are charged to deliver. This is happening at a time when the Boards are being directed to put in place arrangements that will lead to a smooth transition to one Education Authority.

### **Future Post-Primary Arrangements**

9. 2008 will be the last year of the Transfer Test for children in Primary 7 and schools will lose the right to select pupils on the basis of how they perform in any test used to measure academic achievement. The decision to end 'academic selection' has not received universal acceptance. The Moderator received delegations arguing in favour of its retention. Some argued that a higher percentage of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in Northern Ireland go to university than children from similar backgrounds in England; it was said that pupils in Northern Ireland have a right to a grammar school education; others felt that a decision to remove academic selection would destroy good schools; some expressed the view that Northern Ireland has a problem at the lower end of the academic spectrum and it is unfair that those at the higher end should be disadvantaged; it was suggested that the decision to remove academic selection in a situation where 98% of the pupils are educated in state funded schools would encourage the development of private fee paying schools; and it was stated that the statistics quoted by the Department of Education and which form the basis of the argument for the abolition of 'academic selection' is based on research that has not been peer reviewed.

10. The arguments challenging the practice and questioning the value of 'academic selection', in the Northern Ireland context, have been well rehearsed in the various reports since the 'Burns Report' (2001) and include information such as: many grammar schools have reduced the level of 'academic achievement' required for entry to the school in order to fill pupil places; in some areas when the grammar schools fill all their places the number of remaining pupils is so low that a secondary school is not viable and this situation is exacerbated by the current decline in pupil numbers across Northern Ireland; in secondary schools in Northern Ireland 30% of pupils are entitled to free schools meals (the measure used for Targeting Social Need) and in grammar schools the figure is 7% of pupils, suggesting that academic selection and social selection appear to be closely related; and perhaps the most shocking statistics were quoted in the Secretary of State's speech in January 2006 when he stated that 25% of the Northern Ireland workforce have no qualifications compared to 13% in the UK as a whole and only 12% of the Northern Ireland workforce has a degree or equivalent, compared to 18% in the UK.

11. An outsider looking at the present system of post primary education in Northern Ireland would see a highly complex system which accommodates academic selection, religious segregation, religious integration, gender separation (within both the grammar and secondary sectors) and Irish medium. These choices exist within the context of a downturn in pupil numbers which is having an adverse effect on the system as a whole and some schools in particular. Another factor to add to the complexity of the situation is the upgrading of the schools' estate. Many new schools are provided through Private Public Finance schemes which involve a long term agreement between

government and private financiers. As the contract involves payments over a 25 or 30 year period it is important that the school is sustainable in terms of its pupil numbers. It is clear that future provision needs to be carefully planned and managed.

12. The Churches have been generally supportive of the process leading to the Consultation on the Proposal for a draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order (December 2005) which included proposals regarding: the revision of the Northern Ireland Curriculum; the introduction of a curricular Entitlement Framework; the abolition of academic selection; new arrangements for the suspension and expulsion of pupils; and some other matters. In its submission to the Consultation on the draft Education Order, the TRC took the view that it had to consider the needs of all pupils within the education system and attempted to give a balanced response to the vision and principles of these proposals. However, having listened carefully to the views of others who support academic selection and to parents who are not convinced that the proposals will make a positive difference in the provision of post-primary education, the TRC has urged the Minister to address the lack of public confidence regarding the future of Northern Ireland's education system.

### **Religious Education Curriculum Review**

13. It was reported at last year's General Assembly that the Proposed Revised Core Syllabus for Religious Education in Grant-Aided Schools is with the Department of Education having been recommended by the Four Main Christian Churches and a full 'equality impact assessment' is to be conducted by the Department. The Equality Impact Assessment was published in March 2006 and the closing date for responses to the consultation is 31 May 2006.

### **Stranmillis University College**

14. During the year the leaders of the Methodist Church, the Church of Ireland and the Moderator sought a meeting with the Minister to express disappointment and regret at the process and outcome of the legislative changes to the governance of Stranmillis University College which removed designated places for Church nominees. The Minister informed the Churches that the Department of Employment and Learning had acted on the legal advice that there was no 'objective justification' to reserve three places on the governing body for nominees of the three Protestant Churches and to do so would be a breach of equality legislation. During the consultation process, there were four objections to continued representation by the three main Protestant Churches on the Board of Governors of Stranmillis. It is the view of the Church that Equality legislation is not producing equality of treatment across the education sectors. Also, this decision will make it even more difficult to advance the process of shared schooling throughout Northern Ireland.

### **Acknowledgement**

15. The education system is going through a period of rapid change. Change is to be expected and has become the norm in many spheres of modern life but too many changes at one time can place an unacceptable level of

pressure on both people and the systems under which they operate. The Church recognises that many people in the education system, administrators, managers, teachers, and support staff are working very hard to deliver a high quality education for our children and young people.

## **REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

### **Primary Schools**

*Rev Nancy Cubitt, Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:*

1. The Central School, Castleblayney, was one of the schools to benefit from the Schools' Building Programme initiated in 2004/5. The school received a grant of 275,000 which built a fine and much needed General Purpose Room. The Moderator, the Right Rev Dr Harry Uprichard officiated at the Opening Ceremony on 14 October 2005 and guests included local politicians and representatives from the Department of Education and Science and the Irish National Teachers' Organization.

2. The subject of Patronage has exercised our minds considerably in the past months. The Presbytery is the Patron in Presbyterian schools and it has become apparent that Presbytery is not adequately resourced or financed to deal with some of the issues involved in education provision. One of our Patrons is involved in an Employment Tribunal and several serious problems have arisen in other schools as well. The Board of Education passed a resolution to support the Presbytery of Donegal in employing legal expertise to ensure that Presbytery's case is represented in the Employment Tribunal but issues remain regarding legal costs and the position of the Church if Presbytery is unsuccessful in defending its case. Patrons have been asking for advice and support on a range of concerns and a small group has been established to look into some of the issues relating to Presbyterian Patronage.

3. A half-day conference was held in Donegal on 17 February 2006 for Patrons' Representatives on Boards of Management. This was to encourage and support those who serve our schools in this capacity. Speakers included Mr Frank Fox, Regional Officer for the Dept of Education and Science based in Sligo, and the Rev Canon John McCullagh from the Church of Ireland Board of Education. We were also pleased to welcome the Convener of the Board, the Rev Robert Herron.

4. The question of adequate insurance arises on a frequent basis with one school having received assurance that their Board of Management and Patron were insured only to find out this was not the case. All schools under Presbyterian Patronage have been asked to check their insurance cover.

5. At least one of our schools has undergone the new Whole School Evaluation inspection. This is a thorough inspection, as the name suggests, involving interviews with Parents, Boards of Management and Patrons. Reports from these inspections are to be published on the Department of Education and Science's website. Training needs to be given in preparation for these



inspections and we hope to liaise with our Church of Ireland colleagues on this issue.

6. Material for the delivery of the new curriculum is now with schools, with courses for every subject except Religious Instruction. This is the sole responsibility of the Patron. The Church of Ireland Patrons have instructed their schools to use the "Follow Me" Programme compiled by the Church of Ireland with input from the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. To date PCI has not taken a similar step. Consideration should be given to doing the same with the addition of specific instruction from our own denomination.

7. Primary School management is proving a challenge at the moment for some of our Patrons, but with the support of the Board of Education, they will hopefully see their way through the issues that have arisen. It is hoped to reach a time when the positive in school management is evident, with the immense opportunity to form our own ethos and implement our own Biblical and Evangelical faith so as to influence the formative minds under our care.

### **Secondary Education Committee**

*Mr Brian Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:*

1. The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a body comprising of representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends. It distributes the Block Grant received from the Government and coordinates education policy among the above Churches.

2. The Committee was pleased to be able to increase grants for the school year 2006/07 on a scale from boarding 1,140 - 4,725 ( 1,140 - 4,500) and day 480 - 1,800 ( 480 - 1,710). An increase in certain allowances was also agreed in relation to the reckoning of assessments. This resulted in improved access to grants for a number of families.

3. There has been no further progress on the issue of the provision of state-funded chaplains to voluntary secondary schools although some schools have continued to make such appointments from their own funds. The Department of Education & Science (DE&S) has been reticent to support a pilot project even though the significant benefit of a chaplaincy service to adolescents is manifest.

4. There was a regrettable change in policy by the DE&S in relation to the appointment of a chaplain to the Royal & Prior Comprehensive. The new appointee had been appointed and was offered a permanent contract by the Board of Management, as had been the practice in that and other comprehensive schools as the post is ex quota. The DE&S subsequently insisted that the appointment be on an annual (temporary) basis.

5. A number of schools had their applications for the Summer Works Grant Scheme 2005 rejected on the grounds of being fee charging schools. Subsequently the Committee was delighted to learn that, following representations from it and from the Irish Schoolheads Association, the decision had been reversed and that the DE&S had again acknowledged the eligibility of

the Protestant voluntary secondary schools to participate in this and other building grant schemes.

6. Your prayers are requested for the continuing work of all of the bodies which seek to maintain and improve educational standards for our children.

### **School Chaplain's Report**

#### **Royal & Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe**

*Rev Stanley Stewart reports:*

1. I express gratitude to God for the opportunity to minister to over 600 students and 40 staff in the context of a school environment. The main emphasis of my work is:

- (a) Relationship building with the school community, demonstrating approachability and availability through structured pastoral care and participation in school activities;
- (b) Restating the relevance of the Christian message in Morning Assembly and in conjunction with the student-led Christian Union. A highlight of the year was Gospel Concerts during the school day in December when 250 students attended. There is on going work with Child Evangelism Fellowship and Operation Mobilisation.
- (c) Representation on community organisations like the Finn Valley Alliance for Positive Mental Health. I am currently assisting in establishing a project to work in suicide prevention amongst young people attending the four second level schools in East Donegal in a response to an exceptionally high level of youth suicide
- (d) Religious Education: I teach 40% of a full-time teacher timetable and have introduced the new Leaving Certificate course in Religious Education as an examination subject option to the senior students. This very broad course is being well received by the students and is stretching me in delivering it!

2. I am also involved in deputation type meetings to PWAs and frequently conduct worship in vacant Congregations in Donegal. I give thanks for the openness and support available within the school, the community and the local Churches and ask for continuing prayer that the work for God will continue to bring blessing.

ROBERT HERRON, Acting Convener

## **UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

1. Throughout the past year, the work of the University Education Committee has focused mainly upon the provision of chaplaincy support for staff and students working at universities and colleges throughout Ireland. The Committee is grateful for the assistance provided by other Boards of the Church, local Presbyteries and the institutions of third level education, who recognise the

benefits provided by chaplaincy. The Church is asked to remember our university chaplains as they provide pastoral support, spiritual guidance and Christian comment within the universities and colleges.

### **Queen's University Chaplaincy**

2. The new Presbyterian Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue opened its doors at the start of the autumn term. Already, the much improved facilities at the heart of the university have been a great benefit to our chaplaincy effort and to the wider Christian community at Queen's. Rev Steve Stockman, Chaplain in Residence, Lynn Ferguson, Assistant Chaplain, and the team of Resident Volunteers have been enabled to interact with a greater number of students and staff, and a wide range of activities have taken place. The Chaplaincy Centre now complements the work carried out at the Derryvolgie Halls of residence. The vision and support provided by the Board of Social Witness, who through the War Memorial Hostel Committee (now Student Services Committee) financed the extension of the building and run the centre, is much appreciated. PCI now enjoys a new presence in the university area.

### **University of Ulster Chaplaincy**

3. Consultation has taken place regarding the post of Chaplain at Jordanstown with Whiteabbey Congregation, the University administration and recently representatives of the Board of Social Witness. Several Chaplaincy models have been considered in an attempt to create greater support for the Chaplain. It is hoped that an appointment may be made before the start of the new academic year. In the interim, Andrew Howard, Youth Worker with Whiteabbey Congregation, has been providing chaplaincy cover.

4. In Coleraine, Rev John Coulter and in Magee Londonderry, Rev Joe McCormick continue as part-time Chaplains. Over the next few years the proposed expansion of the student population at the Magee campus may mean an increase in the commitment of chaplaincy at this site.

### **Dublin Area**

5. The present joint chaplaincy scheme between the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church in the Dublin area has been in operation for almost five years. Difficulties have been encountered in continuing this scheme mainly because of limited funding. It is hoped that an informal arrangement can be agreed for the future, with the possible inclusion of the Church of Ireland.

6. Following consultation with the Dublin and Munster Presbytery, it was decided to extend the full-time chaplaincy post at Trinity College for a further three years, subject to the approval of the Appraisals Committee. Rev Katherine Meyer completes five years as Chaplain at Trinity in September 2006. The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland approached the Board of Education and asked for an extension of Rev William McLaren's contract for a further three years from September 2006; this was agreed. Rev Frank Sellar continues as part-time Chaplain to St. Mary's Teacher Training College. Mr Baird Lewis and Rev Paul Steiner are appointed by the Methodist Church as

Methodist/Presbyterian Chaplains at Dublin Institute of Technology and University College Dublin respectively.

### **Future Developments in Chaplaincy**

7. Much of the University Education Committee's time is taken up with the practicalities of employing and supporting Chaplains. In the absence of a Secretary to the Board of Education this has become difficult. The Board of Social Witness has responsibility for Chaplains working in hospitals, prisons and the forces. Through the Student Services Committee it already offers support to the Queen's Chaplaincy. The Board of Social Witness has administrative staff with expertise regarding personnel issues and has the capacity and resources to fulfil the role of supporting chaplaincy work in universities. The Board of Education has agreed to ask the Assembly to transfer the responsibility for university chaplaincy to the Board of Social Witness.

### **University Fees**

8. From this autumn students entering higher education face the prospect of leaving university with considerable debts due to the introduction of increased fees at universities in the U.K. It is not yet known how this will affect the numbers of students attending university courses but the Church is concerned that this step will have a negative impact and place undue stress on students during their academic studies.

### **University Chaplains' Reports**

#### **Queen's University**

*Rev Steve Stockman reports:*

1. The new Chaplaincy Centre opened just before term started and we are delighted with the building. Franchising the Café to Roast has proved helpful. The Centre is more welcoming to non Presbyterians and non students and it is a powerful shop window to the progressiveness of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The building has a Student Lounge, a Quiet Room and a Conference Room alongside the Chaplains' Rooms. Chaplaincy has taken on a new presence in the University.

2. It has been a busy year and the support of three interns has been appreciated. There are good numbers attending 'Sundown', the Sunday night study and prayer time. Particular mention must be made of how Helen Bond from Lucan, who is studying theology at the Reformed Theological Seminary of Aix-en-Provence, developed our prayer meetings during her three week placement in February. 'Boots On', the social issues group, attracts a group of students with a wide range of interests and is developing really well.

3. Lynn Ferguson and I are taking 70 students, plus a staff team of ten, to Cape Town this summer. Two teams will go to a Blitz Build in June and another will go in July. As well as building houses we will engage with Fair Trade, HIV/AIDS and Reconciliation projects.

4. Thanks are due to Lynn Ferguson and Mark Drennan, last year's intern, who held the fort during my sabbatical. They put into practice some of the events that are now part of our program and ran a very successful Summer Retreat at the end of term.

### **University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus**

*Rev John Coulter reports:*

1. I am available in the Chaplaincy Office at Coleraine every Wednesday and students and staff are very welcome to drop in or to meet me by appointment if that would be preferable. Sometimes people come in for help with a particular issue or problem while others just drop in for a chat or to say hello - some call regularly and others just as they need to.

2. This year I have been holding a Bible study at lunch time and while numbers have been small I am encouraged by the enthusiasm of the students who take part.

3. The joint service project with the Christian Union to help with a Homework Club in Ballysally has been continuing this year and has been very beneficial to students, children and the Congregation of Ballysally. It has proved to be a great example of partnership in the gospel.

4. The Chaplaincy Team provided an opportunity for staff to think about grief and how to cope with it. A lunch was provided and then the Rev Phillip Campbell spoke about grief to about 50 members of staff. The feedback from these initiatives for staff has been very positive and they have been very useful for developing contacts with members of staff.

### **University of Ulster, Magee Campus**

*Rev Joe McCormick reports:*

1. The chaplaincy team at Magee has been augmented this year by the arrival of a new Methodist chaplain and a renewed contribution from the Church of Ireland. This united Christian front has been well received by staff and students.

