



GENERAL ASSEMBLY



ANNUAL REPORTS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Notes:**
- (i) **Business commences at 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday and at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday and Thursday.**
 - (ii) **An “Introduction to Assembly Business” will be given in the Assembly Hall on Tuesday at 9.15 a.m.**
 - (iii) **Communion will be held on Tuesday at 11.45 a.m. and Worship on Wednesday and Thursday at 12.15 p.m. The break for lunch will be at 1 p.m. each day.**
 - (iv) **Figures in brackets refer to page numbers in the Annual Reports.**

Tuesday

Business

2010 Special Assembly

Presbyterian Women

Mission in Ireland

Youth and Children

Finance and Personnel

Wednesday

Christian Training

Communications

Social Witness

General

Thursday

Judicial Commission

United Appeal

Mission Overseas

Education

Union Commission

Trustees

Trusts

NOTES

MONDAY, JUNE 6

Within Church House

7.00 p.m.—

Service of Worship
Constitution of Assembly
Election of Moderator

TUESDAY, JUNE 7

9.45 a.m.—

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (1-7).
Arrangements Committee.
2. Reports of Presbyteries (8-14).
3. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.
Church of Scotland: Rt Rev David Arnott, Rev Joanne Hood, Mr Robin Arnott.
United Reformed Church: Mrs Val Morrison, Rev Dr Jim Coleman.
Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev Iain Hodgins.
Church of Ireland: Most Rev Michael Jackson, Rev John McDowell.
The Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev Donald Ker, Mr TG Wilson.
Irish Council of Churches: Rev Philip McKelvey, Mr Mervyn McCullagh.
Presbyterian Church USA: Rev Doug Baker.
Waldensian Church: Rev Bruno Gabrielli.
4. 2010 ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:
Report and Resolutions (297-298).

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

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(11.15) Intermission.

11.45 a.m **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Memorial Roll.**

2.00 p.m.—

5. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: Report and Resolution (153-156).
6. BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (122-152).
Strategy for Mission; Research and Resources.

(4.00) Intermission.

(4.15) 7. BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (176-189).
Ministry Opportunities; Research and Education; Ministry Resources; Ministry Events.

8. BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Report and Resolutions (236-283).
Pensions and Assessments; Personnel; Property Management; Finance, Legal and IT; Tyrone Memorial Review.

9. Overtures anent Pars 315; 318(2) of the Code (283-284).

Lapsed Business (if any).

(6.00) Close of Business.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

9.30 a.m.—

10. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (190-217).
Training and Resources; Ministerial Studies and Development; UTC Management.

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

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11. Overture anent Par 190(2)(a) of the Code (217).
- (10.30) Intermission.
- (10.45) 12. BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS: Report and Resolutions (218-221).
Church Architecture.
13. BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (157-175).
Specialist Ministries; Older People Services; Family Services; Adult Services

12.15 p.m.—

Worship.

2.00 p.m.—

14. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (15-75)
Memorial Record; Financial Crisis; Priorities; Moderator's Advisory; Doctrine; Pensions and Assessments Review; Church Relations; Reception of Ministers and Licentiates; Pastoral Care of Manse Families.
- (4.00) Intermission.
- (4.15) 15. GENERAL BOARD (cont'd): Report and Resolutions (15-75).
Church and Society; Global Concerns; Panels.
16. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 25; 48; 33; 81 of the Code (75-76).
- Lapsed Business (if any).
- (6.00) Close of Business.

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

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7.45 p.m.— Evening Rally.

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

9.30 a.m.—

In Private

17. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (77-78).

In Public

18. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (285-291).

(10.45) Intermission.

- (11.00) 19. BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS: Report and Resolutions (102-121).

Outreach Ministries; Leadership Development; World Development; Mission Involvement.

Lapsed Business (if any).

12.15 p.m.—

Worship.

2.00 p.m.—

20. EDUCATION BOARD: Report and Resolutions (222-235).

21. UNION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (79-100).

22. Overtures on the Books anent Pars 57; 106(g); 128(3); 128(5)(d); 128(5)(a); 128(6)(b) of the Code (100-101).

(3.45) Intermission.

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

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- (4.00) 23. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (293-296).
24. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (292).

Lapsed Business.

BUSINESS BOARD: Final Report.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

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. 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. Committees: 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 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 or a section of it, may be received and referred back. This is done by an amendment to resolution 1. 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. Where it is considered helpful the seconder may speak before questions to clarify issues which may arise during questions.

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 for 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 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. No speech should be longer than ten minutes, unless by specific permission of the Business Board.

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 who has spoken or voted against any decision may intimate his personal dissent or protest immediately after the decision 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.

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BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Business Board is grateful to all those who play their part in enabling the General Assembly to run smoothly – Conveners, staff, Arrangements Committee members, stewards, caterers, cleaners and so many others. This year may be especially demanding with the new facilities in place, so the Board asks members to show patience when needed. There is no doubt that all who use the Assembly Hall will benefit from the renovations and even more so as people become used to the new technology.

2. The order of business is presented for approval. The one significant change to the agenda this year is not to hold a “Presbyterians Talk” event on Tuesday evening to allow more time for members and guests to meet informally. It is hoped that a similar event (or events) may be held during the year.

3. The General Assembly last year agreed some changes to the format of Opening Night and the Tuesday Communion Service. These have been implemented in what the Board hopes is a sensitive and helpful way.

Invitation to Londonderry

4. An invitation has been received from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal for the 2013 General Assembly to meet in Londonderry. That is the year in which the city will be the UK City of Culture. A small group from the Board met with an enthusiastic working-group of Presbytery to see the facilities available at the Millenium Forum. It reported that the Forum would be a very suitable venue, with room for meeting and catering. From the arrangements point of view the Business Board would be pleased to hold an Assembly in Londonderry during the Year of Culture and would value the opportunity to share Presbyterian culture and tradition with a wider audience. The General Board has also discussed the invitation and is consulting with Presbyteries. An appropriate resolution will be brought in the Supplementary Reports.

Nominations for Moderator

5. A suggestion was brought to the Business Board that with present-day communications it should be possible, should the voting at the February Presbyteries result in an equal number of nominations for more than one person as Moderator of the General Assembly, to vote again on the same evening. This would obviously require Presbyteries all to meet in the evening and for the vote to be taken early. The Business Board can see significant advantages to this, particularly in the time given to the new Moderator to prepare and has alerted Presbyteries that a resolution to this effect is being brought to test the mind of the Assembly.

Elders’ Representation

6. The Business Board was asked to consider if a Congregation could be represented at the General Assembly by a number of elders coming to different

debates during the week. It was pointed out that different people are interested in different aspects of the Church's work and not everyone can be free for the three days of debate. While sympathetic, the Board felt that only one individual may be commissioned in any year, but other elders with particular interests should be encouraged to attend. It is always possible to arrange, with the permission of the House, for such people, who may well have valuable insights to share, to speak at the Assembly even if they would not have a vote.

Invitations to Opening Night

7. The Board agreed for the first time this year to extend an invitation to Opening Night to representatives of the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Irish Football Association and the Irish Rugby Football Union.

Date of the General Assembly, 2012

8. It was confirmed that due to the two UK public holidays at the beginning of June to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, it is recommended the General Assembly be held from 28-31 May, 2012.

Delegates to other Churches

9. Delegates were appointed to attend other Church meetings as follows:

Presbyterian Church of Wales 2011: Rt Rev Dr Ivan Patterson

Church of Ireland General Synod 2011: Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson; Mr George Russell

Methodist Conference 2011: Very Rev Dr Norman Hamilton; Mr Samuel Douglas

Business Board

10. 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 2011-2012, 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 WT Cordner; Mrs Jean Mann – Rev CUR Bradley; WK Belshaw – Rev Desmond Knowles; John Sutters – Rev GF McKeown; Miss Muriel Torrens – Rev JR Burnett; David McCleery – Rev PP Campbell; DC Cowan – Rev AE Tolland; Roy Kennedy – Rev JA McCaughan; Joseph Cassells – Rev RL Craig; Thomas Allen – Rev SA Woodburn; William Reid – Rev DB Knox; Albert Maxwell – Rev CG Gamble; W McIlreavy – Rev MG McClelland; David Knight – Rev GJ Mackarel; Ronnie Gillanders – Rev DB Murphy; William Grills – Rev RN Orr; J Young – Rev RW Gaston; _____ – Rev WJ Murdock; JH McClurg – Rev Dr AR Rodgers; EM Carroll.