2. Concerned with some student 'behaviour' in the neighbourhood and wishing to maintain a good relationship with local residents, the chaplaincy team met with representatives from Student Welfare, the university, and local residents. In association with the new Music Department at Magee, a Community Carol Service was held before Christmas in which all the above groups took part. This is to become an annual event and will take place in a neutral venue, either the Guildhall or Millennium Forum. Some local residents also accepted an invitation to attend the annual 'in-house' carol service. These efforts have had a healing influence on the 'behaviour' situation.

3. Some discussion took place between the part-time Chaplains and the Provost with regard to remuneration of Chaplains. I can only report that this is something our Board has been thinking about since my appointment! One would hope that very soon the part-time Chaplain's role might receive practical recognition.

**Trinity College, Dublin**

*Rev Katherine Meyer reports:*

1. In the Trinity College Chaplaincy we are continuing to develop our ministry of active confessional Christian presence within the public sphere of the university. We offer, in the name of Jesus Christ, hospitality to students and staff of all backgrounds. Invitations to a wide range of events in the Chapel allow members of the College community to continue to explore the depth and richness of different forms of Christian worship. Social gatherings encourage friendships among students from widely divergent backgrounds, and also enable students to meet the Chaplains in a relaxed setting. And ongoing creative exploration of Scripture and its claims provides a continuing foundation for our work, as well as enabling us to work in inter-disciplinary partnership with a diverse range of groups from around the College.

2. Throughout 2005 we continued to serve lunch each Tuesday to a large group of students, often numbering over 100. Our Coffee Room was seldom empty and allowed students and chaplains to meet informally over the sink! Slightly more organised gatherings included day trips to both Clonmacnoise and Armagh, with visits to local sites, hospitality from local Christians, and a shared time of evening prayer all forming part of the day.

3. Weekly services of ecumenical morning prayer, and evening prayer in the tradition of the Taize Community, continued in the College Chapel. Special services provided some of the worship highlights of the year, which included interpretations of the theme of repentance by the College FilmMakers at the beginning of Lent, a sermon by John Lonergan, Governor of Mountjoy Prison in Dublin, at the beginning of the academic year, and a Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent with readings in five languages. The Tuesday evening group, "A Word in Your Ear . . ." enables students and Chaplains to explore together one of the Scripture readings designated for the following Sunday.

4. Alongside the scheduled events of the Chaplaincy, staff and students regularly and increasingly contact me for confidential conversations on a wide range of issues. In the spring, I, along with a colleague, led two bereavement support groups for students, and was in touch with over 35 students in relation to bereavement issues. I have continued my involvement with the Mental Health Steering Group in College, and participated in the review of the Student Counselling Service. The College Chaplains have hosted visitors from Germany, Egypt, and the Church of Ireland Theological College, all of whom were interested in the model of third-level chaplaincy we have been developing here. I gave a paper on our experience to the Greenhills Ecumenical Conference in January 2005. I am serving as Chairperson of the College Chaplains for the academic year 2005-2006.

5. Finally, I continue to be an active member of Presbytery, and to serve on the Churches' Asylum Network, the Race Relations Panel, and the All Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism. I am grateful as ever for the prayers of friends and colleagues across the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and

also for the warm support and prayers of many students and staff. If you are ever in Dublin, you are warmly welcome to come and visit us in House 27.

### **Church of Ireland Teacher Training College, Rathmines**

*Rev Frank Sellar reports:*

1. As a constituent College of Trinity College Dublin, the Church of Ireland College of Education in Rathmines provides training for students who become teachers in the Protestant sector of Primary schools. It is my privilege to be a recourse for the Presbyterian students who hail from all three Presbyteries: Donegal, Monaghan and Dublin and Munster.

### **Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)**

*Rev William McLaren reports:*

1. In conjunction with visiting clergy of other denominations the Chaplain is responsible for worship in College including Morning Prayer, the annual Christmas Carol Service, the Anatomy Department Memorial Service for those who have donated their bodies to the Medical School, and other occasional offices. By maintaining links with other Dublin Ministers I aim to act as a bridge between the College and the City, providing students and staff with information and contact details of local Churches. On Sunday 6 November 2005 Sunday Morning Worship on RTE Radio1 was led by students and staff from RCSI.

2. A weekly "Friendship Lunch" of soup and sandwiches is very well attended and provides the opportunity for informal discussion between students of different disciplines and many nationalities. I make weekly visits to Beaumont Hospital, where a similar event is also increasingly well attended and provides students in the clinical years with the opportunity to reflect on their experience in a relaxed, informal atmosphere. From time to time I visit the other teaching hospitals associated with the College.

3. In partnership with the Habitat for Humanity "Global Village" programme I led a team of 14 students and staff from RCSI who travelled to Uganda in August 2005 to work with local volunteers in the construction of two simple, decent, affordable homes for families in need. While in Uganda we also had the opportunity to visit local schools, a clinic and Church. Nearer home a number of students and staff also worked on the Habitat for Humanity houses which were built as part of the regeneration of Ballymun in north Dublin.

4. I am president of the RCSI Film Society and other clubs and societies continue to welcome the interest of the Chaplain. I sit on the RCSI Student Affairs Committee and the Cultural Affairs Committee. I represent the Presbyterian Church on the Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) and represent the Third Level Chaplains Network (CN3) on the Churches Commission on International Students (CCIS). I am a lay member of the Beaumont Hospital (Research) Ethics Committee.

5. It is a great joy and a real privilege to minister in Third Level Education, especially in an institution as diverse as RCSI and I thank colleagues

throughout the Church and in particular my fellow Chaplains for their prayerful support.

### **University College, Dublin**

*Rev Paul Steiner reports:*

1. Since arriving in Ireland in September 2005, I have been trying to settle into life in Dublin and on the campus. I have joined several student societies and am working with the schools of law, social science, and sports management. With a fellow Chaplain I started a prayer time which meets once a week, called 'Still Point'. Also, I have begun a new chapter of Habitat for Humanity with a student adviser. There are two worship services on campus in March and April at the Belfield Church and my hope is to begin weekly services.

2. I am grateful to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church for giving me the opportunity to serve on the campus of UCD.

*Mr Baird Lewis reports:*

1. The Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Chaplaincy over the past five years has been operating as an ecumenical team ministry. Some recent examples of our working together over the 05/06 academic term are:

- (a) successful planning and implementation of the annual two day all Ireland 3rd Level chaplaincy conference (CN3);
- (b) ongoing shared work on planning volunteering activities such as Habitat for Humanity, the DIT Links program;
- (c) shared work on regularly updating our website, a tool for contact and engagement with the staff/students and a means of evangelisation;
- (d) shared work on organising retreats, guided prayer, services of worship, memorial services;
- (e) shared pastoral care responsibilities (providing cover for each other whilst away and discussing occasional 'case studies');
- (f) numerous ongoing tasks both administrative and pastoral that enable the chaplaincy to function;
- (g) everyday being on site and present to students and staff as well as attending events and being a part of the life of the 3rd level atmosphere.

2. Fundamentally, our team values a person-centred ministry in that we are always concerned about being approachable, available and open to whoever we encounter. Issues like death of family members or friends, mental health and self awareness, and issues of relationships are some of the matters that we encounter frequently. Our job, in a nutshell, is to help carry the light of hope and peace of a loving and caring God on the wider campus of DIT through our ministry.

ROBERT BUICK, Convener

### **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.



2. That the General Assembly thank those members of the Church who have accepted the appointment, for a four year term, as Transferor Representatives to the Board of Governors of a Controlled School in Northern Ireland.

3. That the General Assembly thank those members of the Church who are serving as Patrons' Representatives on the Board of Management of Presbyterian Schools in the Republic of Ireland.

4. That, recognising the many changes and pressures in education provision in Northern Ireland, the General Assembly acknowledge and thank the many people in the education system, including administrators, managers, teachers, and support staff, who work very hard to deliver a high quality education for our children and young people.

5. That the General Assembly note that for a second consecutive year all five Education and Library Boards have been put in the situation where they are required to make substantial savings on the services they are charged to deliver.

6. That the Rev CD McClure be appointed as Convener of the State Education Committee.

7. That the General Assembly authorise the transfer of all matters concerning university chaplaincy to the Board of Social Witness.

8. That the Board of Education, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 284 of the Code as follows:

# BOARD OF STUDIES AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: REV GEORGE MOORE

1. The Board of Studies and Christian Training has had another interesting and worthwhile year as it has set its mind to the task of developing the Priorities approved by the General Assembly of 2005. To this end an Ad Hoc Committee has drawn up a list of Priorities for Christian Training for the next five years. The Committee on Ministerial Studies has set up a panel to begin the process of reviewing Ministerial training. The Board Committee on Ministerial Development has begun to look at ways in which it can encourage Ministers in the work of ministry.

2. We are greatly encouraged by the number of candidates who are currently training for the ordained Ministry and by a steady flow of potential applicants. However we dare not become complacent about this situation, for we have seen the tide ebb and flow in recent years.

3. Congregational placements are regarded as an essential ingredient in both the application and training processes. Our sincere gratitude is expressed to all those local Ministers who are willing to provide experience and supervision in this regard.

4. We are happy to report again this year that we have seen yet another significant increase in the number of undergraduates who choose Union College for their course in theology. We believe that this is a most valuable opportunity to teach the Christian faith at this level, and we believe it will prove a wise investment in helping to train future teachers, and Church leaders, and hopefully in helping some to hear God's call to the ordained ministry.

5. The Institute of Christian Training has had another worthwhile year running a variety of courses which appeal to a wide variety of Church members. We are hoping that the "Discipleship" course will be completed in time for the Assembly and intend in the near future to recruit facilitators to help with its delivery.

6. The Board note the retirement of Dr Bill Addley as Professor of Practical Theology from 31 August, 2006.

7. Professor Cecil McCullough has indicated his intention to retire on 31 August, 2007 and the Board requests the General Assembly to begin the procedures for appointing a successor.

8. Dr Rodger Crooks has come to the end of his tenure as Convener of the Resourcing Christians for Ministry Committee. He began his convenership on the old Board of Evangelism and Christian Training and it was in no short measure due to his leadership that the transition from one board to the other was done so smoothly and successfully. As well as convening the Committee and overseeing its work, Rodger has also regularly been involved in training events in various Congregations, especially in the training of elders. He worked in close

relationship with the Director of Christian Training in delivering training to our denomination. We express our thanks and appreciation to him.

9. There was an outstanding item of business from the Report the Board made to the 2004 General Assembly. That was the issue of Associate and Successor. The panel looking at the issue felt that there was no real ground swell of opinion in favour of this within the denomination and saw several difficulties in such a plan. The recommendation is therefore that no change be made.

## **MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

*The Convener, the Rev Prof Bill Addley, reports:*

The past year has witnessed a continued increase in the amount of funding given under the scheme - £17,433 was granted in 2003, £22,652 in 2004, and £25,264 in 2005.

During the past year the Committee convener and the Director of Ministerial Studies met with Presbytery Ministerial Development Fund representatives. Very profitable discussions arose from these meetings. As a result it is proposed to increase the maximum weekly allowance granted under the scheme from £200 to £250. Other modifications to the scheme are under discussion

## **ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE**

*The Convener, the Rev Dr Donald Watts, reports:*

1. The Assignment Committee this year made twenty-one assignments, including four ministers received from other Churches. While this initially seemed to be quite a challenge, there was a good response from ministers prepared to take an assignment. At the time of writing almost all the assignments are agreed, although for some Congregations this has meant a special arrangement.

## **QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE**

*The Convener, the Rev George Moore, reports:*

1. The Committee met to discuss the question of degrees and other qualifications to be listed in the Directory of Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. After some discussion it was agreed to confirm the decisions made in 1994 as follows

The Committee will normally recognise degrees awarded by:

- (i) Any University or faculty in Great Britain or Ireland incorporated by Act of Parliament or Royal Charter (Code par 217 (1)(a)(i)).
- (ii) An American University or Seminary that has full ATS accreditation.
- (iii) A University in another country which, in the judgement of the Committee, is of an academic standard equivalent to 1 or 2 above.

2. It was further agreed that the Committee would recognise:

- (i) Degrees and professional qualifications accepted as fulfilling the General Assembly's requirements for ministerial training, eg BA; MA; BSc.
- (ii) Other degrees and appropriate professional qualifications related to Ministry from recognised institutions.
- (iii) State awards, decorations and honours, eg MBE; TD.

It was also agreed that these decisions should be made retrospective.

3. Further discussion took place as to whether people studying for qualifications which did not fit the criteria above should receive support from the Ministerial Development Fund. Comments were passed to the appropriate Committee.

### **STUDENTS' BURSARY FUND**

*The Convener, the Rev Stewart Mackay, reports:*

1. The Students' Bursary Fund Committee continues to administer the Church's financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families.

2. It is encouraging to see that there were 45 students for the ministry in the year Sept. 2005 - June 2006. The cost of grants, fees, and other expenses for this period is over £446,000. This is met through offerings at services of licensing, ordination and installation, personal and congregational gifts, and the United Appeal Fund.

3. The Committee continues to be thankful for the generosity of the members of our Church who support the Fund in these ways. It would ask Presbytery Clerks and Conveners of Vacancy Commissions and Elders' Ordination Commissions to ensure that full use is made of the literature available – the bookmark and especially the Gift Aid envelope – at the above services, preferably by them being given out to the Congregation on the Sunday before the service. The more support the Fund receives through these services the less will need to be request from the United Appeal Fund.

## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES**

1. The Committee met two times during the year.

2. Through the Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS), the Rev Ronnie Hetherington, it continues to give advice to prospective candidates, to set courses and administer examinations in accordance with the Regulations of the General Assembly and the direction of the Board of Studies & Christian Training. The Committee wishes to record its appreciation to the DMS for his wise counsel and pastoral concern for the students.

3. In the academic year 2005/2006 there were 49 students under the care of Presbyteries (37 in 2004/2005, 37 in 2003/2004, 30 in 2002/2003, 25 in 2001/2002, 22 in 2000/2001), as listed in the appended Schedule (Appendix I).

4. One student was granted permission to study at a College other than Union, namely Regent, Vancouver. The Committee also noted with regret the withdrawal of 1 applicant and 1 student.

5. The Committee expresses its thanks for the work of the following external examiners:

Old Testament Language and Biblical Theology - The Rev I J Patterson, BA, MTh

New Testament Language - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD

New Testament Greek (Qual) - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD

Systematic Theology - The Rev D Bradley, BA, BD

Church History - The Rev Dr W D Patton, BSSc, BD

Homiletics, Public Worship and Pastoral Work - The Rev Dr D C Irwin, MA, BD

6. The Board approved the Report on the Review of Ministerial Training (see Appendix II) and the establishment of a Ministerial Training Review Panel which would report to the Committee, the Board and the General Assembly as appropriate.

7. The Board considered the issue of the consideration by Presbyteries of an applicant's "call" prior to possible nomination to the Board as a candidate for the ordained ministry. It was decided that no change be made to the Code. However, as part of the process of Review of Ministerial Training it is anticipated that recommendations regarding changes to the Code will be brought to the General Assembly of 2007.

### **Study In A Missionary Partnership**

*Rev Dr Ian Hart reports:*

8. Students who are studying for the ordained ministry of our Church at Union College are encouraged to spend one of the 3 theological years (or, if they prefer, a "year out") studying theology in a country where we have a missionary partnership. Such time can be a very stimulating and enlightening experience. For example, overseas Churches are often struggling with very different issues from those which concern us in Ireland. Sometimes we need to be freed from localistic practices, so as to realise we have been following social conventions rather than the gospel. In recent years students have taken up this opportunity in Kenya (St Paul's United Theological College, Limuru), in Jamaica (United Theological College, Kingston), in Singapore (Trinity Theological College) and in Lebanon (Near East School of Theology, Beirut).

### **Pre-Theological School & Interview**

9. The 2006 Pre-Theological Mini School and Interview was held in Union College from 10-12 April. The Interviewing Panel comprised: Revs Robert Beggs, Gordon Best, Helen Boyd, Rob Craig, Nancy Cubitt, William Henry, John Hutchinson, David Knox, Adrian McLernon, Brian McMillen, Ian McNie, Adrian Moffett, Colin Morrison, Brian Savage, William Sinclair, David Thompson; Mrs Mary Robinson, Mrs Jayne Wright; Messrs Wilbur Clarke, Mervyn Whittle, together with the Rev George Moore (Chairman), Rev Ronnie

Hetherington (Coordinator), Rev Stephen Moore (Secretary) and Dr Joan McQuoid BA CPsychol (Vocational Consultant, acting as advisor to the Panel).

10. 15 candidates were in attendance and completed the normal aspects of the interviewing process. 12 are being recommended to the General Assembly of this year, together with 3 candidates from previous years.

STEPHEN P MOORE, Convener

## APPENDIX I

### SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	Colin G Anderson	Union
	William Harkness	Union
	W J Ivan Thompson	Union
ARMAGH	Ronnie S Agnew	Union
	Andrew McConnell	Union
	Roger G McElnea	Union
	John D Montgomery	Union
	Kenneth Nelson	Union
	Robert N Orr	Union
BALLYMENA	Thomas Bruce	Union
	W Edwin Chestnutt	Union
	Mark E Donald	Union
	Colin W A Jones	Union
	Linda Mary Keys	Union
	T Philip McCullough	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	David McCarthy	Union
	Graeme P Fowles	Union
	Dario F Leal	Union
	Edel M McClean	Union
	David J McIlwaine	Union
	Karen M Simpson	Union
EAST BELFAST	Janice M Browne	Union
	David Clawson	Union
	Martin D McNeely	Union
	Ben J Walker	Union
CARRICKFERGUS	Scott A Woodburn	Union
	William J A Buchanan	Union
	Grant R Connor	Union
	J Martin Gracey	Union
	Richard S J McIlhatton	Union
	Jonathan A McKay	Union
COLERAINE	Heather M Rendell	Union
	Mark F Russell	Union
	P Martin Baxter	Regent
	David S Brownlow	Union
	William Montgomery	Union

DERRY & STRABANE	Nigel J E Reid	Union
DOWN	Mark R Catney	—
DROMORE	Martyn C Cowan	Union
	Colin McKibbin	—
	Raymond McKibbin	Union
DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Andy Carroll	Union
IVEAGH	T Neil Bingham	Union
MONAGHAN	Mary E Deatherage	Union
	H Clarke Deering	Union
ROUTE	Andrew D Mullan	Union
	John B Mullan	—
TEMPLEPATRICK	Peter Turton	Union
TYRONE	Adrian T S McAlister	—

## APPENDIX II

### REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF MINISTERIAL TRAINING

In 2004, four priorities were adopted by the Board of Studies and Christian Training and noted by the General Assembly in June 2005. The second of these four priorities is:

#### **Revision of ministerial training in light of relevant consultations.**

The context in which any review must take place is that described by the Code, which provides the foundation for any consideration of ministerial training and development. However, changes will need to be made to the Code to bring it into line with current practice as a number of modifications have been made to the application procedure in recent years, with the approval of the General Assembly, but with the intention that the Code be updated when the new procedures have been proven to be beneficial and of a long-term nature. The Board has also adopted interpretations of certain requirements for students for the ministry and the relevant Board minutes need to be taken into account when any amendments to the Code are being made.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Review of Theological Education, which was appointed by the General Assembly of 1992 and reported in the years 1993 to 1996, made significant recommendations, many of which have been incorporated into the scheme of training for ministerial students to their great benefit and ultimately to the benefit of the Church. However, it is clear that the original aspirations of the Committee proved too ambitious in practice and sights were set lower as time went by. Subsequent experience has demonstrated that for pragmatic reasons some of the recommendations had to be modified. Nevertheless, the thinking of the Ad Hoc Committee continues to exercise an enormous influence on processes and training requirements. Especially helpful is the focus on the 3 main areas which must be included and co-ordinated in the education of pastor-teachers: Academic, Spiritual and Ministerial.

An ongoing process for review of ministerial training is necessitated by the rapidly changing face of PCI, theological training in the wider context and society in Ireland (north and south) with the onward march of secularism,

materialism and post-modernism. Any review would appraise the following areas: application procedure, pre-theological, theological and licentiate training.

The Committee on Ministerial Studies is considered to be the most suitable body to undertake this ongoing review process with a Panel (rather than a sub-committee) appointed by the Committee for the task. The Panel is to consist of between 6 and 10 members, of whom the Board Convener, Committee Convener, DMS and 1 representative of Faculty (chosen in consultation with Faculty) are designated as members. A report on the review of ministerial training is to take place not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years since the last report.

The review will involve the Panel engaging in a 3 stage process:

1. Information gathering through contact with focus groups representing the following 4 bodies - current Licentiates, Ministers who are in their seventh year since licensing, Faculty and representatives of Mission Boards.
2. Evaluation and assessment of the feedback gathered from the focus groups along with any other information considered relevant by the Panel e.g. General Assembly Reports, materials from other Churches or colleges, etc.
3. Drawing up of recommendations to be reported to the Committee on Ministerial Studies which will then present them to the Board for approval or for recommendation to the General Assembly as appropriate.

## COLLEGE AND MAGEE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The College is greatly encouraged by the significant increase this year in the number of students in training for the ministry. The numbers of other degree students also remains high (the demand has necessitated an increase in the UCAS grade requirements, now 3 “B’s,” one of the highest in the UK for a course in theology).

2. The numbers are as follows:

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	
Ministry students & Deaconesses	35	47	full-time plus
		6	part-time
Other full-time under-graduate	101	98	
Other full-time post-graduates	22	22	
Part-time undergraduates and A-level course	64	76	
Part-time post-graduates	45	60	
Youth & Children’s Ministry courses	83	58	
Overseas	3	2	

In all of this we are seeking to promote and make available theological education of a high standard and of a practical relevance; to enable theological research and to facilitate the provision of Christian training at every level.

3. The Institute of Christian Training continues to develop both in the variety of courses and number of participants, with further significant initiatives also being planned. The number of course participants for 2005 are:



At UTC	671
Courses away from UTC	204
Total	875

4. The demands for sufficient teaching accommodation remains. The Committee have agreed in principle to proceed, subject to further feasibility study and permission from all necessary Church authorities, with the building of a new courtyard building (which had been postponed during the process of the recently completed refurbishment) and also with the refurbishment of the Principal's House. This will provide us with much needed social/community space for students and staff; with additional lecture and seminar rooms; with additional office provision (in particular for the Institute of Christian Training); with study facilities for post graduates students; with specialised library facilities and a resource centre for Church members; and with essential storage facilities, including library stacks.

5. The Management Committee is aware of the strategic importance of Ministerial and Christian training as PCI faces the quite considerable challenges of ministering in this day and generation. We are thankful to God for the foundational theological education given to our ministerial students and will continue to endeavour to place resources for training where and how they can be most effective.

6. The Management Committee records its appreciation of the dedicated work of the staff under its care and congratulate them in the contribution they make to the work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. We wish Professor Addley well for his retirement: his contribution to all aspects for College life will be greatly missed.

*The Principal, the Rev Prof Patton Taylor, writes:*

Rev Professor William Palmer Addley (Bill) retires on 31 August 2006 after 39 years in the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

He served his assistantship in Joymount Presbyterian Church, Carrickfergus, after which he was called to University Chaplaincy in Coleraine. During his time in Coleraine, Bill was also the "founder" of the Church Extension charge in Hazelbank, which he served as Stated Supply until his call to Ebrington Presbyterian Church in 1974. After a fruitful and innovative ministry in Ebrington, Bill accepted the invitation of the Overseas Board to a University teaching ministry in Brazil. He further served for a short time as Minister of Conlig Congregation before his appointment to the Chair of Practical Theology at Union in 1999.

He came to the College with a wide range of relevant academic qualifications, considerable experience in pastoral ministry, and with nine years of "missionary and theological teaching" experience in Brazil.

Bill has made an outstanding contribution to the teaching of Practical Theology in Union College. He has done much to enhance the standing of Practical Theology in the university world, with Queen's modules now on offer up to MDiv level. He also has promoted postgraduate research within the fields of Practical Theology and Missiology and has supervised a number of PhD candidates. Bill has also been closely involved with pioneering the new DMin course which is now available through Union. His main focus has, of course,

been the training of students for the ministry and he has done much to develop a curriculum that is academic and theologically sound as well as of practical relevance to the 21st century.

In addition to his work in the classroom, Bill has brought a considerable measure of wisdom and experience to the deliberations of Faculty and Staff, to the General Assembly's Doctrine Committee, and to a wide range of Boards and Agencies of the Church. His inimitable combination of wit and wisdom will be greatly missed in all aspects of College life, as will his pastoral concern for staff and students alike. In all his work he has been supported by his wife Ruth and staff and students regularly have enjoyed the hospitality of the Addeley home.

Bill has had a profound effect on those Ministry students who have passed through his classes across the years, and he is held in the highest regard by all those whom he has taught. The outworking of his teaching in the ongoing ministries of those who have come under his influence will be a significant tribute to his years in the College. On behalf of all on the Board and in the College community, we wish him well for his retirement.

DAVID BRICE, Convener

## **COMMITTEE ON RESOURCING CHRISTIANS FOR MINISTRY**

1. During the year, Dr Desi Alexander and Raymond Magowan of Evangelical Ministries co-authored and produced *Prepared to Serve*. This is a three-week course to enable Christians to discover what their gifts are and how they can use those gifts in their Congregation and community. *Prepared to Serve* has been piloted in two Congregations and is ready for use. The Committee hope that this excellent resource will be widely used and will result in stronger, revitalised, more mission and ministry-minded Congregations within our Church.

2. Work on producing *Learning to Lead*, the new elders' training manual, is at an advanced stage. It should be ready for use in the autumn of 2006.

3. Once again the Committee is indebted to Dr Desi Alexander for all his invaluable help and expertise.

RODGER CROOKS, Convener

## **COMMITTEE FOR THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES**

1. The Committee has operated the new application procedure for the first time during the year and appreciates the benefits which a single system and earlier application date have brought. The names of all applicants were submitted for POCVA checking but reports are generally not forthcoming on the majority of applicants who are from overseas. This means that the additional

time which the Committee now has to follow up applicants and take up references is very valuable.

2. The Committee has concluded that the procedure should now be written into the Code and overtures to this end will be presented to the General Assembly.

3. Four Ministers applied to the committee and were interviewed. The Board has accepted two of these applicants as eligible for call upon completion of suitable conditions:

Rev Dr Annes Francois Nel of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa

Rev Samuel Ian Dennis of the Church of Scotland

4. At the request of the vacancy commission of a Presbytery, a Minister of the PCUSA was interviewed with a view to him being placed on a list for hearing by a Congregation. The Board subsequently approved as eligible to be placed on a list for hearing by the Congregation concerned:

Rev Dr Mark David McDonough of the Presbyterian Church of the USA.

R BRIAN SAVAGE, Convener

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That the General Assembly note, with gratitude to God, the heartening number of those making application for ordained ministry and encourage Ministers and Kirk Sessions to identify suitably-gifted members so that this increase may be sustained.

3. The General Assembly express its appreciation of the Rev Professor Bill Addley for his work as Professor of Practical Theology and wish him a long and happy retirement.

4. That the resignation of the Rev Dr R M Crooks as Convener of the Resourcing Christians for Ministry Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev JS Carson be appointed in his place.

5. The General Assembly note the impending retirement of the Rev Professor Cecil McCullough from 31 August, 2007 and ask the General Board to proceed towards the appointment of a successor.

6. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Board of Studies and Christian Training, be accepted as students for the Ordained Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

James Cochrane	First Saintfield	Down
Nick R A Cooper	Ballynure	Carrickfergus
Andrew Faulkner	Ballydown	Iveagh
Stewart Glendinning	First Stewartstown	Tyrone
Bryan A Kee	Albany	Tyrone
David Leach	Dundonald	East Belfast
Michael McClenahan	West Kirk	South Belfast
Graeme McConville	Hamilton Road	Ards
Mark McKeown	Ravenhill	East Belfast
Rodney Moody	Ballyloughan	Ballymena

Liam Rutherford	Strand	East Belfast
Ivan Steen	Fisherwick	South Belfast
Kathryn Viner	First Saintfield	Down
Lesley-Ann Wilson	Fisherwick	South Belfast
Mark Wilson	Knappagh	Armagh

7. That the General Assembly note the Report on the Review of Ministerial Training.

8. That the General Assembly confirm the recommendations of the Qualifications Committee as outlined.

9. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:

the expense of the Mini School & Interview	£1,920
the expense of the Pre-Term College Retreat	£3,250
the expense of the Applicants' Study Day	£320
the expense of Licentiate Courses	£1,430
the expense of meetings for students and spouses	£880
the expense of honoraria for Extern Examiners	£300
teaching in Communication Skills for students outside Ireland	£100

TOTAL	£8,200
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10. That the General Assembly welcome the production of *Prepared to Serve* and strongly encourage each Congregation to make use of this excellent resource.

11. That the Board of Studies and Christian Training, together with the appropriate working Committees be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 285 of the Code, as follows:

### OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

#### **Anent Par 193(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that, in Par 193(1) of the Code sub-paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) be deleted and substituted by: "(b) ministers of other churches, if previously received by the General Assembly, provided they have completed any course of study and/or period of assistantship required by the Board of Studies and Christian Training."

and that sub-paragraph (e) be re-numbered (c).

#### **Anent Par 193(2)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 193(2)(b) of the Code the words "sub-paragraphs (1)(c) and (d) above" be deleted and replaced with "sub-paragraph (1)(b) above".

#### **Anent Par 200(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 200(4) of the Code the words "from member Churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches" be deleted and replaced by the words "of other Churches".

**Anent Par 219(5) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 219(5) of the Code be deleted and (6) renumbered as (5).

**Anent Par 285(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285(3) of the Code all sentences following the word “thereon” be deleted and replaced by: “(4) The Board, directly or through a Committee on Reception, shall investigate all such applications and shall act thereon as rules prescribe as follows:-

(a) Ministers and licentiates of other branches of the Christian Church must apply to the Convener of the Committee for the Reception of Ministers and Licensates by 15 December.

(b) Applicants will be interviewed and a report brought to the spring meeting of the Committee which will make recommendation to the spring meeting of the Board which will approve or reject the applications.

(c) A list of those ministers and licentiates who have been approved by the Board will be presented to the General Assembly and received as ministers eligible for call subject to paragraph (d) below.

(d) A minister or licentiate who has been received in this way will not be eligible for call to congregations until he/she has completed the studies and assistantship required by the Board of Studies and Christian Training (if any).

(e) A successful applicant who has not begun his/her required course of study and/or assistantship by 1 October in the year following his/her reception by the General Assembly will cease to be eligible.

(f) In cases where the reception of a minister is being sought to facilitate the work of a Board of the General Assembly or where a vacancy commission seeks to place a minister of another denomination on a list for hearing, the Committee for the Reception of Ministers and Licensates may make special interview arrangements and the Board of Studies and Christian Training shall have power to issue or to refer the matter to the General Assembly.

(g) Ministers and licentiates whose applications are rejected by the Board of Studies and Christian Training may appeal by memorial to the General Assembly.

**MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED**

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 5th day of June, 2006.

**The Memorial of the Presbytery of Armagh Respectfully Showeth:**

That the Presbytery, on considering its role in the interviewing of prospective candidates for the ordained ministry, believe that a change in the Code would help clarify Presbytery’s responsibility following a report from the Student Convener after the meeting of the Board of Studies and Christian Training with Presbytery Student Agents on 17 November 2005.

That a proposed change to paragraph 215(2) would read as follows:

“In nominating a candidate the Presbytery shall observe the following rules:

- (a) They shall require from him a certificate from the Kirk Session of the congregation to which he belongs, stating that –
  - (i) he is a member of that Church in full communion and
  - (ii) he has given evidence of personal character, gifts, *sense of call and beliefs suitable* for the office of the ministry.
- (b) They shall make such enquiries as to his personal character, gifts, *sense of call and beliefs* as they consider necessary to satisfy themselves that he is a suitable person for nomination, and they shall interview him at a convenient time.”

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly to refer these matters to the Board of Studies and Christian Training for their consideration.

And Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Adopted by the Presbytery of Armagh at its meeting in Richhill on 7th February, 2006, and transmitted to the Synod of Armagh and Down with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

MAURICE STEWART, Moderator  
COLIN HARRIS, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted simpliciter by a Commission of the Synod of Armagh and Down, meeting in Armagh on 9 March, 2006.

TA MOORE, Moderator  
EP GAMBLE, Clerk

# COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

1. Attention is drawn to the Capital Account of the General Investment Fund. The Commission advised the acceptance of the Trust Funds.

AJ RANKIN, Convener

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 130 of the Code as follows:-

# BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Convener: JOHN MILLAR, OBE

1. In addition to considering the many and often complex issues dealt with by its Committees, the Board set up Panels to carry out Reviews of Pensions and Property Procedures.