A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (6)

Rev GE Best, Convener

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Communications Secretary, Hospitality Secretary, Buildings Manager; Committee Convener.
- (x) Rev Alan S Thompson; DA Crowe, Maurice Fisher, Mrs Joyce Anderson.
- (y) Revs WT Cordner, AE Tolland, RN Orr, WJ Murdock, JA McCaughan, MG McClelland; Miss Muriel Torrens, DC Cowan, David McCleery.

The Welsh Assembly 2010*The Rev George Moore writes:*

1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales met at Lampeter University from 6-8 September, 2010. Valerie and I were warmly welcomed and enjoyed the fellowship. The residential nature of the occasion meant that there were opportunities to meet a good number of people over meals. The proceedings are in Welsh and so we were dependant on simultaneous translation through headsets. I had the opportunity to bring greetings to the Assembly on the Monday morning and to acknowledge the contribution being made to our denomination by the Rev Prof Stephen Williams who is remembered warmly in the Church of his birth. I was also given the opportunity to lead a seminar at a fringe meeting on the Monday evening.

2. The Rev Ian Hodgins from Penclawdd was installed as the Moderator on the Tuesday evening. Ian's roots are in Dublin where he grew up in Clontarf Congregation. The Rev Ifan Roberts who has served as General Secretary for the past eight years (their central posts are termed appointments) is returning to parish ministry and going to a Presbytery with only one minister in the whole Presbytery. This highlights one of the major concerns for the denomination. In the past ten years the number of full time ministers has dropped from 407 to 257; and the number of part time ministers has dropped from 67 – 40. Presently there are only 5 people training for ministry.

3. Membership is also in steep decline falling from 45,700 in 1999 to 29,136 in 2009. One member challenged the Assembly "Is the Christian Church in Wales today ready and prepared to face this challenge, or will it drift further towards oblivion?"

4. The highlight of the Assembly for us was the presentation of the Youth and Children's Department where we saw the enthusiasm of young people for the Gospel. The Department is introducing the concept of a "Family Friendly Church". The idea is that a set of criteria will be drawn up and Churches which meet the criteria will win commendation and be given the right to use the logo.

The Methodist Conference 2010*The Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson reports:*

1. The Methodist Church in Ireland met for its Annual Conference in Belfast from 10-13 June, 2010 and, along with Mr Campbell Young, I attended to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Its theme was taken from a line in one of Wesley's hymns, "Our Calling to Fulfil". It was a good opportunity to renew personal friendships with many fellow ministers in the Methodist Church, as well as to chat with Bishop Harold Millar, the Church of Ireland representative to the Conference.

2. At the opening night service in St Mark's, Dundela, (famous for its close links with CS Lewis), the Conference installed the Rev Paul Kingston as its President, succeeding the Rev Donald Ker. In addition, for the first time, it also installed Mrs Gillian Kingston as its Lay Leader. It was an interesting innovation, and the way the duties of chairing the Conference were shared between the President and the Lay Leader reflected the concern of the Church to recognise the gifts of all God's people.

3. Paul and Gillian are not related, but one can imagine that many people will assume that they are. To complicate matters, a former President of the Conference in 1984 was also called Paul Kingston, and he is a first cousin of the current President. Added to that, the current President and the out-going President, Donald Ker, are also first cousins. Methodists in Ireland are a close-knit family.

4. The issues addressed at this Conference were remarkably similar to the issues which we have heard discussed at other Church assemblies this year: falling numbers, financial pressures and consideration of new models of ministry.

5. The statistics reveal that the Methodist Church in Ireland has lost approximately 2,500 people in the last five years, bringing its current full membership to around 51,500. Allied to this decline, serious concerns were expressed about the Church's financial position. The proposed budget increase of 5% was met with some expressions of concern. But in spite of fears that members will be stretched to reach the new target, the Conference approved the increased budget. There is a serious pension deficit that needs to be addressed and more funds are needed for the training and support of new ministers. Like many other Churches, the Conference directed its Finance Committee to undertake a wide-ranging review of all Church finances.

6. One strategy that was strongly commended to the Conference was the *Back to Church Sunday* in which a deliberate effort is made to invite people to come to Church on a given Sunday. In 2010, it was 26 September. This initiative challenges the general delusion that exists in many Churches that they are welcoming of new visitors, and that visitors will naturally feel at home. As well as being a simple strategy in getting Church members to invite their friends to come to Church, it also challenges Churches to re-think how accessible and welcoming they really are.

7. The Conference also considered a report on interchangeability of ministry between the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland. The goal is to move to a position where there will be mutual involvement in the consecration of bishops and dedication of presidents, and eventually an interchangeable ministry where a duly ordained presbyter/priest of either Church may administer communion in the other Church according to either rite or ceremony.

8. The final service of the Conference was an impressive service of ordination and communion held in Bloomfield Presbyterian Church. The President of the British Methodist Conference, the Rev David Gamble, preached an engaging sermon on using one's God-given gifts, and four new ministers were ordained. Their personal testimonies of their call to the ministry were full of evangelical warmth and commitment.

9. Like many other Churches, the Methodist Church in Ireland is facing challenging times. They have a "calling to fulfil". The mood of this Conference reflected a real desire to respond to those challenges, to fulfil their calling, and to advance the gospel throughout Ireland.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

1. This year the Assembly meets in the newly refurbished Church House, grateful for the greater comfort and practical benefits afforded by the modifications. The Committee however, asks for your patience as everyone gets used to the slightly altered layout of the building etc.

Guidelines to New Members

2. It has been agreed again to provide an opportunity for Elders and Ministers who are attending the General Assembly for the first time to be given an introduction to Assembly procedures. This will take place at 9.15 am on Tuesday, immediately prior to the first Business Session of the Assembly.

Communion and Worship Services

3. The Communion Service this year will commence at 11.45 am 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 11.40 am. There will also be worship on Wednesday and Thursday at 12.15 pm, to which the public are warmly invited.

First Aid

4. St John's Ambulance personnel are in attendance on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Others trained in First Aid will be in the building at all times. Please notify the Convener or any of the stewards if First Aid is required.

Exhibition

5. Various exhibition stands will be displayed this year in the Concourse area. These will feature the work of Boards and other agencies within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Web Streaming and Twitter

6. The public sessions of the General Assembly will be streamed again through the PCI Website, and proceedings can also be followed on 'Twitter'.

Tea/Coffee Breaks

7. Tea and coffee will be served this year in the Minor Hall and on the Concourse. As many people as possible are encouraged to make their way to the relatively spacious surroundings of the Minor Hall to minimise the usual congestion on the Concourse. Members and guests are asked to move away from the serving areas once served, to allow others to be attended to efficiently.

Queuing to Speak

8. The row of seats directly in front of the rostrum is reserved for those queuing to speak in debates. In the interests of efficiency and courtesy, members are asked to respect this. To encourage debate, there will be two alternative speaking points on the floor of the main Hall, with reserved seating adjacent to them, clearly visible to the Moderator.

Voting Cards

9. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk located on the Concourse, 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

10. Admission to the Private Session is by voting card only. 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

11. 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 Reception. Full details of rates are printed on the form.

Thanks

12. Sincere thanks are expressed to Church House administrative staff, stewards, time-keepers, musicians, and many others, who work very hard behind the scenes to ensure that everything runs smoothly throughout the Assembly.

GORDON BEST, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That on the first Tuesday of February Presbyteries should meet in the evening to nominate the next Moderator of the General Assembly and remain in session until voting is complete.
3. That the professional amplification controller and visual display operator be admitted to the Private Session each year at the General Assembly.

4. That a grant of £16,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.

5. That the Business Board, with its associated working Committee, be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code for the ensuing year beginning 15 March, 2011.

REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev AM Bates is their Moderator; that the Rev DM Spratt was inducted to the work of Associate Minister in First Bangor on 11 April, 2010; that Mr DW Leach was ordained and inducted to the work of Associate Minister in Hamilton Road, Bangor on 28 March, 2010; that Mr Mark Catney was ordained and installed to the charge of St Andrew's, Bangor on 22 April, 2010; that Mr CG Anderson was ordained and installed to the charge of First Donaghadee on 23 April, 2010; that Mr Peter Douglas was licensed on 20 June, 2010; that Mr Graeme McConville was licensed on 20 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr Ivan Steen and Mr DC Millar presented credentials and were received as Licentiates; that Mrs KM Mbayo was given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast, Miss Molly Deatherage was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan and Dr Michael McClenahan was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that under their care are: as Ministers without charge Revs Dr SI Dennis, CD Mawhinney and David McKee (retired); as Licentiates Mr Peter Douglas, Mr Graeme Fowles, Mr MWJ McKeown, Mr Ivan Steen and Mr DC Millar; as students Mr David Conkey, Mr Andrew Conway, Mr Aaron Ditty, Mrs Fiona Forbes, Mr Andrew Galbraith, Mr Paul Orr, Mr Owen Patterson, Mr Robert Hamilton, Mr Edward Kirwan and Mr Stuart McCrea; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Very Rev Dr JS Carson is their Moderator; that the Rev BA McDonald, Minister of Caledon and Minterburn retired on the 31 August, 2010; that the Rev JWP McConnell resigned the charge of Waringstown on 31 August, 2010 on his acceptance of the position of Chaplain in the Royal Hospital School, Ipswich; that the Rev AJ Dunlop, Assistant Minister in First Portadown, was inducted as Associate Minister in First Portadown on 28 November, 2010; that Mr Mark Proctor was licensed on 13 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that Mr WDS McCullagh was licensed on 27 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr Colin McKibben, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was presented with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal; that they have under their care as a Minister without charge the Rev JWP McConnell; as Licentiates Mr A Faulkner and Mr MB Wilson; as students for the ministry Mr Seamus Burke, Mr Philip Cleland, Mr Russell Edgar, Mr Ashley Graham and Mr Simon Hamilton; that during the year they held a Consultation at Richhill Congregation; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev MJR Neilly is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Dr JM Finlay retired from the duties of the active Ministry in Harryville, Ballymena on 31 July, 2010; that the Rev Gareth McFadden resigned his appointment as Associate Minister of High Kirk, Ballymena on 22 September, 2010 having received and accepted a call from the Congregations of Drumlough and Anahilt and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that Mr NL Smyth was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 20 June, 2010 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr NG Mulholland, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone, Mr RH Houston having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus were received as Licentiates under the care of Presbytery; that they have under their care as Licentiates Mr WE Chestnutt, Mr RH Houston, Mr RM Moody and Mr NG Mullholland; and as students for the ministry Mr MJO Currie, Mr PA Kerr, Mr PWA McClelland, Mr SW Moore, Mr SW Orr and Mr RMP Simpson; that they held Consultations at Wellington, Brookside Ahoghill and Trinity Ahoghill; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DW Brice is their Moderator; that the Rev RB Logue, Minister Emeritus of Ballygomartin, died on 16 February, 2011; that the Rev TV Patterson, Minister of Immanuel, retired on 9 May, 2010 and that the Rev TC Wright, Minister of Alexandra, retired on 16 May, 2010; that Mr David Clawson presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and inducted as Moderator's Assistant (Ballysillan) on 9 May, 2010; that Mr RH Houston was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 6 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr JA Spence was licensed on 13 June, 2010 as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry and given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr WI Ferris was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 27 June, 2010 and remains under the care of the Presbytery and that Miss PJ Nelson was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 27 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that Mr PA Bovill presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was received as Licentiate; that upon receiving a call to the Congregation of Leckpatrick, the Rev MF Russell demitted his charge as Associate Minister in Carnmoney on 30 September, 2010 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal; that they have under their care as Ministers without charge: the Revs LH Eagleson, CI McKnight, WA Shaw, WM Smyth (retired), and FW Vincent; as Licentiates Mr PA Bovill, Mr TJ Bruce, Mr WI Ferris, Mr SWK Glendinning and Mr David McCarthy; as students for the ministry Mr Lachlan Webster and Mr Gareth Simpson; that a Consultation was held with the Congregation of Abbey, Monkstown; that the Congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

The **SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JR Burnett is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Prof John Thompson died on 29 May, 2010; that Mrs KM Mbayo, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was ordained and installed as QUB Chaplain on 3 June, 2010; that Mr Grant Connor, Licentiate, presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed as Minister of Dunmurry on 24 November, 2010; that the Rev MS Gault presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was installed as Minister of Cooke Centenary on 11 February, 2011; that Mr CG Anderson, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that Mr DC Millar was licensed on 6 June, 2010 and given credential to the Presbytery of Ards; that they have under their care as Ministers without charge the Revs KA Drury and JD Maxwell; as Licentiates Mrs Kathryn Viner and Miss PJ Nelson; as students for the ministry Mr Jonathan Abernethy-Barkley, Mr Ross Collins and Mrs Corrina Heron; that a Consultation is being held with the Richview Congregation; that the Congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RJ Beggs is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr David Murphy retired as Minister of Ballymacarrett Congregation on 31 October, 2010; that the Rev WA McCully presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was installed as Minister of Dundonald Congregation on 18 June, 2010; that Mr PA Bovill was licensed on 30 May, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that Mr GJ Maclean was licensed on 6 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that Mr Jonathan Boyd was licensed on 13 June, 2010 and placed under the care of Presbytery; that Mr WDS McCullagh presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh and was received as a Licentiate; that Mr JL Rutherford was given credentials as a Licentiate to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that Mr William Harkness was given credentials as a Licentiate to the Presbytery of Route; that Mr Grant Connor was given credentials as a Licentiate to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that they have under the care of Presbytery as Ministers without charge the Revs DR Baker, RA Crooks (retired), WJ Harshaw, Dr Elizabeth Jamison (retired) and LR Pedlow (retired); as Licentiates Mr NRA Cooper, Mr Jonathan Boyd and Mr WDS McCullagh; as students Mr Andrew Boreland, Mr Stephen Cowan, Mr David Gray and Mr Edward McKenzie; that Consultations were completed in Bloomfield and Orangefield during the year; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr CA Grant is their Moderator; that the Rev MS Gault, Minister of Downshire, resigned his charge on 10 February, 2011 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that the Rev RJ Gilkinson presented credentials from the Presbytery of Route and was installed to

the charge of Craigy Hill on 11 June, 2010; that Mr NL Smyth and Mr Graeme McConville presented credentials and were received as Licentiates on 14 September, 2010; that Mr David Clawson, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; Mr RH Houston, Licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that under their care are: as Minister without charge the Rev DJ Paul; as Licentiates Ms Linda Keys, Mr Graeme McConville and Mr NL Smyth; as students Mr Mark Dodds and Mr Alan Moore; that they held no Consultations; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed individually.

The **COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr RA Kane is their Moderator; that the Rev RJ Lester, Minister-Emeritus of Ringsend Congregation, died on 14 March, 2010; that Mr JP Stanbridge was licensed on 6 June, 2010 and placed under the care of Presbytery; that they have under their care as students for the ministry Mr Alan Buick, Mr Chris Cordner, Mr Jonathan Doey, Mr Jonathan Frazer, Mr Keith Hibbert, Mr Stephen Hibbert, Mr Ivan Linton, Mr Neil Stewart and Mr Gordon McCracken; that the Congregational Financial Statements are being printed separately.

The **DERRY AND DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr Brian Brown is their Moderator; that the Rev JK McCormick retired from the duties of active Ministry in the Congregation of Second Derry (Strand and Buncrana) and Burt on 31 August, 2010; that the Rev WA McCully resigned as Minister of Trinity, Letterkenny and Trenta Congregations on 15 June, 2010, having received a call from Dundonald Congregation and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that on 1 October, 2010 the Rev MF Russell, Associate Minister in Carnmoney Congregation, presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was installed to the pastoral oversight of the Congregation of Leckpatrick; that on 10 September, 2010 Mr Colin McKibbin, Licentiate Assistant in First Armagh Congregation, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh and was ordained and installed to the pastoral oversight of the Congregations of Carnone, Convoy and Donoughmore; that Mr Jonathan Cowan was licensed on 20 June, 2010; Mr William Montgomery a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, on receiving a call to the Home Mission charges of Cahir and Fermoy, was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that the Presbytery have under its care as Ministers without charge the Revs JC Teeney and KG Patterson, as a Licentiate Mr Jonathan Cowan, and as a student for the ministry Mr Brian Smyth; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DJ Hyndman is their Moderator; that the Rev AA Cole, Minister of Kilmore retired on 9 February, 2011; that the Rev LC Orban presented credentials from the

Hungarian Reformed Church and was inducted to the work of First Ballynahinch on 28 March, 2010; that Mr DTR Edwards and Mr GJ Maclean presented credentials and were received as Licentiates; that under their care as Ministers without charge are: the Revs RN Stewart, JM Casement, GR Stockdale and Samuel Armstrong; as Licentiates Mr MC Cowan; Miss Lesley-Ann Wilson, Mr DTR Edwards and Mr GJ Maclean; as a student Mr Gary Ball; that no Consultations were held; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RA McLernon is their Moderator; that the Rev John McCaughan, Minister Emeritus of Legacurry, died on 14 August, 2010 and that the Rev Dr JB Irvine, Minister Emeritus of Hillsborough, died on 9 December, 2010; that the Rev WJ Keefe, Minister of Sloan Street retired on 3 January, 2011; that the Rev Gareth McFadden presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was installed to the charge of Drumlough and Anahilt on 23 September, 2010; that Mr Mark Proctor presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh and was received as a Licentiate; that Mrs HM Freeburn presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster and was received as Licentiate; that under their care as Ministers without charge are: the Revs JD Mark and KI Young-Wimberly, as Licentiates Mr Mark Proctor and Mrs HM Freeburn, as a student Mr Nathan Duddy; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev CJ Gamble is their Moderator; that the Rev SW Rea, Minister in Enniscorthy and Wexford, resigned his charge on 6 August, 2010 and was inducted as Minister in Athy and Carlow on 7 August, 2010; that Mr William Montgomery presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was ordained and installed into the Home Mission and inducted as Minister in Fermoy and Stated Supply in Cahir on 20 March, 2010; that Mrs HM Freeburn was licensed on 6 June, 2010 and given credentials for the Presbytery of Dromore; that under their care as students are: Mr Damien Burke, Mr Kevin Hargaden and Mr Reuben McCormick; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Samuel Newell is their Moderator; that the Rev JL Rutherford presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of Ballydown on 26 March, 2010; that under their care as a Minister without charge is the Rev EG McAuley (retired); that they held Consultations at Loughbrickland, Scarva, Gilford and Tullylish; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev NS Millen is their Moderator; that Miss Molly Deatherage presented

credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was ordained and inducted to the charge of Ballina, Ballymote and Killala on 13 November, 2010; that they held Consultations at Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev NJE Reid is their Moderator; that during the year they conducted Consultations in Annalong and in First Newry; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RA Campbell is their Moderator; that the Rev JT Williamson, Minister of Urney and Sion, retired on 30 April, 2010; that the Rev JF Murdoch, Minister of First Omagh, retired on 28 February, 2011; that the Rev CWA Jones presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick and was installed to the charge of Seskinore and Edenderry on 4 June, 2010; that Mr DTR Edwards was licensed on 25 June, 2010 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr Mark Jones is their Moderator; that the Rev JH Brown, Minister Emeritus of Dunloy, died on 4 November, 2010; that the Rev NE Dorrans, Minister of Ballycastle and Croaghmore, retired on 30 June, 2010, the Rev JT Magowan, Minister of St James's Ballymoney retired on 10 August, 2010; that the Rev RJ Gilkinson, Minister of Garryduff and Dunloy resigned his charge on 10 June, 2010 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr William Harkness presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of Mosside and Toberdoney on 7 May, 2010; that under their care as Ministers without charge are: the Revs Dr V Dobbin (retired) and William Brown (retired); and as students for the ministry Mr JB Mullan, Mr J McConaghie and Mr SD McNie; that they visited the Congregation of Armoy; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev ES McDowell is their Moderator; that the Rev CWA Jones was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that Mr JA Spence presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was received as a Licentiate; that under their care as students are: Mr Stuart Morrow and Mr Mark Johnston; that they held Consultations at Duneane, First Randalstown, Greystone Road, Antrim and First Ballyeaston; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JE Sloan is their Moderator; that the Rev JW Fleck retired from the charge of Upper and Lower Clonaneese on 30 September, 2010; that Mr NG Mulholland

was licensed on 13 June, 2010 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that under their care as students for the ministry are: Mr Trevor Boyd, Mr Nigel Kane, Mr Graeme Orr, Mr Ben Preston and Mr Ronald Watt; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

As the Board Report is long and varied members may wish to note:

1. **In the Introduction** (pp 15-17) there is reference to the Board Conference; Correspondence on the 2013 Assembly meeting in Londonderry, the Belfast Marathon, the Church of Scotland Special Commission, Financial Strain and new arrangements for Communications.

2. **The Memorial Record** (pp 17-22) records the faithful service of Ministers who died since last Assembly.

3. **The Priorities Report** (pp 22-24) includes a proposal for future Assembly themes. **The Moderator's Advisory Report** (pp 24-25) refers to invitations to the papal visit. **The Doctrine Committee** (p 25) is bringing its substantial report next year. **The Church Relations Report** (pp 25-26) reports on the work of various inter-Church bodies. **The Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Report** (pp 26-29) now includes reports on recognised ministries and Ministers and Licentiates without charge.

4. **The Church and Society Report** (pp 29-52) contains a significant report on Presbyterians and Economics and two important appendices on Building Good Relationships and Sectarianism. In the **Global Concerns Report** (pp 52-55) there is information on the work of the **Environment, Building Good Relations** and **Race Relations Panels**.

5. **Important Panels reporting** include **Financial Crisis** (pp 55-63) on the Presbyterian Mutual Society; **Pensions and Assessments** (pp 63-69) mainly on Assessments; **Pastoral Care of Manse Families** (pp 69-70) and the **Future of Peacemaking** (pp 70-71).

6. **Briefer Reports** may be found on **Structures** (pp 71-72), **Consultations** (p 72) and **Judicial Appeals** (p 73).

INTRODUCTION

1. The General Board has had an interesting, if demanding, year. Once again in February the Board held a Conference to look more generally at some areas of its work. The Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Norman Hamilton led an interesting session on "Leading God's People in Ireland Today". This led into discussion led by the Rev Dr Lesley Carroll on "Cohesion, Sharing, Integration – A Challenge to the Churches". In the afternoon the question asked was what this meant for the work of the General Board, particularly in four areas of its work – Church and Society; Church Relations; Peacemaking and Race Relations. It was a day of lively and profitable discussion.

2. During the year several matters were raised by Presbyteries.

- (a) the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal extended an invitation to the General Assembly to meet in Londonderry during the city's time as UK City of Culture in 2013. The invitation is being dealt with by the

Business Board but the General Board was also consulted and kept informed, particularly on the issue of invitations to Opening Night. The Board decided to consult Presbyteries and a further report will come in the Supplementary Reports.

- (b) The Ballymena Presbytery asked the General Board to consider making representation to the relevant authorities on the proposal to hold the Belfast Marathon on a Sunday from 2012 onwards. The Conveners of the Church and Society Committee were asked to write to and engage with Belfast City Council and Belfast City Marathon to express concern.
- (c) Four Presbyteries – Armagh, Ballymena, Newry and Tyrone – asked the General Board to express concern to the Church of Scotland, in the context of the continuing close relationship between the two Churches, about the Church of Scotland Special Commission reporting to the General Assembly in May. The General Board passed the following:

“That the General Board instructs the Clerk of the General Assembly to write to the Church of Scotland expressing appreciation of the long and valued relationship between our two Churches; indicating that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland strongly believes the scriptural position to be that sexual relations outside of marriage between a man and a woman are sinful and as such, in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, no minister or elder would be ordained or installed who continues to engage in such practices; and assuring the Special Commission of its prayers that wisdom and insight be given as it reports to the General Assembly in May.”

- (d) The Armagh Presbytery also expressed concern about the continuing drain on congregational resources in support of the central Boards and Agencies of the Church through the United Appeal and assessments.

3. The Board of Communications, meeting in November, invited *“the General Board along with the Communications Department and its Board officers, to consider how the communications needs of the Church may be effectively carried out in the future and, if appropriate, to bring forward proposals for the discharge of the Board of Communications.”* A possible new structure with a Communications Committee under the General Board, including a Media Panel, Production Panel and an ad-hoc Panel on Website was discussed. The Presbyterian Historical Society would report annually to the General Board, through an agent and the Church Architecture Committee would move to the supervision of the BMI. The General Board approved the new structure and recommends that the Board of Communications be discharged, but referred its comments back to the Communications Board for implementation.