2. The Report on the Review of Pensions is Appendix 1 to this Report and highlights the problems facing the Church in its provision of retirement benefits. Much work needs to be carried out to enable the Assembly to make the necessary decisions. Resolutions are appended to facilitate the preparation of proposals for the 2007 Assembly.

3. Appendix 2 to this Report contains the Report on Review of Property which makes recommendations on Guidelines and procedures for the effective oversight and control of properties under the control of Boards and Agencies of the Church.

4. The Assembly Buildings' Committee has continued to make the best of an uncertain situation pending the sale of the building. Rental and letting income has held up although it is disappointing that the Presbyterian Mutual Society, the Presbyterian Orphan Society and the Belfast City Mission moved to other premises in 2006.

A Detailed Condition Report has been carried out on Church House and a summary of the necessary work and estimated costings is in Appendix 5 to this Report.

5. The Finance, Legal and IT Committee (FLIT) has this year, for the first time, presented Accounts in the format of the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice).

6. Substantial work has been carried out in seeking a satisfactory solution to the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs relating to Ministerial expenses. Consultations have taken place with the Union Commission and the Board has approved procedures for future recording of expenses and we await formal acceptance of our proposals by the Revenue.

7. The FLIT Panel considering the revision of the Statistics Form and the provision of a standard accounting package for Congregations is well advanced in its work and hopes to bring forward proposals in the near future.

8. The Risk Assessment required by the General Assembly has been carried out and a summary of the findings is Appendix 3 to this Report.

9. The Pensions and Assessments Committee completed its Review of the operation of the Tyrone Memorial and details of this are in Appendix 4 to this Report.

10. The Board agreed an above-inflation increase of 4.7% to bring the Ministerial Minimum to a significant level of £20,000 per annum but stressed that future increases of this level cannot be assumed. Part of this increase is financed by the Central Ministry Fund.



11. The Personnel Committee continues to consider proposals for a new Job Evaluation Scheme. This is a significant exercise and the Committee wants to be convinced of the benefit of proposals before coming to a conclusion.

12. Due, largely, to the proposal for funds to meet costs arising from the Pensions' Review, the Incidental Fund Assessment is proposed to increase from 4.75p to 6p in the £ of stipend. Despite this, the Board's proposals, if approved, will reduce the overall burden of assessments by 1.5p in the £ of stipend as set out in the Table below.

	2006	2005	2004
Central Ministry Fund	15.00p	16.00p	17.00p
Retired Ministers' Fund	8.50p	9.50p	11.00p
Widows of Ministers' Fund	7.00p	7.75p	7.75p
Prolonged Disability Fund	0.75p	0.75p	2.00p
Incidental Fund	6.00p	4.75p	5.25p
(incl. 0.25p re Peninsula)			
Ministerial Development Fund	**0.25p	0.25p	0.25p
Special Assembly	—	—	0.25p
	—	—	—
SUB – TOTAL	37.50p	39.00p	43.50p
Ministers' Pension Scheme(1978)	22.50p	22.50p	20.75p
	—	—	—
TOTAL	60.00p	61.50p	64.25p
	—	—	—

*\*\* This figure is set by the Board of Studies and Christian Training and is provisional at the time of writing.*

## ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS' COMMITTEE

1. Following the decision of the General Assembly in June 2004 and confirmed in June 2005 that the Church House complex should be sold, the proposed sale and the subsequent uncertainties related to it have inevitably affected the day to day management of the building, particularly regarding the renewal of commercial tenancies.

2. However the rentals generated from the Shopping Mall and other offices (including the Church offices) continue to operate at a small profit and there has been a significant increase in income from the letting of the Assembly Hall and other associated rooms.

3. For most of the year there were one or two vacant commercial units and the footfall passing through the Shopping Mall remains a key concern.

4. Major items of maintenance and internal refurbishment have not proceeded until final clarification on the timing of the sale of the building.

5. In order to comply with insurance requirements and to update the General Assembly on possible further expenditure, a comprehensive survey of the exterior of the building, including stonework, windows and roofs, was instigated. After a competitive tendering exercise, the survey contract was

awarded to Alastair Coey Architects. A summary of the Architect's Report is set out in Appendix 5 to this Report.

6. The Presbyterian Mutual Society, the Presbyterian Orphan Society and the Belfast City Mission have not renewed their tenancies and moved out of the building at the beginning of 2006.

7. The Committee is grateful to the staff directly involved with the management and operation of the building and thanks them for their professionalism and dedication during the year.

HUBERT MARTIN, Convener

## FINANCE, LEGAL AND IT COMMITTEE

1. We have pleasure submitting the report of the Finance Legal and IT Committee.

2. **General Expenses** – General Expenses for the year ended 31 December 2005 were slightly below budget and considered to be satisfactory.

Budgeted expenses for the year ended 31 December 2006 reflect a budgeted increase of about 2.5% compared to 2005. Overall the budget was considered to be satisfactory.

3. **Auditors/SORP accounts** – For year ended 31 December 2005 two sets of SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) accounts have been prepared. One for the activities under the General Assembly and the other for the Trustees who have separate legal status. The audit opinion is expressed on these accounts rather than those of the individual agencies. As a result the audit fee will be reduced.

4. **Statistics** – see appended Tables

5. **Statistics Form and Statement of Recommended Practice** – The sub-committee set up to consider revising the statistics form in line with the requirements of those who use the statistics and the Statement of Recommended Practice has made good progress during the year. No recommendations have been made yet.

6. **Regulation of Charities** – The Government are currently consulting on the regulation of charities in Northern Ireland. A number of responses have now been made to the Department of Social Development's paper "Consultation on Review of Charities Administration and the Legislation in Northern Ireland in 2005". It is likely that this will result in legislation bringing Northern Irish charities into line with charities in Great Britain. This may result in significant accounting and regulatory changes for Congregations.

7. **Risk Assessment** – The General Assembly passed a resolution in 2005 to have a Risk Assessment for the Central Church carried out and for a report to be made to the General Assembly no later than 2006. The auditors facilitated a risk assessment review meeting with representatives of Boards during the year to identify the key risks facing the Church. Following the meeting the auditors prepared a Risk Register where key risks were identified. The Register also highlights some of the root causes. There is a risk that the Risk register will become another report sitting on the shelf. To avoid this we

recommend that Risk Assessment should be a recurring item on Board agendas and that once a year Boards should submit a report to The Board of Finance and Personnel confirming that they are not aware of any factors which would cause one of the risks identified to materialise. In addition they should report on possible new risks, or risks which have ceased during the year. To that end, a copy of the Risk Register will be passed to all Board Conveners/Secretaries. The Committee would like to thank the auditors for their help in facilitating the risk review and the Boards of the Church for their co-operation.

8. **Bank Overdrafts** – We continue to receive reports on overdrafts. Ongoing overdrafts in relation to some of the Residential Homes and Youth Centres were reported.

9. **Ministerial Expenses** – The Committee report that the Financial Secretary continued to meet with the Church's tax advisors and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in relation to Ministerial expenses for 2004/05. It is likely that the Church will be assessed for National Insurance Contributions in relation to the returns made by Ministers. A provision has been made in the Incidental Fund in relation to this. Following consultation with Union Commission and HMRC, procedures for Ministerial Expenses have been approved by the Board. It is anticipated that HMRC will grant a dispensation for expenses paid in accordance with these procedures. Ministerial expenses will now have to be submitted annually to the Financial Secretary's Office by 5 July following the end of the fiscal year.

10. **Handbook for Treasurers** – As the handbook has not been updated since 2002, we plan to review the Handbook during the coming year.

11. **Information Technology** – Mr McMurray has made an extremely valuable contribution with respect to IT and is now providing valuable support to IT systems in Board projects outside Church House.

12. The Committee continues to work on a number of other tax, finance, legal and IT matters.

13. Special thanks go to the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for their hard work and assistance to the Committee during the year.

MICHAEL FITCH, Convener

## **PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS COMMITTEE**

### **Review of Tyrone Memorial**

1. The Committee concluded its review of the operation of the Tyrone Memorial and its report on this is Appendix 4 to this Report.

### **Central Ministry Fund**

2. At the end of 2005, the CMF had a retained balance of £2,717,077 (excluding investments), a decrease of £137,873 on 2004.

3. The basic Ministerial Minimum for 2006 has been increased by 4.7% (ie UK Retail Price Index + 1.8%) to £20,000, rising to £23,000 after 30 years

service and in the Republic of Ireland by 4.1% (i.e. RoI Consumer Price Index + 1.8%) to €31,000 rising to €35,650 after 30 years service.

4. The proposed rate of assessment for 2005 is 15p per £1 of Stipend, a reduction from 16p in 2005, 17p in 2004 and 21p in 2003.

5. The following increases were set by the Board, under the Tyrone Memorial Scheme:

£0 – 21,965	2.9%
£21,965 – 25,000	2.5%
£25,001 – 30,000	2.0%
£30,001 – 35,000	1.5%
£35,001 – 40,000	1.0%
£40,001 and over	0.0%

Because the Ministerial Minimum has been increased by a higher percentage than the Tyrone Memorial increases, a greater and continuing burden will fall on CMF.

6. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2006:

	Northern Ireland		Rep of Ireland	
	2006	2005	2006	2005
(a) Ministerial Minimum	£20,000	£19,100	€31,000	€29,780
After 5 years service	£20,500	£19,578	€31,775	€30,525
After 10 years service	£21,000	£20,055	€32,550	€31,269
After 15 years service	£21,500	£20,533	€33,325	€31,014
After 20 years service	£22,000	£21,010	€34,100	€32,758
After 25 years service	£22,500	£21,488	€34,875	€33,503
After 30 years service	£23,000	£21,965	€35,650	€34,247
(b) Family Grants 2006	<b>Northern Ireland</b>		<b>Rep of Ireland</b>	
Birth to 10 years		£295		€865
11 to 15 years		£445		€1,365
16 years and over				
- at School		£670		€2,520
- at University		£2,230		€4,200
Bands for joint incomes				
Reduction £1 for every £5	£22,900-£30,805		€34,665-€46,625	
Reduction £2 for every £5	£30,805+		€46,625+	
(c) The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years + falling into category (b) and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 every £1 by which such grant or other sponsorship or scholarship exceeds £1,000.				
(d) The amount a Minister may earn, apart from congregational work, without the augmented grant being affected shall be £4,056 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code or £2,100 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under the above paragraphs shall be £4,056.				
(e) Bequests: A Minister may receive up to £1,185 per annum from bequests received during his/her ministry without augmented grants being affected.				

- (f) Retired Ministers with pre 1978 service will receive a special grant of £15 per month. Code Par 315(5).
- (g) In reckoning augmentation for 2005, the CMF shall not take account of a sum, not exceeding the annual bonus, being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. Code Par 316(2)(e).
- (h) Euro differential: Under the Euro differential scheme, the allowance for the first six months of 2005 was 1,894 and for the second six months 1,800.

#### **Widows of Ministers' Fund**

7. At the end of 2005, the WMF had a retained balance of £763,416 (excluding investments) an increase of £157,769 on 2004.

8. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for the 2006:

- (a) That the assessment for 2006 be 7.0p per £1 of Stipend, a reduction from 7.75p in 2005.
- (b) That Widows' Pension be £5,500.
- (c) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension receive £5,500 plus £475.
- (d) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWFA receive £5,500 plus £500.
- (e) That widows whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension receive £5,500 plus £4,267 for 2005/06 (rate for 2006/07 not yet announced by Government).

#### **Presbyterian Widows Fund Association**

9. All Ministers join this Association at ordination. The annual membership subscription is 1.25% of the Ministerial Minimum for active Ministers and is 0.2% for retired Ministers. An additional 0.1% is charged to Ministers not under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Membership provides annuity to widows, which is currently £1,164.

#### **Retired Ministers' Fund**

10. At the end of 2005, the RMF had a retained balance of £1,403,229 (excluding investments) an increase of £218,125 on 2004.

11. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2005:

- (a) That the assessment for 2006 be 8.5p per £1 of Stipend, a reduction from 9.5p in 2005 and 11p in 2004.
- (b) That Basic Retirement Allowance be £10,000.
- (c) That Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension is currently £6,822 married, £4,266 single. (Rates for 2006/07 not yet announced by Government).

**Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)**

12. The Trustees Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005 are included in the published accounts.

13. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire, at or over age 65, by Presbyteries:

Vy Rev Dr Russell Ivan Birney (High Kirk, Ballymena), Rev David Elwyn Jones (Clough), Rev David Stanley Irwin (Drumachose & Derrymore), Rev William James Sleith (High Street Antrim), Rev James Carson (Greystones & Arklow) and Rev James Leslie Casement (Sixmilecross).

14. The Trustees did not award any discretionary increase for pensions in payment, accrued pre 1997, in excess of the Guaranteed Minimum Pension. This is likely to remain the case whilst the scheme is in actuarial deficit.

**Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund**

15. At the end of 2005, the fund had a retained balance of £644,773 an increase of £87,936 on 2004.

16. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2005:

(a) That the assessment for 2006 remains at 0.75 p per £1 of Stipend.

(b) That the maximum level of grant for 2006 increases to £10,080.

17. Currently 3 Ministers are receiving benefits under the Fund.

18. In addition to annual grants, pension contributions to the Ministers' Pension Scheme are paid by the fund until the beneficiary returns to work or attains his or her normal retirement age. In broad terms the cost to the fund for each person receiving benefit, including pension contributions, is circa £15,000 pa.

**The Staff Pension Scheme**

19. The Trustees Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2004, are included in the published accounts. Results of the triennial actuarial valuation of the scheme, which became due on 31 December 2005, are expected towards the end of August. In the current climate for pension schemes it is not anticipated that the outcome of the current valuation will be encouraging.

**Incidental Fund**

20. At the end of 2005, the Incidental Fund had a retained balance of £63,179, a decrease of £66,303 on 2004.

21. The principal reason for the decrease in retained balance was unexpected expenditure emerging from the proposed sale of Church House.

22. Assuming that income and expenditure matches budget during 2006, the retained balance at the end of the year is forecast to be circa £26,000.

23. The reason for the continued reduction in retained balance is that, whilst very substantial costs are expected to be incurred in connection with the work of the Pensions review panel, the Committee is anxious to keep increases in the assessment to the minimum possible.

24. It will be the aim of the Committee to restore the retained balance to a more substantial figure in future years.

25. The Committee reviewed applications for funding and recommends that the following grants be allocated in 2006.

Business Board:	
Arrangements Committee	£18,000
General Board:	
Peace and Peacemaking	£8,000
Church and Society	£11,500
Centres' Review	£13,000
Centres' Director	£36,000
Church Relations	£48,000
Social Witness Board	£8,000
Board of Youth & Children's Ministry	£8,240
Communications Board:	
Historical Society	£15,700
Architecture	£1,500
Board of Studies and Christian Training	£8,200
Board of Finance and Personnel:	
Peninsula and National Insurance	£50,950
Pension Review Panel	£80,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£307,090</b>

26. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2006:

That the assessment for 2006 be 6.0p per £1 of Stipend, an increase from 4.75p in 2005.

### **The Ministerial Development Fund**

27. At the end of 2005, the Ministerial Development Fund had a retained balance of £389,294, an increase of £14,265 on 2004. Responsibility for recommending the assessments for this fund lies with the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

DOUGLAS CROWE, Convener

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee met on three occasions during the year.
2. Thanks are due to the Personnel team, led by Mrs Eileen McClenaghan, Head of Personnel, for their work during the year in the development and delivery of a first class service.
3. Thanks are also due to the Rev Leslie Casement and Mr Herbie Smyth, supported by Mr Ian McElhinny from the Financial Secretary's Office, for their work in respect of the Retired Ministers' House Fund. Rev Ivor Smith was unavailable through illness and the Rev Leslie Casement stepped in to take his place.

**Personnel Matters**

4. Work continued throughout the year on the design of a Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme and a Job Evaluation Scheme, with the support of consultants from BDO Stoy Hayward. Due to the size and complexity of the overall task, it was agreed to focus effort on the new Job Evaluation Scheme and work on this continues.

5. Congregations have made significant use of the personnel and health and safety advice provided by Peninsula Business Services Ltd. A handbook for Republic of Ireland Congregations was issued in March 2006.

6. The task of developing and updating personnel policies and procedures has continued throughout the year, providing a valuable resource for managers and staff.

7. Arrangements for staff consultation and communication are being advanced through the planned provision of an intranet service.

**Retired Ministers' House Fund**

8. Steps have been taken to sell a major portion of the property in Cullybackey that was bequeathed to the Fund by Miss Jane Megaw. An application for outline planning consent is in the course of preparation.

9. A bungalow was most generously donated to the Fund by a lady in Craigavad and a tenant was found, following advertisement in the Ministers' newsletter.

10. After a period of time when liquid funds were very limited, the Fund will hopefully be able to look more favourably at requests for loans and equity share arrangements once the sale of the Cullybackey property has been completed.

DAVID LAMB, Convener



## TABLE ONE

## PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Decrease</b>
Retired Ministers	209	213	4	
Ministers in Active Duty	388	378		10
Retired Missionaries	9	9		
Missionaries in Active Duty	59	56		3
Total Ministers and Missionaries	665	656		9
Licensures	10	11	1	
Congregations	550	551	1	
Total Families	111,158	110,485		673
Persons of All Ages	270,753	266,581		4,172
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	90,742	89,646		1,096
Baptisms	1,849	1,857	8	
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	1,950	1,889		61
Communicants	113,854	112,497		1,357
Attended at Least One Communion during year	71,235	70,485		750
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	7,056	6,958		98
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	29,382	28,332		1,050

**TABLE TWO**  
**CONGREGATIONAL INCOME**

	2004		2005		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Specified Sources	26,377,036	2,326,156	27,585,653	2,550,977	4.6%+	9.7%+
Building Fund etc. "For Others"	14,747,520	1,304,101	14,775,432	1,768,989	.2%+	35.6%+
	6,457,260	543,821	8,931,501	657,803	38.3%+	21.0%+
Raised from other sources	4,333,650	1,103,914	4,825,667	1,303,753	11.4%+	18.1%+
Bequests etc.	8,670,342	191,697	9,650,964	661,559	11.3%+	45.1%+
Total Receipts	60,585,808	5,469,690	65,769,214	6,943,079	8.6%+	26.9%+
Total Receipts Less						
Bequests etc.	51,915,466	5,277,993	56,118,250	6,281,520	8.1%+	19.0%+
Bequests	1,742,323	58,855	1,596,922	377,578	8.3%-	41.5%+

**TABLE THREE**  
**CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE**

	2004		2005		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	14,028,951	1,136,568	14,488,187	1,267,570	3.3%+	11.5%+
Payments under Assembly Assessments	5,162,135	455,839	5,095,762	478,758	1.3%-	5.0%+
Building, Repairs, etc.	17,331,372	937,662	18,683,003	1,945,751	7.8%+	7.5%+
United Appeal Schemes	3,042,373	195,387	3,123,619	202,103	2.7%+	3.4%+
Supplementary Schemes Other Religious and Charitable Objects	4,703,901	468,867	7,481,503	784,012	59.0%+	67.2%+
General Expenses	8,015,468	1,003,665	8,496,359	1,130,706	6.0%+	12.7%+
Total Payments	52,284,200	4,197,988	57,368,433	5,808,900	9.7%+	38.4%+

**TABLE FOUR**  
**CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES**

	Closing 2004		Opening 2005		Closing 2005		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Credits	29,645,438	4,175,311	29,091,131	4,317,778	30,826,530	4,714,070	6.0%+	9.2%+
Debits	3,806,901	117,158	3,800,705	123,576	3,941,321	100,353	3.7%+	18.8%-
Net Credits	25,838,537	4,058,153	25,290,426	4,194,202	26,885,209	4,613,717	6.3%+	10.0%+

**TABLE FIVE****MINISTERS' INCOME AND ALLOWANCES (SEE NOTES)**

	<b>2004</b> £	<b>2005</b> £	<b>% Difference</b>
Total Ministerial Income (Active Duty — Note 2)	9,473,124	9,676,676	2.1%+
Retired Ministers' Income	2,008,539	2,047,752	2.0%+
Stipend Paid	7,603,084	7,785,503	2.4%+
Allowances			
Light, Heat, etc			
Ministerial Duties			
Total	2,162,880	2,187,556	1.1%+

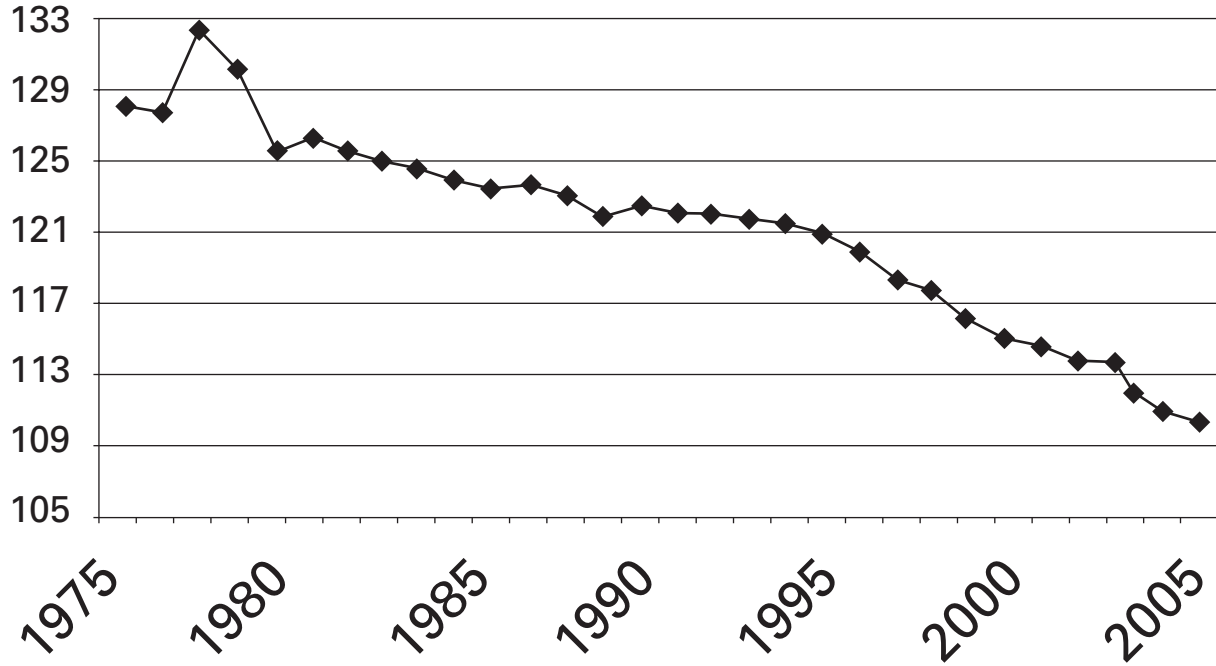
**Note 1** Figures for the Republic of Ireland have been converted into £STG using the average value of the Euro for the year.

**Note 2** This refers only to 352 ministers in charge of congregations, excluding Assistants, Chaplains, Missionaries, Professors, Administrative Officers and Ministers in recognised service in special work.

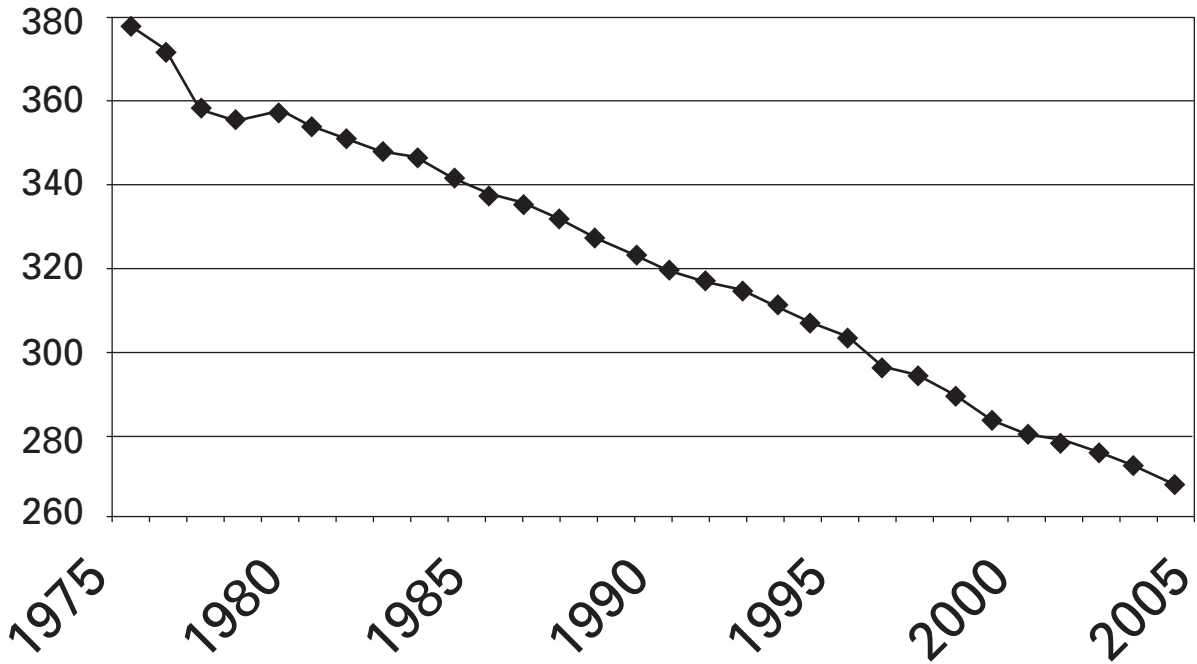
**TABLE SIX****PERSONS**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Persons who are aged 18 and under	50,899	49,106
Average attendance at Sunday Worship — Morning	86,807	85,717
— Evening	19,611	19,542

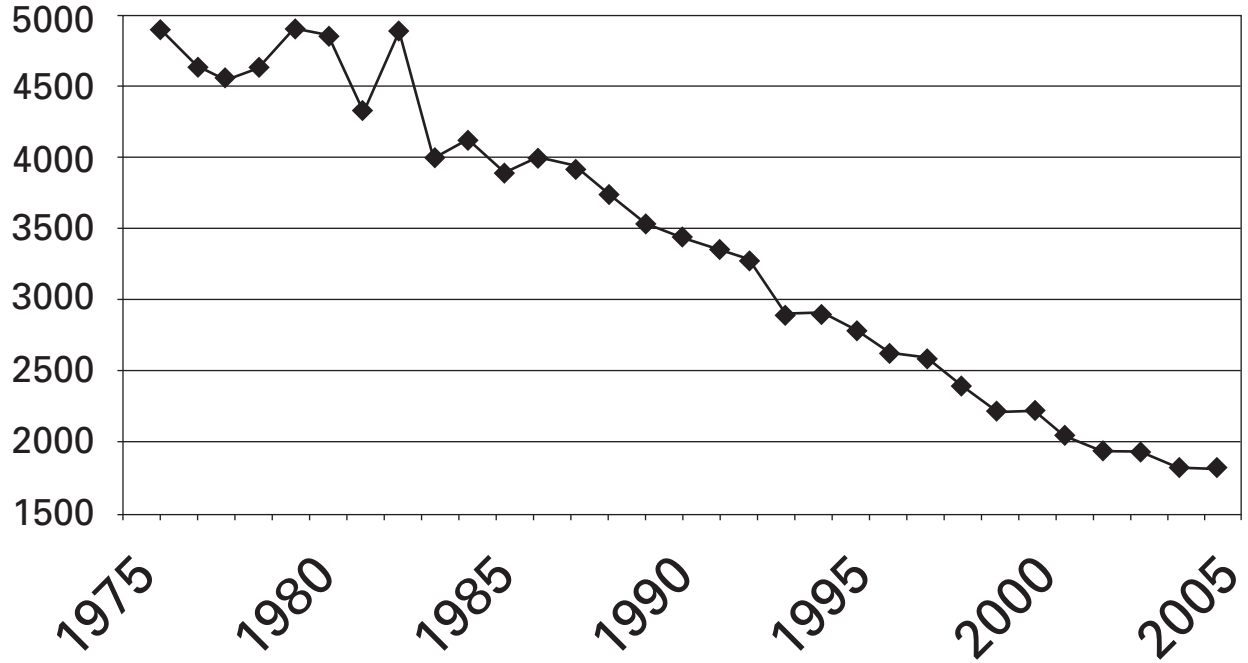
# FAMILIES ('000)



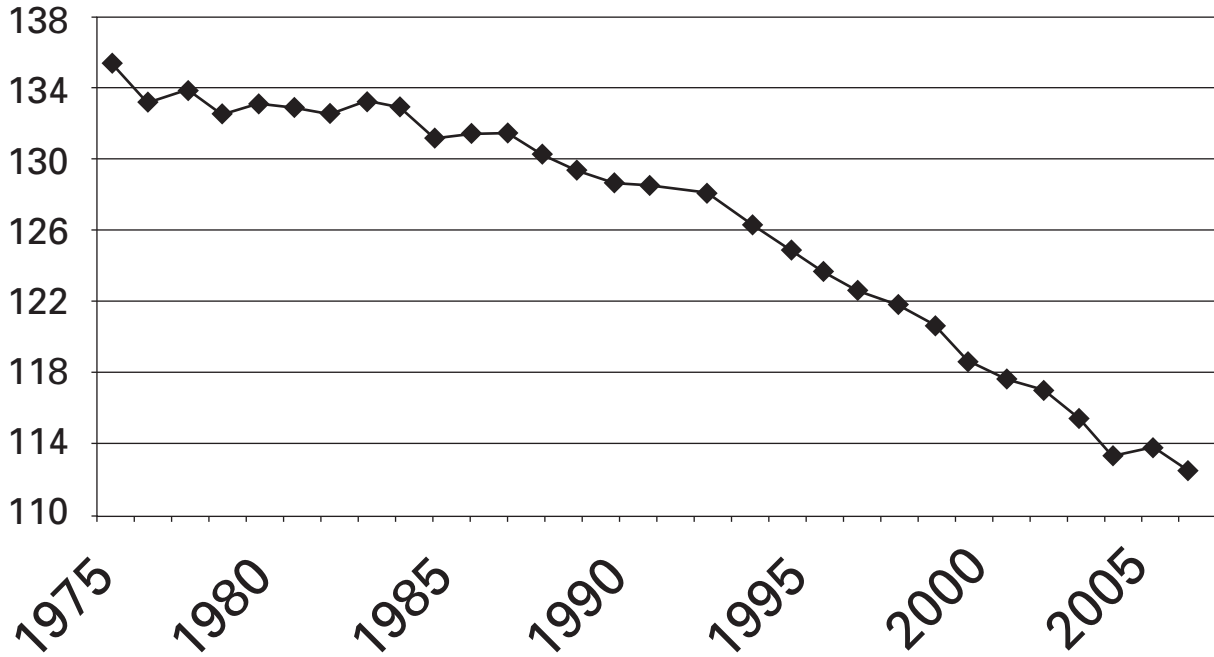
# PERSONS ('000)



# BAPTISMS



## COMMUNICANTS ('000)





**APPENDIX 1****REPORT ON REVIEW OF PENSIONS****Background:**

No-one can have failed to observe the publicity given in recent years to the deteriorating funding position of Defined Benefit (benefits related to, say, final or revalued average salary) Pension Schemes.

Due to a variety of reasons, inter alia, changes in taxation, poor investment returns and improving life expectancy, many schemes that were previously adequately funded are now in deficit. This has, inevitably, caused concern amongst employers who are obliged to meet the scheme liabilities and prompted them to review their attitude to their schemes.

Over the last few years, many employers have closed their schemes to new members and, presumably, provide Defined Contribution Schemes (the employer's liability is confined to the pre-determined contributions and the benefits depend on the performance of the contributions invested until retirement) for employees. Recently, Rentokil became the first FTSE 100 company to close its Defined Benefits Scheme to existing employees (members of the scheme will retain benefits accrued up to the date of closure and will then accrue pension benefits under any new Rentokil arrangement which is probably a Defined Contribution Scheme). Many observers see this as the beginning of a trend.

This general climate of concern about pensions was the catalyst for this review.

**Present Pension Arrangements of Presbyterian Church in Ireland:**

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) operates the following Pension arrangements:

Scheme	Nature of Scheme
Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)	Defined Benefits based on revalued average salary
Staff Scheme	Defined Benefits based on final salary
PWA/Irish Mission/Board of Mission Overseas	Defined Benefits based on final salary
Pensions' Trust (some Board of Social Witness employees)	Defined Contribution
Stakeholder Pension	Contributory – no employer contribution.

Around 200 employees of the Board of Social Witness have no pension provision.