4. The regular work of the Board Committees is reported later. Seven Panels on the Financial Crisis; Pensions and Assessments; Pastoral Care of Manse Families; the Future of Peacemaking; Assembly Structures; Consultations and Judicial Appeals are also reporting. This has created a heavy, though necessary workload for the Board although several of these have almost completed their work and it is hoped they may be discharged by the next

meeting of the General Assembly. Thanks are expressed to all those Panel members who have given freely of their time and expertise.

5. The Board is aware that there are several items on the agenda still to be advanced. The General Board itself set up a Financial Ethics Panel but some of its work may be anticipated by the final report of the Financial Crisis Panel. The Board will co-ordinate their work. The Board of Christian Training asked for a consideration of the wider role of Faculty at UTC. With the recent changes in College management it has not so far been possible to progress this request but hopefully there will be progress in the next year. At the request of the Union Commission the General Assembly last year directed the General Board "to allocate to the appropriate Board or Committee the task of preparing practical guidance to Presbyteries on the disposal of redundant buildings, particularly where sensitive issues such as graveyards surrounding Churches are concerned." As there is no obvious Board or Committee the General Board appointed an ad-hoc Panel.

An ad-hoc Committee has been appointed to consider the remit which was agreed last year on a resolution from the Moderator's Advisory Committee to consider possible terms of service for an elder on Kirk Session. It will report next year.

The membership of the ad-hoc Committee on planned and generous giving, called for last year in a United Appeal resolution, is in the process of being appointed. There was a reticence to move too quickly on this with the recent financial problems, but the work will progress next year. The suggested membership of both the ad-hoc Committees is in the Board and Committee booklet.

6. Much of the work reflected in these reports is possible because of the hard work and dedication of the staff in the General Secretary's Office. This has been a particularly demanding year with building work both above and beside the offices. While there were times of considerable disruption tribute must also be paid to the ready co-operation of the contractor. At no time did the staff complain but simply got on with the work which had to be done. Especial thanks are due this year to Joyce, Jennifer Michelle and Alicia.

MEMORIAL RECORD

The Very Rev Dr Donald Patton reports:

The Rev John McCaughan, BA, Minister Emeritus of Legacurry Congregation in the Presbytery of Dromore, Co Down, died on 14 August, 2010 in the 92nd year of his age and the 68th of his ministry. He was born on 7 November, 1918, one of nine children to Robert McCaughan and his wife Mary Jane, née McLernon, who farmed at Ballinlay, near Ballycastle. John attended the family Church of Croaghmore and was educated at Moyarget Primary School and then Ballycastle High School. He proceeded to Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA in 1940. Following theological training at Assembly's College, Belfast, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Route on 30 November, 1942 and served as Assistant in the Congregation of Nelson Memorial, Belfast. He was ordained and installed in the united charge of Cremore and Tyrone's Ditches, in the Presbytery of Newry, on

4 June, 1943. A countryman, he quickly settled into ministry in this rural parish commending himself through his faithful preaching and caring pastoral work. John had a warm heart and an interest in the lives of his people and in sport. On 29 July, 1948 he married Mary Agnes (Molly) Lyons a daughter of the Rev JA Lyons, Minister of Dublin Road Reformed Presbyterian Church, Belfast, enjoying long and happy years of marriage until Molly's passing on 28 August, 2005. Three children were born to the marriage, two boys and a girl. Kay is married to the Rev Ivan Hunter, Minister of Ballywatt, and James is Minister of First Dunboe. John and Molly knew the keen sorrow of loss as their other son, John William Lyons, lived for only seven months. John was installed as Minister of Legacurry on 6 October, 1949 and continued there until his retirement on 10 November, 1983. He followed a routine of pastoral visitation in the homes establishing a close bond between Minister and people. He had a heart for youth reflected in his initiative in starting a Company of the Boys' Brigade of which he was Captain for twenty-five years and encouraging the formation of a Girls' Brigade Company. He also taught Religious Education at Annadale Grammar school in the nineteen sixties and early seventies and was part-time Irish Secretary to the Christian Education Movement for some years from 1966. His solid work in the Congregation was rewarded with numerical growth from 120 families to 200 in the 1970's. In addition to his congregational duties he served as Clerk of the Presbytery of Dromore from 1977 to 1990 guiding his brethren through the business of the Presbytery and proving a friend to all. He was Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Down 1982 to 1983. He exercised a wider and greatly appreciated ministry as Churches Correspondent to the Lisburn Star newspaper from 1960. In a published tribute to him following his demise, the editor of the Star described him as 'a cornerstone of the paper ... an extremely talented writer who could easily have made a career in journalism.' We give thanks to God for the ministry of this 'good and faithful servant' of whom his family can be proud and whom we commend to the comfort of Almighty God.

The Rev James Herman Brown, BA, BD, MA, Minister Emeritus of the Congregation of Dunloy in the Presbytery of Route, died on 4 November, 2010 in the 95th year of his age and the 69th year of his ministry. He was born in the Cregagh district of Belfast on 20 December, 1914, son of Charles Napeir Brown, a Post Office Inspector, and of his wife Elizabeth, née Boal. His home Congregation was First Ballymacarrett and he was educated at the Harding Memorial Public Elementary School and then Renshaw's Tutorial College. He started his working life in the furniture business and in response to the call of God to the full-time ministry attended Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated with First Class Honours in Classics. He remained a keen student and avid reader throughout his life and was described by Mr Alex Blair as 'a man with a fine brain, a sharp intellect and a vast knowledge of humanity.' He attended the Assembly's College, Belfast, graduated BD in 1938 and achieved his MA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1948. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 21 May, 1940 and served his assistantship in the Congregations of Newtownbreda and Crescent, University Road, Belfast. He was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of

Donegal as Minister of Carnone and Alt on 27 May, 1942 and moved to Dunloy on 27 June, 1944, where he remained until his retirement on 30 April, 1989. His pastoral visitation over the years formed a strong and intimate bond with his people. He reached across denominational boundaries and was a member of an inter-church group called Friends of the Way. These links became important in the local community when tensions built up during the years of the Troubles. Mr Brown sought to exercise a calming and moderating influence. He married Edith Lyle Orr Pollock from County Monaghan on 4 December, 1952 and they were blessed with the birth of their daughter, Jennifer. He was Chaplain to the Route and Robinson Hospitals, Ballymoney, and the Causeway Hospital, Coleraine, for over forty years, retiring from this work aged 80. He was the Moderator of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine from 1986 to 1987. He was a man with many interests, enjoying gardening, bee-keeping, peat cutting, and sport. His practical skills were put to good use in the building of much of his own bungalow. To Mrs Brown, daughter Jennifer, now Mrs Jennifer Beattie, and the wider family circle, we extend our sympathy as we give thanks to God for the life and work of His servant.

The Rev James Barr Irvine, BA, BD, DD, Minister Emeritus of the Congregation of Hillsborough in the Presbytery of Dromore, died on 10 December, 2010 in the 92nd year of his age and the 61st year of his ministry. He was born on 4 November, 1919, the son of James Irvine and his wife Mary, née Gordon, who lived in Tate's Avenue, Belfast. His mother died shortly after his birth and he was raised by his father, his father's sister Margaret and his grandmother. He was nurtured in Christian faith in the Congregation of Ulsterville on the Lisburn Road and he responded by taking Christ as his Saviour at an early age. He was educated at St Nicholas Primary School and Belfast Royal Academy. On leaving school he worked for some years with the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Ltd, achieving a qualification for the Associate Chartered Insurance Institute during the same period. He became convinced of God's call to the ordained ministry and so attended Magee University College, Londonderry, from 1943 to 1945 then on to Trinity College, Dublin, where he won a blue for Association football, and graduated BA in 1947. He proceeded to the Assembly's College, Belfast, for his theological training and graduated with a Queen's University BD in 1950. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 26 May, 1950, serving his assistantship in the Congregation of Ravenhill. Upon receiving a call to the Congregations of Lecumpher and Union Road, Magherafelt, he was ordained and installed on 18 July, 1950, resigning in 1955 after accepting a call to Alexandra, Shore Road, Belfast, where he was installed on 31 May, 1955. There he continued until 1963 when he was called to the Congregation of Hillsborough and was installed on 20 February serving as Minister until his retirement on 30 September, 1985. During his ministry in Hillsborough he actively encouraged the formation of the 1st Hillsborough Company of the Boys' Brigade. He was Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Down, 1971 and Convener of the General Assembly's Retired Ministers Fund, 1980-1987. In 1963 he was appointed a part-time Lecturer in Sacred Music in the Assembly's College and also in Homiletics from 1978. Outwith his Church duties he served for a period in the Royal Ulster

Constabulary Part-Time Reserve and was a volunteer with the Samaritans for ten years. He was awarded the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa) by the Presbyterian Theological Faculty of Ireland in 1985 in recognition of his service to the wider Church. In all of his work he was loyally supported by his wife Edith Victoria, née Gray, whom he married in 1948. In retirement Jim remained very active, helping in several Congregations where his giftings were greatly appreciated. Delivering the tribute at his funeral Service the Rev Dr Jack Richardson said of him, 'His preaching was convincing, his teaching was authentic; his pastoral caring and his friendship was enduring.' We give thanks to God for his life and work and express our sincere sympathy to his wider family circle.