The contributions to the Schemes are:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Employee - £000</b>	<b>PCI - £000</b>
Ministers' – ye 31.12.05	601	1,595
Staff – ye 31.12.05	82	342
PWA etc – ye 31.03.05	47	211
Pensions Trust	24	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>2,184</b>

Contributions to the schemes, based on pensionable income in the year of contribution, are:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Employee - %</b>	<b>Employer - %</b>
Ministers'	01.04.99	4.40	12.20
(next valn 31.12.06)	01.04.02	5.00	14.00
	01.04.05	6.00	15.60*
Staff	01.01.98	3.75	15.25
(next valn 31.12.05)	01.01.01	3.75	15.25
	01.01.04	5.00	20.85
PWA etc.,	01.04.97	4.00	13.50
(next valn 01.04.05)**	01.04.00	4.00	13.50
	01.04.03	5.00	22.50
Pensions' Trust		4.00	6.00

\* ceased funding for discretionary increases otherwise a higher rate

\*\* at the time of writing, the Scheme Actuary has advised the Scheme Trustees that the new combined contribution arising from this valuation should be 40%. The Trustees await the employers' response.

In addition to the Schemes above, PCI makes payments to retired Ministers, College Professors and Deaconesses in respect of service prior to the introduction of the Schemes. In 2005, payments were made from Retired Ministers' Fund (£780,000), Widows of Ministers' Fund (£560,000), Union Theological College (£45,000) and PWA (£31,000). Already there are indications of a gradual reduction in Assessments for the Retired Ministers' and Widows of Ministers' Funds. The College and PWA payments are part of their ongoing operating costs.

### **Scheme Funding Positions:**

In common with many other schemes, the funding position of the PCI schemes has deteriorated markedly in recent years.

### **Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)**

At 31 December, 2003, the Actuary reported a deficit of £8.9 million compared with a surplus of £1.4 million in 2000. It was agreed to seek to eliminate the deficit over the average expected future-working lifetime of the current active members, ie 16 years. The new funding rate reflected this but the

increase was significantly reduced by a decision to cease funding for discretionary increases in pensions. In any event, the Trustees have not awarded any discretionary increases in recent years.

It should also be noted that new regulations will require deficits to be eliminated over a maximum of 10 years except in approved cases.

### **Staff Scheme**

An Actuarial Valuation at 31 December, 2005, is currently being carried out. Three years ago, the Valuation showed a deficit of £217,000 compared with a surplus of £343,000 three years earlier. The outcome of the current valuation is unlikely to be encouraging.

### **PWA/Irish Mission/Overseas Scheme**

The Actuarial Valuation at 1 April, 2005, reveals a deficit of £1.2 million compared with a surplus of £7,000 in 2002. The deficit has to be eliminated over the average expected future-working lifetime of the current active members ie 10 years and this, together with the cost of future service provision, leads to the substantial increase in contributions referred to above.

### **General**

Some 15 – 20 years ago, most employers operating Defined Benefit Schemes would have planned on a funding rate of between 10% and 15%, with one third of this borne by the employee. The current position is dramatically different with the employers' contribution continuing to rise substantially. Members' contributions are also higher.

The current annual cost to PCI of approximately £2.2 million represents an enormous burden on Congregations. Further, if the assumptions made in the actuarial valuations are not realised, the deficits will get larger. Even if the deficits reduce, PCI always has a responsibility to meet any shortfall in funding.

The fear of having to meet liabilities that have arisen, or could arise due to events beyond their control (such as investment returns, yield on gilts, longevity etc) is forcing Scheme providers to take steps to reduce exposure.

Government has responded to the clamour from those who have suffered from the collapse of Schemes and are introducing a Pension Protection Fund. This, of course, will be funded by Pension Schemes. The levy payable to this Fund will depend on a financial rating of the Scheme Provider by a company acting for the Regulator. We have been taking issue with the initial low rating of PCI and our Actuary now advises us that PCI's rating has been raised to a higher level. Despite this, the levy payable by PCI will be in the region of £30,000 in 2006/07.

### **Conclusions of the Panel**

- (a) The current costs of pension provision and the risk of even higher costs are unsustainable. Urgent consideration should be given to a more efficient and affordable pension policy for PCI.

- (b) As a general principle, every effort should be made to have some pension provision for all employees. Indeed, there are proposals currently before Government that, if adopted, would make it compulsory for employers to contribute at least 3% towards an employee's pension.
- (c) There is no obvious benefit from, or justification for, 3 separate Defined Benefit Schemes. The benefit structures are different and the administration is more involved and costly. Whatever future policy is adopted, the number of Schemes should be reduced.

### **Options and Recommendations**

The Panel suggests that the following options are open to PCI:

1. Do nothing.
2. Close all Schemes to new members and provide alternative arrangements for new starts.
3. Revise benefit structures of existing Schemes thereby reducing contributions for future service.
4. Freeze all Schemes at a chosen date and set up new arrangements for all which could be
  - (i) A defined benefit scheme with a new benefit structure for Ministers and the class of employees currently in the three schemes and, perhaps, a defined contribution scheme to cater for others not currently provided for. There may be a case for a probationary period in a defined contribution scheme before, if appropriate, transferring to a defined benefit scheme. Or

(ii) A defined contribution scheme (s) for all.

The position is too serious to accept Option 1.

Option 2 is not considered appropriate as it would introduce unacceptable disparity in treatment and would not address the problems of contributions and complex structures of the Schemes

Option 3 has some attraction but, given the complexity of operating 3 schemes with different benefit structures and the attendant management burden, the Panel considers that the time is opportune to have a fresh look at the problem.

Option 4 is, in the Panel's view, the one on which we should concentrate. Whilst the Panel's preferred outcome is that in 4(i), a detailed exercise is required before a conclusion is arrived at. Therefore, the Panel recommends that a resolution be put to the Assembly asking the Board to bring detailed proposals to the next Assembly. It should be noted that no benefits accrued up to the date of any change can be taken from members.

Time is of the essence and the hope would be to have plans approved by the 2007 Assembly and final arrangements, including the required consultation with Scheme members, put in place for implementation no later than 1 January, 2008.

The drawing up and implementing of proposals will be complex with many aspects requiring legal and actuarial guidance and advice. This will be an expensive exercise and, whilst it is difficult to accurately forecast the cost, it would not be unrealistic to anticipate costs and professional fees in the region of

£100,000. This is a large sum but, given the size and complexity of the Schemes, the liability and contribution problems and the likely annual levy to the Pension Protection Fund, it is imperative that proper advice is sought. Accordingly, the Panel recommends that the Board asks the Assembly to approve the inclusion of 1 penny in £ of Stipend in the Incidental Fund Assessment (approximately £80,000) with any balance being subject to approval at the 2007 Assembly.

## APPENDIX 2

### REPORT ON REVIEW OF PROPERTY

At a meeting of the Board in October a small panel was set up to undertake the review. The panel prepared a short questionnaire covering the matters listed below and issued this to the Boards of the General Assembly for completion in respect of the properties for which they are responsible:

- (a) Compliance with statutory obligations.
- (b) Procedures for the appointment of Professional Advisers.
- (c) Procedures for the appointment of Building Contractors.
- (d) Procedures for the approval of Contracts.
- (e) Property Inspections, Maintenance and Condition.
- (f) Complaints or Disputes.
- (g) List of properties under the Board's control.
- (h) Any other comments.

The Board would like to express its appreciation to the other Boards for their co-operation in completing the questionnaire.

In total, Boards reported approx 80 properties with a value estimated in the region of £40-45m covering residential homes, youth and other centres, homes for retired Ministers, overseas missionaries, Irish Mission workers, properties held for investment as well as Church House and Union Theological College.

The key findings from the survey are as follows:

1. **Statutory Obligations.** Some Boards were unable to confirm whether their properties fully complied with statutory obligations in relation to Health and Safety, Disability Access, Building Control, etc.

2. **Professional Advisers.** There does not appear to be any consistency of treatment in the procedures for the appointment of Professional Advisers. While professional advisers are generally appointed it appears this is not always put out to tender nor, in all cases, is their appointment formally approved by the relevant Board or Committee. No check is generally carried out to ensure that the appointed firm has adequate professional indemnity insurance. Some Boards indicated that they use expertise within their Board to fulfill this function.

3. **Building Contractors.** Again there does not appear to be any consistency of procedure re appointment. Where works are carried out to properties the contractor's appointment is usually subject to a tender process but this may not be subject to Board approval. No insurance cover check is generally carried out.

4. **Inspections.** Generally there is no planned programme of property inspection and maintenance. Some properties are in need of major refurbishment.

**5. Complaints.** No major disputes or complaints were reported.

**6. List of Properties.** One Board is presently undertaking its own review and is unable at the time of writing to confirm the complete portfolio of properties under its control.

The Board of Finance and Personnel, as a Support Board, sees its responsibility to assist the Mission Boards of the Church primarily in the areas of finance, personnel and property. The Board is concerned that the results of the survey reveal a lack of adequate property management procedures and therefore make the following recommendations:

1. That the General Assembly recommends the property Guidelines, as set out in Appendix 2A, to all Boards of the Church.

2. That the remit of the Assembly Buildings' Committee be extended to include oversight of all properties under the General Assembly, excluding those of individual Congregations, and that a report be made on an annual basis by the supervising Board to that Committee. To reflect this extended remit the name of the Assembly Buildings' Committee be changed to the Property Management Committee. (*Code changes, if any, to be discussed with the Clerk*).

3. That, subject to the approval of the Appraisals Committee of the United Appeal Board, a suitably qualified Property Manager be appointed with responsibility for

- oversight of all centrally held property;
- ensuring Boards maintain adequate records of title, statutory and other approvals;
- ensuring compliance with statutory and other regulations;
- ensuring planned maintenance programmes are put in place and implemented and that adequate budgets are set;
- advising Boards and Committees of the Church as required;
- reporting to the Board of Finance & Personnel, through the Property Committee, and its appropriate Committees as required.

In making this recommendation the Board wishes to emphasise that the role of the Property Manager would not release Boards from their individual responsibilities for the day to day management of their properties. The role is seen as one of oversight and compliance rather than maintenance.

## APPENDIX 2A

### GUIDELINES FOR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

These guidelines were approved at a meeting of the Board of Finance and Personnel in February 2006 and submitted to the General Assembly in June 2006. It is recommended that these are adopted by Boards of the General Assembly.

#### 1. SUPERVISING BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

All Boards should ensure they have adequate structures or arrangements in place to address matters arising in relation to property. Boards may decide to set up a property committee or panel or should ensure related matters are dealt with within the existing committee structures.

## **2. RECORDS**

All Boards should ensure that a Property File for each property is held in the Financial Secretary's Office. This file should contain all documents of title along with architect plans and statutory approval or other notices and related correspondence. Boards are responsible for keeping this file up to date.

All property should be held in the name of the "Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland"

## **3. APPOINTMENT OF ADVISERS/CONTRACTORS**

- (a) Appointment should be on a tender basis. A minimum of two firms (or at least 3 in the case of a substantial contract) should be invited to tender or quote.
- (b) Tenders should be opened in the presence of appointed representatives of the Board and retained by the Board Secretary. Tenders should be compared and a recommendation made to the supervising Board or to a delegated committee or panel for approval.
- (c) Written confirmation of the terms and conditions of appointment should be obtained and adequate insurance cover should be put in place.
- (d) Confirmation of appointment, including anticipated costs, should be recorded in the Committee/Board minutes.
- (e) Boards should ensure that no conflicts of interest arise in the appointment of advisers or contractors.

## **4. APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS**

Legal advice should be obtained in advance of the signing of any contracts. Signing of contracts should be subject to approval by the supervising Board through its relevant committee or panel.

## **5. MAINTENANCE**

- (a) Boards should ensure that an annual inspection of all properties is carried out by a suitably qualified person and that a report on condition is made to the Board.
- (b) Boards should put in place a planned maintenance programme.
- (c) An adequate maintenance budget should be set and approved by the supervising Board.

## **6. INSURANCE**

Boards should ensure that adequate insurance is in place with the Church's recognised provider (at time of writing, Bartholomew & James).

## **7. PROPERTY PURCHASE OR DISPOSAL**

Where a Board wishes to acquire property it should seek approval of the Appraisals Committee of the United Appeal Board and should complete the Appraisal and Evaluation Checklist approved by that Board. No property should be purchased without that Board's approval.

No property should be disposed of without the approval of the Supervising Board.

## **8. REPORT TO BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL**

The Code Par 286(3)(a) delegates to the Board of Finance and Personnel responsibility to “oversee the finances of the Church, including the regulation of the systems for the control of all assets and funds of the Church, except those which are the responsibility of individual Congregations or the Assembly Trustees.”

To ensure the Board fulfils its remit regarding the “control of assets” all Boards should make an annual report to the Board of Finance and Personnel through the Property Manager.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **REPORT ON RISK ASSESSMENT**

The General Assembly passed a resolution in June 2005 that

*“The Board of Finance and Personnel (previously Administration) have a Risk Assessment for the Central Church carried out and that a report be made to the General Assembly no later than 2006”*

In the Board of Finance and Administration report to the June 2004 Assembly the following was included:

*“The Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) Accounting and Reporting by Charities issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales recommends that a Charity’s Annual Report should include “a statement confirming that the major risks to which the charity is exposed have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks”. While at present there is not a Charity Commission in Northern Ireland our auditors have suggested that the Church should consider carrying out an assessment of major risks. The Board of Finance and Administration support such a review but recognise that, while not mitigating risks often results in financial commitments, risks are not always financial in nature. It is recognised that the Board of Finance & Personnel should take the lead in bringing a report to the Assembly on this matter but it will require input from and consultation with other Boards and Agencies of the Church.”*

While there is still no Charities Registrar in Northern Ireland, compliance with the SORP is now considered mandatory by most of the Professional Accountancy practices. The Board has taken a decision to prepare accounts for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for 2005 in compliance with the SORP. In addition The Department of Social Development has also issued a Consultation of the Review of Charities Legislation in Northern Ireland in 1985 and this proposes the introduction of a Charities Registrar.

Risk assessment is a concept that to some may not sit easily within a Church setting. The Board is conscious that while we must take steps to minimise risk this should not constrain our mission to be risk takers for the sake of the gospel. Many real-life stories from around the world tell how God can and does use people and how working for Him has changed their lives. Some of



these people are well known, others will never be famous, but all have taken risks for the sake of His Kingdom.

Following the audit tendering process in 2005, the Board of Finance and Personnel agreed to ask the auditors, Ernst & Young LLP, to facilitate a risk assessment review and on 23 November a meeting of Board representatives was held to identify the key risks facing the Church. Following the meeting, Ernst & Young prepared a Risk Register where key risks are identified and some of the root causes are recorded below.

While the risk assessment has been carried out for the “Central Church” it is recognised that many of the identified risks could materialise from events or circumstances at congregational level.

### **1. Risk of damage to the reputation and standing of the Church**

Like most organisations, the Church is not immune to the risk of legal action. In addition such a risk may arise from a lack of response to issues affecting the society in which we live, in particular where the Church fails to promote biblical teaching and moral standards. Clearly such a risk may also arise if those involved in the mission of the Church fail to adhere to the behavioural standards one would expect of Ministers, staff, elders and all those connected with the Church.

### **2. Failure to exercise appropriate “Duty of Care”**

In many areas of the Church outreach it is important that a “duty of care” is exercised. This is particularly important in respect of the requirements under POCVA (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults). It however extends to our overseas missionaries, Ministers and staff. It could also arise from a failure to adhere to the terms of trusts or bequests.

### **3. The Mismanagement or Erosion of Financial Resources**

The central Church has assets in the region of £150 million when all property, investments and pension assets are accounted for. This is a substantial sum and brings particular responsibility to the Boards and Trustees charged with their stewardship. No matter how stringent the financial and management controls are, there is always a risk of misappropriation or fraud. There is also the possibility that the value of assets could be eroded due to inadequate management or professional advice. This is particularly relevant in the current pension climate of increasing life expectancy and lower rates of return on investments, which could have significant financial implication in respect of past service entitlement.

### **4. Failure to achieve the Church’s Mission/Increasing secularisation or losing relevance**

The mission of the Church is clear and all those connected with it have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel. The Church must communicate effectively, face up to the difficult decisions, ensure it engages with the community and be aware of the changing nature of society and how it relates to it.

### 5. Failure to make effective use of people

God has given us abundant riches and given us all different gifts and talents. It is vital these are co-ordinated and used to His glory and honour. It is important to encourage candidates for the ministry or others in His service. It is important that all those employed at central level are accountable and there are clear and effective management structures.

### 6. Failure to take appropriate professional advice

This is largely self explanatory and all those empowered to make decisions should ensure that professional advice is taken where appropriate.

### 7. Contingency Planning

It is important that procedures are in place to protect the assets of the Church, or to mitigate the consequences from the loss of data through fire damage, corruption or other causes.

### 8. Issues that divide the Church

There are many examples in Church life where divisions have occurred eg from theological or moral issues.

As well as identifying the key risks, the Risk Register also considers the potential impact of the identified risks happening, the likelihood of occurrence and highlights some procedures and controls to mitigate such risks. The Report highlights the responsibility which individual Boards have as “risk owners” and the steps to take to mitigate the likelihood of a risk arising.

## APPENDIX 4

### REPORT ON REVIEW OF TYRONE MEMORIAL

1. In addition to its regular tasks, the Committee continued to review the operation of the Tyrone Memorial. The 2005 Reports, Page 244, Pars 7 to 15, summarise the Committee’s original deliberations.

2. A calculation of the average stipend paid to the 12 highest paid Ministers during the years 2003, 2004, and 2005, compared the average with the ministerial minimum shows the following figures:

	2003	2004	2005
Average of 12 highest paid	£38,264	£38,929	£39,440
Ministerial Minimum	£17,700	£18,500	£19,100
Gap	£20,564	£20,429	£20,340
Minimum as percentage of Average of 12 highest paid	46.25%	47.5%	48.4%

3. These figures indicate that the gap has narrowed in percentage terms, but only very modestly in cash terms. It is hoped that the above inflation increase to the minimum for 2006, combined with the effect of some retirements will

continue to narrow the gap.

4. A comparison of the minimum against the average of the highest paid, shows only part of the effect of the Tyrone Memorial. A more valid comparison is to measure what the gap would have been had the old 'fraction' been applied to current specified sources in the highest paying charges.

5. Such a comparison indicates that, had the 'Fraction' system remained, the 'Gap' would have increased greatly, rather than reducing.

6. 2004 stipend data was compared with 2001 data to determine whether the objectives of the Tyrone Memorial were being achieved and to identify problems that had arisen.

7. The analysis revealed the following points:

- (a) The average percentage of specified sources paid in 2001 was 31.83%. The average in 2004 was 30.67%. Therefore the amount of specified sources used to pay stipend is declining.
- (b) The Gap between the Average Stipend for Ministers above the minimum and the minimum itself declined from 31.1% 2001 to 29.5% in 2004.
- (c) The Gap between the Average Stipend for all Ministers and the minimum declined from 20.7% 2001 to 19.5% in 2004.
- (d) Where Stipend is below the Minimum the average percentage of specified sources used to pay stipend declined, only very slightly, from 36.8% 2001 to 36.6% in 2004.
- (e) Where Stipend is above the Minimum the average percentage of specified sources used to pay stipend declined from 30.6% 2001 to 29.2% in 2004.

8. It was observed that the average increase in specified sources in Congregations, where stipend is below minimum, have increased broadly in line with stipend leaving little room for further expenditure on mission.

9. Congregations above minimum had experienced, on average, a greater increase in specified sources than the percentage increase in stipend, leaving more room for further expenditure on mission.

10. The principal objective of 'Tyrone' was to prevent an ever increasing widening of the gap between the highest paid and the minimum. This objective has been achieved.

11. Some Congregations, below minimum stipend, are paying a smaller percentage contribution to Stipend, leaving a larger contribution to be paid by CMF.

12. Because contributions to CMF are based on Stipend some Congregations are contributing less than they would have been under the fraction system.

13. The conclusions of the Committee were discussed with representatives of Union Commission.

14. It was re-emphasised that where Congregations' specified sources are declining compared to stipend, which is therefore taking up an increasing percentage of resources, they should apply to Union Commission for a review. This point was clearly stated in 2005 Annual Reports p 245, Par 13.

15. It was recognised that, because minimum stipend has been increased by a higher percentage than Tyrone Memorial increases, a greater and continuing burden will fall on CMF.

16. In situations where an augmented charge is experiencing growth in specified sources compared to their contribution to stipend, they should be asked to reconsider the extent of their contribution in order to ensure that the burden on CMF is in keeping with congregational resources. It was felt that Presbyteries, as part of their oversight of Congregations, should have a role to play in this matter.

17. It was recognised that, in higher paying charges, because stipends are now, on average, less than they might have been had the 'fraction' system remained in place, those Congregations are contributing less to CMF than would have been the case. In effect the strong are now contributing less to help the weak. It is, however, difficult to envisage any simple mechanism to address this problem.

18. Union Commission confirmed that they are comfortable with the concept of maintaining a 'ceiling' on stipends agreed, following vacancies. They have been implementing such a system for some time. This will help, over time, to ensure that the 'gap' between the highest and the lowest paid decreases or, at least, does not increase.

19. It was acknowledged that there is some disquiet amongst those who have received below inflation stipend increases under the Tyrone Memorial.

20. Union Commission confirmed that they are mindful of the burden on CMF when agreeing new calls where stipends will have to be substantially augmented and consider a range of criteria in these situations.

21. It was agreed to recommend that the operation of the Tyrone Memorial should continue to be reviewed on a triennial basis.

## APPENDIX 5

### ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS' COMMITTEE

#### SUMMARY OF ARCHITECT'S REPORT AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Church House (a Grade B1 listed Building) and Fisherwick Buildings comprise one of Belfast's most significant and distinctive buildings. They have served the Presbyterian Church well in the one hundred years since they were first built. With the passage of time the buildings have undergone modification, most significantly during a major remodelling project, carried out in 1992, when a modern shopping mall was inserted in the ground floor of Church House and the upper floors were extensively re-styled and re-modelled including removal of one tier of the Assembly Hall. Although extensive structural underpinning was carried out at that time very little work was done to the external fabric of the building with the notable exception of new entrances being formed on the west, north and east elevations and the re-covering of some roofs.

In the intervening years, to the present, restoration of external stonework was carried out primarily to the west (Fisherwick Place) elevation returning to Wellington Street to the north. It was after completion of the most recent phase of this work, in 2002, that a decision was taken by the Assembly Buildings' Committee to commission a further detailed condition report on the external fabric of both buildings in order that the full magnitude and implications of remaining work necessary to complete the external refurbishment of the buildings might be understood. Following a tendering exercise Alastair Coey, Architects were appointed to prepare a report.

Their report has been prepared on the basis that its recommendations, if implemented, will give the buildings a period of approximately fifty years during which no further major repairs to the external fabric will be required. A summary of the key findings are as follows:

1. Church House and Fisherwick Buildings is a complicated grouping of inter-connected structures constructed from sandstone, with a brick inner core, with richly composed, and architecturally significant, principal elevations to Howard Street and Fisherwick Place. The tower, and its remarkable copper-clad spire, occupying the south-west corner, is truly a tour-de-force and, without doubt, the building's most distinctive feature. The elevations to Fisherwick Buildings are unremarkable and the elevation to Wellington Street is utilitarian in the extreme. Behind the four main elevations is a truly bewildering array of pitched and flat roofs.

2. It would be remiss not to acknowledge, at this point, the methodical care and prompt intervention that has been invested in maintaining the buildings, and in particular the roofs. This has succeeded in enabling both buildings, in spite of all their inherent problems and defects, to operate in remarkably good functional order.

3. A number of matters require urgent attention in the interests of protecting public safety. These are:

- Removal of loose concrete from decaying window sills to Fisherwick Buildings.
- Securing of loose casements to windows to Fisherwick Buildings.
- Checking support mountings for canopy to entrance to Fisherwick Buildings.
- Refixing loose mountings to banner on south elevation.

It is estimated that these matters could be dealt with within a matter of days.

4. The extent of remedial work proposed by this report is, by definition, of a conservative nature. Nevertheless, the cost estimates noted below take into account the fact that refurbishment and restoration will be carried out in accordance with current conservation best practice. A major example of this approach is in the restoration of stonework. No attempt will be made to clean entire stone elevations through aggressive methods, such as sand blasting. Only stones that are completely defective, or likely to become so within the next fifty years, will be replaced. Replacement stone will be selected on the basis of geological compatibility, weathering performance and satisfactory colour and texture matching. Generally, stones falling within what have been classified as Stage One (where the masonry element is sound but there is some minor

disfigurement of no structural significance) and Stage Two (where there is superficial deterioration) will be left untouched. Only Stones categorised as Stage 3 (original surface erode or decayed) or Stage 4 (extensive decay) will be considered for replacement. In view of the fact that most of the stonework has, at some time in the past, been re-pointed using cement-rich mortars, all existing mortar will be removed in areas in which stone restoration is to be carried out and will be replaced with lime-based mortars. This will in itself create a harmonious and unifying appearance to the completed work while retaining the patina of age evident on the surface of retained stones.

5. The order in which refurbishment of the external fabric of Church House and Fisherwick Buildings is carried out will depend on a number of factors including availability of funding, intended future use of the buildings, consideration of the implications of disruption and the degree of urgency as associated with dealing with defects identified in this report.

6. Parts of the exterior of the building were inaccessible; in particular the upper reaches of the spire. Also the internal flat roofs which were covered by concrete slabs were not examined in detail and the central chimney to the west of Fisherwick Buildings was not accessible. No internal inspection was carried out and the remit of the report did not extend to compliance with current regulations.

7. Estimated costs are as follows:

HOWARD STREET ELEVATION EXCLUDING TOWER (SOUTH) <i>(Stonework repair/replacement, window repair &amp; replacement of defective rainwater goods)</i>	£748,520
UPPER QUEEN'S STREET ELEVATION (EAST) <i>(Stonework repair/replacement &amp; renewal of windows)</i>	£414,920
WELLINGTON STREET ELEVATION (NORTH) <i>(Stonework repair/replacement, window repair &amp; replacement of defective rainwater goods)</i>	£407,220
TOWER ELEVATIONS (NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST) <i>(Stonework repair/replacement, window repair, structural repair, recladding of copper spire, etc)</i>	£892,680
INTERNAL ELEVATIONS <i>(Stonework repair/replacement, window repair &amp; replacement of defective rainwater goods)</i>	£326,720
ROOFS <i>(repairs, replacements etc)</i>	£471,010
FIRE ESCAPES	£90,000
M & E SERVICES ALTERATIONS	£15,000
CONTINGENCY SUM @ 10%	£336,600
 SUB TOTAL	 £3,702,670
PROFESSIONAL FEES	£440,000
VAT	£725,000
 SUB TOTAL	 £4,867,670

LESS HISTORIC BUILDINGS GRANT (estimated – Note 1)	<i>£800,000</i>
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	<i>£4,067,670</i>
Say	<i>£4.1 million</i>

Note 1 - Estimated as £3,702,670 less £1,000,000 not eligible at 20% plus fees at 75%.

## APPENDIX 6

Sterling Salary Scales of Executive and Administrative staff in post on 1 January 2006 (inclusive of a discretionary 2.5% increase applied as from 1 January 2006 following the annual review).

### EXECUTIVE POSTS

#### Scale 1 (20,118 - £24,074)

Payroll & Assessment Manager  
Secretary for Education & Promotion

#### Scale 2 (£22,838 - £27,657)

Director of Nightlight  
Financial Manager  
Assistant Residential Services Manager  
Finance & Office Manager  
Project Manager, Willowbrook  
Youth Centres Director  
Buildings Manager & Safety Officer  
Youth Development Officer  
Children's Development Officer

#### Scale 3 (£25,662 - £31,473)

Director for Congregational Life  
Director for Personnel (BMI) – Currently protected as Scale 4  
Education in Mission Officer  
Personnel Officer (Overseas)  
Minister & Superintendent, Kinghan Mission  
Deputy Director of Youth & Children's Ministry  
IT Development & Support Manager

#### Scale 4 (£28,375 - £35,675)

Residential Services Manager  
Head of Personnel  
Senior Financial Accountant  
University Chaplain (QUB)

**Scale 5 (£31,473 - £38,550)**

Information Officer  
Director of Christian Training  
Director of Youth & Children's Ministry

**Scale 6 (£33,869 - £41,461)**

Deputy Clerk  
Secretary, Board of Mission Overseas  
Secretary, Board of Social Witness

**Scale 7 (£38,550 - £49,848)**

Clerk  
Financial Secretary

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS****Scale 1 (£10,198 - £12,913)**

Secretary/Receptionist  
Telephonist/Receptionist  
Clerical Officer  
Handyperson

**Scale 2 (£11,969 - £13,984)**

Caretaker and Warden, Youth Centres  
Clerical Officer  
Secretary  
Telephonist/Receptionist  
Financial Assistant

**Scale 3 (£13,542 - £15,800)**

Senior/Personal Secretary  
Deputy Building Manager  
Wages Clerk  
Senior Clerical Officer  
Payroll & Clerical Assistant  
Nightlight Development Officers  
Co-ordinator-Counselling Services

**Scale 4 (£15,466 - £17,948)**

Personal Secretary  
Administrative Assistant  
Assistant to the Information Officer  
Departmental Secretary  
Lay assistant-Kinghan



**Scale 5 (£17,007 - £19,773)**

Production Manager  
Assistant Accountant  
Co-ordinator PCI Year Team & Volunteers  
Financial Assistant  
Personal Assistant  
Regional Youth & Support Workers (Euro Scale A5)  
Assistant Chaplain, QUB

**Scale 5 (enhanced) (£18,875 - £21,707)**

Senior Administrative Officer  
Personal Secretary & Office Supervisor  
Personnel Officer

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly request the Board to bring detailed proposals for pensions to the General Assembly in 2007.
3. That in the 2006 assessment for the Incidental Fund, 1p in the £ of stipend be included in respect of the costs of production and implementation of proposals for pensions.
4. That Retired Ministers with pre 1978 service be paid, in the current year, a special grant (Code Par 315 (5)) of £15 per month from the Central Ministry Fund.
5. That the rate of assessment for the Incidental Fund for 2006 be 6p in the £ of stipend.
6. That the rate of assessment for the Central Ministry Fund for 2006 be 15p in the £ of stipend.
7. That the rate of assessment for the Retired Ministers' Fund for 2006 be 8.5p in the £ of stipend.
8. That the rate of assessment for the Widows of Ministers' Fund for 2006 be 7p in the £ of stipend.
9. That the rate of assessment for the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund for 2006 be 0.75p in the £ of stipend for Ministers, Licentiates and College Professors and of Basic Ministerial Minimum for Ministers who are Missionaries.
10. That the rate of assessment for the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) be 22.5p in the £ of stipend as shown in the column, 'Stipend paid to Minister', or as fixed by the Union Commission in the case of a vacancy.
11. That the General Assembly encourage all Boards and Agencies to have Risk Assessment as a recurring item on Board Agendas, that once a year Boards and Agencies should submit a report to the Board of Finance and

Personnel confirming that they are not aware of any factors which would cause one of the identified risks above to materialise, that in addition they should report on possible new risks or risks which have ceased during the past year.

12. That the Board of Finance and Personnel, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

# UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Mr Hal Stewart FCA

Secretary: THE CLERK

1. The Board wishes to express its thanks to all Congregations who supported the United Appeal in the year 2005. Some Congregations exceeded their target by substantial amounts (in some cases over 50% in excess) thereby supporting those who struggle to reach their targets.

2. We regret to report once again that the Appeal for 2005 was below target by £36,795 (£55,825 under in 2004) when the accounts were prepared for that year. However, we received a further £115,831 in 2005 (£64,734 in 2004) in respect of the previous year. In addition up to the time of writing this report a further £103,752 has been received from 51 Congregations as late payments for the year 2005 (£104,824 for 2004). This is a continuing worrying reversal in the improving trend that had been taking place over a number of years. We would again impress on treasurers the need to insure that all contributions are received by the Financial Secretary's Office in good time to be included in the accounts of the target year.

3. The Board was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants for the year 2005.

4. The Board sees its role as that of augmenting the income of all agencies approved by the General Assembly for United Appeal support, to assist them in carrying forward the priorities of the Church. In this regard the Finance Committee of the Board meets with representatives of those agencies and examines their accounts and budgets. On occasions the budgets indicate that the planned work can be carried out without augmentation for the year under review and therefore no grant is recommended for that year. Where circumstances change the agencies are invited to amend their budget the following year and as a result the recommended grant for the subsequent year is increased to take account of the changed circumstances. The Board therefore feels that it does support all the approved agencies even though in some years no augmentation is required.

5. This year we have again not recommended grants to the Youth Centres pending the outcome of the report of the Centres Review Panel, but augmentation grants will be available when the priorities of the Church have been agreed. A number of other agencies have not been included for grants because they are self supporting or are using up surplus funds and these will be included when the need arises

6. Boards have recently been seeking to take account of the new priorities of the Church and this is to be commended. At the same time, however, they should also consider what work may no longer be a priority and what savings could therefore be made to finance the new priorities rather than looking for additional finance which may not be available.