The Rev Robert (Robin) Beulah Logue, BA, Minister Emeritus of the Congregation of Ballygomartin in the Presbytery of North Belfast, died on 16 February, 2011 in the 91st year of his age and the 67th year of his ministry. He was born at Londonderry on 29 April, 1920, the son of Robert Logue and his wife Isabella, née Connor. He was educated at Magee University College, Londonderry, followed by Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA and then the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Derry on 2 February, 1943 and served his assistantship in McQuiston Memorial, Belfast. He was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Newry in the Congregations of 2nd Newtownhamilton and Creggan on 28 November, 1944. He resigned on 31 August, 1949 to take up a call to Clifton Street United, Belfast, where he was installed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 1 September. A brother, the Rev CPA Logue followed him as Minister in Newhamilton and Creggan. He accepted a call to the Congregation of Ballygomartin in West Belfast in 1955 where he was installed on 15 September remaining until his retirement on 12 June, 1985. He gave himself fully and enthusiastically to parish ministry in his successive charges delighting to be among people of all ages, showing Christian concern for their welfare. He was well known by all within the districts in which he worked, well beyond the boundaries of his own Congregations. In Ballygomartin, which began as a Church Extension charge following the Second World War, he established new Sunday Schools which later became the foundation for the work of the Belfast City Mission on the Springfield Road and in Glencairn. The Troubles brought communal strife and demographic change to the area, and throughout these years until his retirement he sought to counter the actions of the paramilitaries, whose leaders he knew, and to help young people avoid being caught up with them. He was always well prepared for his pulpit ministry bringing a devotional tone to the worship of God and possessing the ability to speak without notes. From time to time he escaped the city streets and the stress of ministry through his love of fishing on the River Fane. Other fishermen would know he was around when they heard the strains of 'All things bright and beautiful' carry downstream. The Presbytery tribute 'gives thanks to God for a faithful Minister, valiant for truth, who loved his fellow men and women and children.' He is survived by his wife Lottie, née Charlotte Kilpatrick, whom he married on 11 September, 1945, and their children Alan, Pamela and David, and their families. We honour the ministry of their loved one and assure them of our prayers in their loss.

The Rev Maurice Bolton, MBE, TD, MA, Minister Emeritus of the Congregation of Strand (Second Derry) in the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal, died on 8 March, 2011 in the 81st year of his age and the 54th year of his ministry. He was born at Lismoyle, Swatragh, on 12 August, 1930, one of five children to Samuel James Bolton, farmer, and of his wife Elizabeth, née Bolton. His early spiritual experience was shaped in the Congregation of Swatragh and he was educated at Rainey Endowed School, Magherafelt. In response to the call of God he set about preparing himself for the ministry by attending Magee University College, Londonderry, then Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA. He studied theology at New College, Edinburgh, and the Assembly's College, Belfast, and served as Assistant to the Rev Ross Greer in Cooke Centenary Congregation, on the Ormeau Road, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Magherahoghill on 27 May, 1956 and ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Newry in the Congregations of Tullyallen and Mountnorris on 11 December, 1957. He married Josephine (Jo) Mulholland Armstrong on 18 July, 1956 and they were blessed with three children, Christine, Janine and Kathryn. In his first charge he started a company of the Boys' Brigade and encouraged youth work and involved himself in the life of the wider community. After eleven years he received a call from Strand Congregation, Derry, and he was installed as Minister on 19 June, 1968 serving until his retirement on 31 December, 1995. He and his family arrived in Derry on the eve of the outbreak of the Troubles and he exercised his ministry through turbulent and trying times, pastoring his people and playing his part in building bridges across the political and religious divide. In the early years he lost considerable numbers of his Congregation who moved from the West bank to the Waterside and further afield. He served as President of the YMCA and Chairman of the Board of Management of the Model Primary School. He was also a Director of the Inner City Trust. He was Moderator of the Presbytery of Derry 1972 to 1973 and Moderator of the Synod of Derry and Omagh 1985 to 1986. On 26 March, 1975 he was appointed Stated Supply to the Congregations of Inch and Buncrana in County Donegal. He continued his work as a Chaplain, begun in County Armagh, to the Army Cadet Force and also a padre in the Territorial Army with the Royal Irish Rangers which later became the North Irish militia, and then the 4th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rangers. He conducted services of worship, took training courses, and went with the cadets and soldiers to camps and on military exercises. He rose to the rank of Major and was awarded the MBE and the Territorial Decoration for his services. Maurice found relaxation from these duties by farming, keeping sheep, cattle and other animals on his farm at Warbleshinney. In all of his work he was faithfully supported by his wife, and to Mrs Bolton and her surviving children, Janine and Kathryn, and their families, we convey our sympathy and assure them of our prayers.

The Very Rev Dr David Burke, BA, DD, Minister Emeritus of the Congregation of Hamilton Road, Bangor, in the Presbytery of Ards, died on 8 March, 2011 in the 92nd year of his age and the 65th year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 31 July, 1919, the son of David Burke, a local government official and of his wife Edith, née Callaghan. Raised in the Congregation of Crescent, University Road, he received his early education at

Rosetta Public Elementary School followed by Methodist College. He gained his BA at Queen's University and studied theology at New College, Edinburgh, and the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 17 May, 1945 and was Assistant in the Congregation of Seaview, Shore Road, Belfast. He was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Derry in the Congregation of Great James Street on 6 March, 1947. He married Sheila Margaret Elliot Burrows on 26 April, 1949, and they had four children, Caryl, Alistair, Rosemary and Bryan. In 1955 he was called to the Congregation of Hamilton Road, Bangor, where he was installed on 6 October, 1955 and ministered there until his retirement on 8 April, 1984. In the work of the wider Church he was involved with the Foreign Missions Board. He was Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Down 1974 to 1975, elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1978 and awarded the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*iure dignitatis*) by the Presbyterian Theological Faculty Ireland. As Moderator he presided over the Special Assembly held on 21 November, 1978 which decided to suspend membership of the World Council of Churches, anticipating the decision taken at the General Assembly of June 1980 to withdraw altogether. During his year he and Sheila visited Thailand and India forming a link between the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Lamp of Thailand Bible Correspondence organisation. The visit so impacted them that in retirement in October 1990 they went to Pakistan to teach in the Gujranwala Theological Seminary, strengthening the partnership with our Church, and then to Thailand to renew personal links with the Lamp of Thailand. They were invited to Myanmar and visited India before returning home later in 1991. He was deeply moved by the poverty he witnessed in those regions and by the generosity of Christians who were so willing to share what little they had. David Burke was noted for his gift of communication. He was an engaging preacher, creative and thorough in his preparation and vivacious in presentation. His approachability invited confidence in him as a caring and wise pastor. He was a Religious Advisor to Ulster Television in the nineteen sixties and seventies, and his gift of communication opened up opportunities for him in broadcasting. Many will remember his televised talk on the Rubik's Cube, a best-selling 3-D mechanical puzzle. His legacy endures in the hearts and minds of his people who knew him best and we, with them, and his family whom we keep in our prayers, give thanks for the spiritual ministry he exercised and the many who were won to Christ and nourished in faith in Him as Lord and Saviour.

PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

1. The Priorities Committee is now well established as the means by which the General Board is enabled to make informed decisions about the work of the Church and how it may best be focussed to fulfil the objectives set by the General Assembly. Its membership is partly made up of senior members from the Boards, but equally important is the component of General Board members drawn from the Presbyteries. This provides an important balance in the critical decisions which have to be made and reflects the remit which was given to the Committee:-

“The Priorities Committee’s main function is to prioritise the mission and ministry needs of the whole Church. It will therefore need to develop a close relationship with the other Boards and provide co-ordination between Boards. It may also give guidance at times to the Business Committee (of the General Board) on the Board’s own priorities.”

2. The Committee, at the beginning of the year, decided that this should largely be a year to consolidate its work. It returned to the five aspirations for our Church already agreed by the General Assembly, recognising that resolutions passed by the General Assembly are not always “owned” by the Church at large. The five key inter-related themes on which the Church has been asked to focus are in providing:-

***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.*

***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.*

***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.*

***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.*

***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.*

3. The question which the Committee asked itself this year is how to ensure that each of these themes, in all its aspects, is explored at all levels of Church life. The Committee believes that they are strong biblical themes around which the Church is able to unite, although not everyone will approach them in exactly the same way. In order to promote widespread discussion, the Committee recognises it has a role in ensuring resources are available e.g. for bible study, small group discussion and worship material. It would also encourage articles in the Church’s magazines and perhaps initiate a conference at an appropriate time of year. The internet would also be an important vehicle to promote discussion.

4. Clearly it would be neither possible nor helpful to provide material on all five themes at the same time, although they should be seen as a whole to indicate the breadth of the gospel imperatives. The Committee therefore suggests that for five years (2012-2017) one of these aspirations should become an Assembly theme for the year. With the Moderator’s co-operation it would be launched at an Assembly Rally on the Wednesday evening of Assembly week. This would mean that thought and preparation may be given to how the rally may become a launching pad to create informed discussion throughout the Church, while at the same time being an inspirational event within itself. If the

Assembly agrees the Committee suggests that for 2012-13 the theme would be “*A prophetic voice*” and for 2013-14, “*A place of transformation*”.

5. The Committee continued to fulfil its remit by reviewing the work of all the Boards. It looked first at those who receive United Appeal funding and is impressed that the Boards are themselves keeping a tight grip on financial matters. It is grateful that Boards are taking their stewardship very seriously. While recognising this, it made a strong recommendation to the United Appeal Board that there should be no increase in the Appeal this year.

6. This year, the Committee also considered the work of those Boards who do not receive funding from the United Appeal, but are supported by the Church in other ways. The Business Board receives a grant from the Incidental Fund which is modest. The General Board is also funded by the Incidental Fund. While the issues before the General Board are constantly changing and it is often responsible for time-limited projects, the Committee is satisfied that budgeting is robust. This is also the case for the Finance and Personnel Board which provides an essential service to all the work of the General Assembly and so is funded through an allocation drawn from the other Boards and Agencies.

7. The work of various ad-hoc Panels was also reviewed, especially the Panels on the Pastoral Care of Manse Families and the Future of Peacemaking. Both will report independently to the Assembly but the Committee is appreciative of their work.

8. At the request of the Priorities Committee the General Board appointed two Panels to consider:

- (a) the policy-making and administrative structures reporting to the General Assembly (i.e. Boards and Committees);
- (b) the process of consultation between Presbytery and Congregations, especially in the light of mission planning.

These Panels will report separately.

DONALD WATTS, Convener

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee met to advise the Moderator in regard to two invitations received in connection with the papal visit to Britain. The first was to a Reception at the Palace of Holyroodhouse to mark the Visit to the United Kingdom of His Holiness the Pope, on Thursday, 16 September, 2010. The other was a service of Evening Prayer in Westminster Abbey on Friday, 17 September, 2010. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and His Grace The Archbishop of Canterbury would both attend the service and take part. Following the service it was proposed that the Moderator should be presented to the Pope.

2. The Committee first considered the Invitation from Westminster Abbey. It was aware of discussion at the General Assembly following the then Pope's visit to Ireland in 1979. However, the Committee was of the opinion that attitudes have changed in the last thirty years and while there are still different views sincerely held in the Church the majority of members would accept a decision of the Moderator to attend. It was the recommendation of the

Committee that, unless the Moderator has strong personal reservations, he should accept the invitation from Westminster Abbey.

3. The Invitation to a Reception at the Palace of Holyroodhouse was issued on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen. The Committee took the view that it should be accepted, and as the Moderator would be in South Africa that day it was agreed that the Clerk of the General Assembly should attend in his place.

4. During the year the Committee appointed assessors to assist Presbyteries in six situations of difficulty in Congregations.

DONALD WATTS, Convener

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

1. The Doctrine Committee presented its report on the issue of spiritual incompatibility and marriage to last year's General Assembly in the expectation that it would receive a mixed response. This has been the case. In broad terms, six Presbyteries were hostile, five were supportive, three were either very bland or mixed and four did not reply. The mechanism by which business is sent down to Presbyteries and received again centrally is slow and the Committee could not begin to work at a consideration of the responses until January. Bearing in mind that, in order to have a report ready for inclusion in the Blue Book, it would need to have finished its work by mid March, it has been impossible to do full honour to the Presbytery responses in such a short time. Therefore this is an interim report, in the expectation of a final report being ready for the 2012 Assembly.

2. Apart from the time lag, consulting Presbyteries has been a good way of doing things. The Presbytery responses have raised a number of issues and identified a number of weaknesses in the last report. The next report will be better. Undoubtedly it will still not say what everyone wants it to say but it will be clearer and, the Committee trusts, will be helpful.

PATTON TAYLOR, Convener

CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met twice during the year to consider issues and to work through matters of common concern. Time was also taken at the General Board day away to talk through the important aspects raised on the day. It was good to hear from Elders and Ministers alike, about local inter-church relations as well as to have a look at some of the global relationships.

Irish Council of Churches (ICC)

2. The Committee noted with joy the appointment of Mr Mervyn McCullagh to Executive Officer. A stimulating AGM was held in Lisburn on Thursday, 7 April. The theme of the Churches in the Public Square was explored by Fintan O'Toole (Irish Times) and Peter Lynas (Evangelical Alliance). There were about 20 representatives of PCI present.

Irish Inter Church Meeting (IICM)

3. The topic for this year's meeting was Education. Presentations were made from those who work in Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic. Common concerns and difficulties were highlighted. Helpful information was given out by those who are directly involved in the school systems.

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)

4. Three members of PCI were present at Grand Rapids to share in the forming of this new body (a merging of two world reformed bodies). It was good time to share and to see firsthand the ways in which God is working through the many Reformed Church bodies throughout the world. It provided valuable experience for those who were directly involved and hopefully an encouragement especially to those who work in places of extreme political and economic pressures.

The Rev Cheryl Meban was elected to the WCRC Executive, and keeps the Committee up to date with the discussions taking place. She attended, with the Clerk of Assembly, the annual WCRC Europe Council meeting in Prague. A brief report will be included in Supplementary Reports.

Conference of European Churches (CEC)

5. The Conference of European Churches is going through a period of assessment and reflection. It is also seeking a new General Secretary. PCI has not been involved in any meetings during the year but the Clerk has been nominated to a Working-Group of the Church and Society Commission of CEC on Human Rights. It will hold its first meeting in May.

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE, formerly Leuenberg)

6. The CPCE is seeking to set up area groups to more adequately carry out its work. An English speaking group from the Churches of the British Isles and Scandinavian/Baltic countries held an exploratory meeting in Copenhagen on the theme of "The Theology of Worship". The Clerk represented PCI and found that it was a useful meeting both for making contacts with European Churches and potentially influencing the work of CPCE, which can be dominated by other regions of Europe. The Rev Prof Gordon Campbell has also been involved in a consultation on theological education.

LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE, Convener

COMMITTEE FOR THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. The Committee met on two occasions during the year and Panels of the Committee interviewed four people.

2. The Presbytery of Monaghan requested the Committee to interview the Rev Christy Irwin, a Minister ordained in the Congregational Union of

Ireland, for service in PCI as a Stated Supply or Assistant to a Convener. The Committee accepted Mr Irwin in the following terms: “that Mr Irwin be rendered eligible for ministry within the Presbyterian Church as a Stated Supply or Assistant to a Convener”.

3. The Board of Social Witness requested the Committee to interview the Rev Glen Jordan, a Minister ordained in the Congregational Union of Ireland for service in the Kinghan Church. The Committee accepted Mr Jordan in the following terms: “that he be received and assigned to the Kinghan Church as Assistant to the Convener; that he completes a course of study and any other requirements as approved by the Board of Christian Training and that he be declared eligible for a Call on the satisfactory completion of the course of study and assistantship”.