7. The requests from agencies for grants in respect of the year 2007 amounted to £3,910,950 which was an increase of almost 26% over the approved grants of the previous year. After discussions with requesting Boards,

the amount was reduced by £499,000 to £3,411,950. A sum of £80,000 has been added to the target sum as a contingency for possible expenditure not yet approved and a further £275,000 has been released from reserves. The net effect of these adjustments is a target for the year 2007, as set out in Schedules III and IV, of £3,216,950, which is an increase of 4.4% over the previous year.

8. The Board is continuing the process of taking greater account of Specified Sources of Income in the setting of Presbytery targets and for 2007 50% of the Target will be set in this way leaving 50% still based on Contributing Families. In future years the targets will be set on this basis. This basis is commended to Presbyteries when setting congregational targets.

9. The payment of grants to agencies on a timely basis has only been possible as a result of the build up of the capital of the Board. Ideally we would like to be able to release part of this fund over a period of years to reduce the target set each year. The efforts so far by some Congregations to forward monies on a timely basis is appreciated. However, a large proportion of the target monies is received after the end of November and some too late to be included in the accounts for 2005. We again encourage Congregations to forward all monies received as soon as practicable.

10. The new Appraisals Committee of the Board, which is augmented by representatives of the Union Commission, Incidental Fund and Board of Finance and Personnel, met on a number of occasions during the year to consider applications in respect of capital expenditure and new staffing, some of which were approved and others deferred for further information.

11. The Board continued this past year to have problems in ensuring that the "United Appeal Briefing" was available on time. This has been to some extent due to shortage of staff in the Communications Department. It is hoped that future issues will be available each year at the beginning of March and September.

*Rev Dr Donald Watts writes:*

12. Mr Hal Stewart has given outstanding service as Convener of the United Appeal Board. With his accountancy experience he has been able to introduce fresh thinking to the complex issues of budgeting for mission. His approval has been thoughtful and rigorous, but always remembering that the United Appeal is there to support and encourage the Mission Boards, not to set obstacles in their way. His fair judgements have been much appreciated both by his colleagues on the Board and those who have made application to it.

## SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2004	Specified Sources 2004 £	United Appeal 2006 £
Ards.....	9,513	2,772,485	316,120
Armagh.....	4,012	1,330,063	140,411
Ballymena.....	7,810	2,556,108	271,873
Belfast North.....	6,448	1,646,649	204,013
Belfast South.....	3,443	1,240,210	124,853
Belfast East.....	8,150	2,653,474	283,095
Carrickfergus.....	5,892	1,506,101	186,485
Coleraine.....	4,509	1,552,244	160,337
Derry & Strabane.....	3,508	1,037,162	117,224
Donegal.....	1,270	394,284	43,268
Down.....	4,646	1,216,368	148,317
Dromore.....	5,208	1,673,460	179,926
Dublin & Munster.....	1,300	745,530	59,368
Foyle.....	2,999	733,708	93,470
Iveagh.....	3,794	1,190,117	129,797
Monaghan.....	988	314,130	33,987
Newry.....	2,701	959,436	97,351
Omagh.....	2,533	769,100	85,534
Route.....	3,639	1,037,824	119,923
Templepatrick.....	4,517	1,351,486	151,647
Tyrone.....	3,833	1,267,449	134,001
	90,713	27,947,388	3,081,000

60% of the allocation for 2006 has been based on contributing families and 40% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2004 of 1.47.

### SCHEDULE II

	Requested 2006 £	Proposed Grant 2006 £
Home Mission .....	350,000	350,000
Irish Mission.....	450,000	450,000
Congregational Life.....	60,000	60,000
Education Board.....	100,000	80,000
Students Bursary Fund .....	225,000	220,000
Youth and Children's Board .....	376,000	376,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	5,000	0
Guysmere Centre .....	5,000	0
Social Witness Board .....	140,000	125,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee.....	5,000	4,000
ADE Committee .....	5,000	2,500
Thompson House.....	2,500	0
Carlisle House .....	1,000	0
Residential Trust.....	20,000	0
Kinghan Mission .....	30,000	25,000
Marriage & Family Project .....	5,000	5,000
Overseas Board.....	1,023,000	975,000
Department of Communications .....	185,000	180,000
Union Theological College .....	262,500	217,500
Chaplains Committee .....	41,000	41,000
	3,291,000	3,111,000
Contingencies		70,000
Allocation from reserves	(100,000)	(100,000)
	3,191,000	3,081,000

**SCHEDULE III**

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2005	Specified Sources 2005 £	United Appeal 2007 £
Ards.....	9,485	2,937,469	331,261
Armagh.....	3,999	1,469,296	152,321
Ballymena.....	7,561	2,628,333	279,788
Belfast North.....	6,146	1,705,343	203,787
Belfast South.....	3,245	1,282,181	128,532
Belfast East.....	8,110	2,778,185	297,856
Carrickfergus.....	5,801	1,566,652	189,992
Coleraine.....	4,552	1,600,758	169,453
Derry & Strabane.....	3,449	1,047,773	119,339
Donegal.....	1,223	433,390	45,709
Down.....	4,604	1,278,838	152,733
Dromore.....	5,101	1,751,029	187,543
Dublin & Munster.....	1,431	811,590	70,179
Foyle.....	2,939	760,809	94,452
Iveagh.....	3,787	1,266,439	137,394
Monaghan.....	980	341,480	36,309
Newry.....	2,753	1,022,690	105,476
Omagh.....	2,549	829,435	91,218
Route.....	3,653	1,093,092	125,484
Templepatrick.....	4,434	1,402,174	156,446
Tyrone.....	3,844	1,325,941	141,678
	89,646	29,332,897	3,216,950

50% of the allocation for 2007 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2005 of 1.46.

## SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 2007 £	Proposed Grant 2007 £
<b>BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND .....</b>	<b>968,000</b>	<b>888,000</b>
Home Mission .....	400,000	370,000
Irish Mission .....	500,000	450,000
Congregational Life .....	68,000	68,000
<b>BOARD OF EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>
<b>BOARD OF STUDIES &amp; CHRISTIAN TRAINING .....</b>	<b>630,950</b>	<b>479,950</b>
Union Theological College .....	230,950	164,950
Students Bursary Fund .....	400,000	315,000
<b>BOARD OF YOUTH &amp; CHILDREN'S MINISTRY .....</b>	<b>495,000</b>	<b>465,000</b>
<b>BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS .....</b>	<b>324,000</b>	<b>319,000</b>
Social Witness Board .....	194,000	179,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee ...	3,000	3,000
ADE Committee .....	0	(30,000)*
PCI Enterprises .....	0	(25,000)*
Kinghan Mission .....	95,000	95,000
PCI Counselling (Marriage & Family Project) .....	32,000	42,000
Chaplains Committee .....	0	(40,000)*
<b>BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS .....</b>	<b>1,123,000</b>	<b>1,050,000</b>
<b>BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS</b>		
Department of Communications .....	180,000	130,000
	3,910,950	3,411,950
Contingencies		80,000
Allocation from reserves		(275,000)
	3,910,950	3,216,950

\* previous grants returned to United Appeal Board



**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received
2. That the United Appeal for 2007 be as set out in Schedules III and IV.
3. That the resignation of Mr Hal Stewart as Convener of the United Appeal Board be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.
4. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 287 of the Code as follows:

# TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Hon Secretary: Rev Dr DONALD J WATTS

Financial Secretary: Mr CLIVE KNOX

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting held in Church House, Belfast, on 25 April, 2006.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2005 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

The General Investment Fund

The Commutation Fund

The Non-Participating Trust Funds

The Magee Fund

The Tops Wilson Trust Fund

The Fire Insurance Trust Fund

The Fortune Mission Bequest

The Lindsay Memorial Fund

Trust Funds

3. Moved by Mr J Millar, OBE, seconded by the Rev WJ Orr and unanimously agreed, that the Report and the Statements of Accounts be adopted, signed by three Trustees, inserted in the Appendix to the Minute Book and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were, therefore, signed by Mr Oliver Greer, Mr Alan Speer and the Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee had also received and examined the audited Accounts for 2005 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College and The War Memorial Hostel and had accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Mr G McCullagh, seconded by Mr WC Henderson, this report was received.

5. Three retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Rev WDF Marshall, Mr G McCullagh and Mr J Millar, OBE.

6. Sir Eric McDowell and Mr G McCullagh were nominated members of the General Assembly, according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

7. The Trustees record with regret the resignation on 6 February, 2006 of Mr J I Bill, OBE, who had served as a Trustee since 1983 and as a member of the Executive Committee since 1997. Mr Bill brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to this role and his contributions in the areas of property and

pensions in particular were highly valued. The trustees wish to record their appreciation for his valuable contribution and advice.

### Trust Funds

A summary Account of the various Trust Funds is included in the Book of Accounts 2005. The following Trust Funds are distributed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Trustees.

8. **Mrs A M Davidson Trust:** The total income for 2005 available for distribution is £6,882.30. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Union Theological College	£3,000.00
Church House Repairs	£2,882.30
Youth/Sunday School	£1,000.00
	<hr/>
	£6,882.30
	<hr/>

9. **Sir Wm V McCleery Estate:** The total income for 2005 available for distribution is £35,932.68. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

10. **Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 2005 available for distribution is £7,444.98. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Board of Social Witness	£3,444.98
Church House Repairs	£4,000.00
	<hr/>
	£7,444.98
	<hr/>

11. **Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown:** The total income for 2005 available for distribution is £4,777.92. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Church House Repairs	£2,777.92
Board of Social Witness	£2,000.00
	<hr/>
	£4,777.92
	<hr/>

12. **Estate of Mr Victor Morrow:** The total income for 2005 available for distribution is £1,557.36. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Union Theological College	£778.68
Church House Repairs	£778.68
	<hr/>
	£1,557.36

**GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND**

13. <b>Declaration of Dividend</b>	15.4.05	15.10.05
Number of shares qualifying	4,832,508	4,852,842
	£	£
Income from investment for distribution and income tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees	590,151	704,646
Dividend per share	12.00p	15.00p

In the year 2005 £23,280 was transferred from the Dividend Equalisation Reserve and the balance on the Dividend Equalisation Reserve at 31 December, 2005 is £566,150.

14. The combined annual Dividend of 27.00p per share is to be compared with 27.00p per share for 2004; 29.30p for 2003; 28.5p for 2002; 28.00 for 2001; 28.00 for 2000; 27.00 for 1999; 25.00 for 1998; 23.50 for 1997; 22.00 for 1996.

15. <b>Valuation</b>	15.4.05	15.10.05
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	26,853,382	28,810,202
Cash on Deposit	2,172,160	2,260,476
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	589,430	566,150
Property and Ground Rents	2,500,000	2,500,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£32,114,972	£34,136,828
No of Shares Issued	4,848,853	4,865,278
Share Value	£6.6232	£7.0164

**General Investment Fund**

16. The advisers to the fund during the year were Smith & Williamson, the owners of Cunningham Coates. The Executive Committee of Trustees meet with the Investment Advisers to review investment performance on a regular basis. The Trustees invited 6 firms to tender for the provision of investment management services in January 2006. Following consideration of the tender proposals, a shortlist was prepared and interviews held. It was agreed to appoint Newton Investment Management Limited.

The Trustees requested a valuation of the properties in the General Investment Fund at 31 December, 2005. The valuation indicated an increase from £2,500,000 to £2,720,000 and this has been included in the accounts of the General Investment Fund.

**Crescent Church Loan Fund**

17. A request for a loan of £25,000 was received and approved during 2005. Interest is currently charged on loans at bank base rate on the average balance outstanding over the term of the loan.

### **Craig Trust**

Under the will of the late John James Craig, the 'Frank McCaughey Craig and Sarah Remington Charles' Trust was established and the income arising is paid to the Augmentation Fund. The Trust consists of investments in the General Investment Fund and properties in Ballymena. Following detailed discussion and a report from the property agent, the Trustees decided to sell the properties and they were auctioned on 24 March 2006 and sold for £3,350,000.

### **Getty Bequest**

18. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2005 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	2,600
Overseas – Jewish	1,400
Home Mission	3,400
Belfast City Mission	2,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£10,000</b>

### **Familybooks Limited**

19. The Company is being wound up and tax clearance from the relevant tax authorities is still awaited. The Liquidator has submitted a preliminary report and the amount to be realised is expected to be £200,468. This amount is represented by £45,000 due to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for a restrictive covenant preventing the undertaking of any competitive business for a period of 5 years from 30 April, 2003. The balance, £155,468, represents the proceeds on the realisation of the assets of the business. The original capital, £150,000, for Familybooks Limited was provided by the Incidental Fund £50,000 and £100,000 from the Trustees Discretionary Fund. In accordance with the resolution approved at the June 2003 General Assembly the Trustees will "retain and invest the nett proceeds of the sales of Familybooks for a period of ten years against the contingency that the Church may decide at a future date to re-establish a Presbyterian bookshop".

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.
6. That the recommendation regarding the Victor Morrow Trust be adopted.

7. That in accordance with the Will of the late John Getty the following be constituted as the Committee for the “direction and management of the application” of the income from the Getty Bequest:

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Revs Dr D J Watts, W D F Marshall, R J A Bell, W J Orr; Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, CB, Mr A T Ross, Mr John Millar, OBE.

### **APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEE**

**Nomination of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine –**  
Mr Robert Alexander Wilson

### **RESOLUTION**

That Mr Robert Alexander Wilson be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in room of Mr J Ingram Bill, resigned, and of the due appointment of Mr Robert Alexander Wilson as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and of the Clerk of the General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.

# HYMNAL COMMITTEE

Convener: Rev WTJ RICHARDSON

1. In what we hope to be the final year of the existence of the Hymnal Committee, we have known both encouragement and frustration.

2. As a Committee we have been greatly encouraged by the steady sales of all three sections of the Hymn Book. At present our Publishers - SCM Canterbury Press Ltd. - have indicated that to date around 90,000 books have been sold. Of the 6000 of the **Music Edition** printed all have now been sold and we await the arrival of the second edition, due in late May. Of the 75,000 **Words Only edition** printed, only around 10,000 remain. Of the 20,000 **Large Print Edition** printed, now only around 2,000 remain. It is estimated that somewhere between one third and one half of our congregations are now using the Irish Presbyterian Hymn Book and this inroads is being increased almost on a week to week basis. This is tremendously encouraging, particularly for those of us who have been involved in what was a truly mammoth task. These figures have far exceeded our expectations and indeed those of our publishers.

3. Unfortunately regarding the publication of the Hymn Book in electronic format, the story has been one of great frustration. Originally we had been led to believe that the CD would be available within a year of the publication of the book. It is now over six months overdue and this is a great disappointment to a number of our Congregations. Apparently the problem is all tied up with Christian Copyright Licencing. A number of the Copyright holders – especially those overseas – have granted permission for the inclusion of the material, but only on condition that the customers CCL reference number can be activated as part of the CD Registration process. CCL have been understandably reluctant to release the necessary information to our Publishers as apparently this has never been made available to outside interests. All this has led to a degree of high level and time-consuming negotiations, which has led understandably to the time delay.

4. The CD when published will feature a double page spread taken from the Full Music Edition, enabling the **Words only** to be either printed out or exported into some other Computer Field in order to produce Overhead Acetates or Service Sheets. It will also include easily accessible Author and First Line indexes. CCL have assured our Publishers that licences issued to Congregations will cover all material within the CD.

5. In their last communication, the Publishers informed the Committee that the launch of the CD is now weeks rather than months away. It is hoped that by the time this report is published the CD will be available for use by our Congregations. It is the prayer of the Committee that this form of presentation will be at least as popular as the three editions of the book presentation, and that those using this format will know the fullness of God's Blessing in the expression of their praise.

*The Rev Dr DJ Watts writes:*

The success of the new Hymnbook is in no small measure due to the hard work and tenacity of the Rev Jack Richardson. He has guided the project from beginning to end. Even at times when many were sceptical about its feasibility, Jack was committed to the project and believed that a new hymnbook would enrich the worship of our Church. That so many Churches are now using the hymnbook has proved that the enterprise was worthwhile. The General Assembly must be grateful to the Rev. Jack Richardson and all the team who so ably supported him.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Hymnal Committee and its Convener, Rev Jack Richardson, be thanked for their services and discharged.



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