4. Mr Rory McClure, a Licentiate of the Presbyterian Church of America, applied in the normal way and was interviewed. The Committee accepted Mr McClure in the following terms: “that he be received as a Licentiate and undertake both a supervised assistantship, (it is recommended that this be two years in length), and any course of study required by the Board of Christian Training and that he would only become eligible for a call to a Congregation, or other service within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, when he was deemed to have satisfactorily completed both the prescribed course of study and assistantship”.

5. Mr Elijah Obinna, a Minister of The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, applied in the normal way and was interviewed. It was agreed that he be not received as the Committee was not persuaded that he had articulated a clear sense of Call to the Pastoral Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

6. The list of Ministers and Licentiates without charge was reported by Presbyteries as follows:-

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev Dr SI Dennis	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev CD Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Armagh	Rev JWP McConnell	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Ballymena	Rev JD McGaughey	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
North Belfast	Rev LH Eagleson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev CI McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev WA Shaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev WM Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

	Rev FW Vincent	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
South Belfast	Rev KA Drury	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JD Maxwell	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev DR Baker	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev RA Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev W J Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Carrickfergus	Rev DJ Paul	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Derry/Donegal	Rev KG Patterson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JC Teeney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev Samuel Armstrong	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JM Casement	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev RN Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev GR Stockdale	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Dromore	Rev JD Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Kiran Wimberly	To be retained as Minister without Charge
Iveagh	Rev EG McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Route	Rev William Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Victor Dobbin	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

7. The following reports were received from Ministers in Recognised Service.

The Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:

For the last 23 years Restoration Ministries has had its base at Restoration House in Dunmurry. Largely due to the on-going economic crisis Restoration Ministries is now planning to downsize which could involve letting the centre

go. However the ethos of the ministry will continue in terms of prayer, retreats, conferences and spiritual direction.

I find these days incredibly challenging with wonderful opportunities here in Ireland and further afield to announce good news and be a bearer of hope. I am grateful to God and to all of those who make such a ministry possible.

The Rev Dr Paul Bailie reports:

Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) is one of Ireland's oldest mission agencies. It is an unambiguously evangelical mission agency, working in partnership with like-minded missions and Churches in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Chad and most recently, Kenya. Through our daughter agency, African Christian Textbooks, our literature ministry is reaching many other countries in East and West Africa.

As Chief Executive I continue to have responsibility for strategic planning, administration of personnel, finance and partner relations. We appreciate deeply all those within PCI who maintain an interest in our work and remember us in prayer.

I am also grateful to be able to record that my status as a Minister in recognised service permits me to play an active role within my Presbytery and the Boards of the Church; I am particularly glad to have been able to serve the Church through some part-time teaching at Union Theological College over the past two semesters.

IVAN J PATTERSON, Convener

CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMITTEE

1. Since last General Assembly there have been many political changes both North and South of the border. The Committee is aware of change and particularly of the speed of change. Change is inevitable and with it the changing circumstances of life can both threaten and inspire. It is important to affirm, for ourselves and for the world, that the Church worships a God who is unchanging in mercy and love and power, a God who walks with His people through change, guiding, sustaining, protecting and transforming.

2. At Westminster a change of government brought a new type of coalition which has given food for thought and provided a change in Secretary of State. In the Republic a change of government was not unexpected. In Northern Ireland there were changes in party leadership for the SDLP and the UUP. By the time the General Assembly meets there will have been an election in Northern Ireland and more changes will have taken place.

3. These changes are a reminder that society is moving from the familiar into the new all of the time and that for the Christian prayer remains the constant in every changing situation of life. Congregations are therefore encouraged to continue to pray for our political leadership at every level as they address the circumstances of each new day.

THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

4. Usually a report of this nature takes the form of the past tense: who did what, when and why. Indeed much of the larger report from the Committee offers just that. However, the seismic shifts in Irish society and their importance for the General Assembly demand a future perspective.

5. Following the intervention of the IMF/ECB/EU, the internal crisis within Fianna Fail and the withdrawal from government by the Greens, a General Election was called for 25 February, 2011. The ruling parties inevitably lost heavily (FF experiencing their worst defeat ever and the Greens suffering a wipe-out). Whilst Fine Gael and Labour enjoyed their best showing ever – Enda Kenny will lead the coalition – it is important to point out the significant gains also enjoyed by SF and the far left parties. Given the state of the economy and the growing dissatisfaction amongst the electorate this is hardly surprising. The major challenge for the victors will be finding sufficient wriggle room with the IMF/ECB/EU to renegotiate the bailout conditions. It is obvious to the vast majority of people within Ireland, the markets, and Europe, that Ireland's economy is simply not big enough to repay the sovereign debt when the bondholder debt continues to be rolled into one. Unless measures are taken by Europe to help shoulder bondholder debt, it is only a question of time before Ireland will default. The far left is calling on the government to 'burn the bondholders'; a tactic that, given the incalculable risks to the domestic and European economy, is unlikely to be heeded by the centrist parties. Their preference is to go down the diplomatic line and argue the need for a consensus that will assist the weak economies and protect the common currency. The new government will have no honeymoon period with a crucial summit of European powers scheduled for the end of March.

6. Meanwhile, individuals, families and businesses continue to suffer. Irish emigration stands at 1000 people per week. Low and middle income families are feeling the disproportionate pain of the 'universal social charge' on their pay-cheque, (this on top of the tax rises and welfare cuts; including the reduction of the minimum wage by 1, and mortgage arrears and negative equity and escalating fuel prices). A 2011 report serves as a stark reminder of the number of households that are in negative equity, mortgage arrears (8.6 billion/ increase of 55.6% / 31,338 mortgages more than 180 days in arrears), and repossession (106 in 2010 despite the soft approach taken by the authorities). Suicide rates are amongst the highest in the world. According to Noel Smyth, property-developer and anti-suicide campaigner, his helpline receives between 2,500-3,000 calls per month. David Mellon of the Irish Property Council describes the lot of many teachers, police and lawyers as one of "suffocating despair." News of banker bonuses and Ministerial severance pay and pension funds in the millions of Euros adds to the sense of hopelessness.

7. As workers work to pay the interest on the bank bailout and recompense financial gamblers for betting and losing, it is little wonder that emigration is seen as a brighter alternative. Businesses of all kinds and sizes are also suffering the ill-effects of liquidity loss and there is little evidence that this will be halted any time soon. Sub-contractors have been especially hard hit as a result of poor protective measures within Irish law. FG/L know that they must get Ireland back to work and they must protect the important but fragile export

figures, but this will come under severe strain if France and Germany succeed in challenging Ireland's low corporation tax with their fixed-band demands.

8. Whatever the fall-out economically, there is a growing movement of social engagement; the first fruit of which was seen in the remarkably high election turnout (+70%). This growing swell for substantial economic, political and social reform will certainly be exploited by the far left and, if the new government fails to make an immediate impact, one can expect a plethora of strikes, marches, civil disobedience and worse. It would be fair to say that the Irish population has moved from a sanguine acceptance of their national plight to a simmering resentment of the authority structures and golden circle they hold responsible.

9. It is impossible to judge the precise impact this is having on Presbyterians. When the Dublin and Munster Presbytery sought to ascertain the repercussions of the PMS demise on southern Presbyterians, very little response was forthcoming and the Committee simply does not have access to precise data to draw meaningful conclusions. One must suppose that our working/middle class families are as susceptible as their non-Presbyterian peers, but this may only become evident as Congregations record giving levels and Ministers engage pastorally with family crises. The denomination will need to be vigilant and prayerful in the coming days. However, to leave it at that risks passing over the real pain of brothers and sisters in Christ and the Church will have missed the crucial signs of the times for the Church. So with relatively little hard data and a fair degree of imagination, here are some important points for the Presbyterian Church to ponder:

- (a) *A sea-change in Irish politics* – the Church must not underestimate the massive changes already apparent. The FG/Labour coalition will be looking over both shoulders at the vocal far left and at the far right independents. They are all more media and techno savvy, more charismatic and more trusted than the old guard. They have strategies for supplementing their meagre speaking rights in the Dail and for holding the government to account. If the major parties fail to deliver on significant Dail/Senate reforms early in the programme for government, the people will be mustered. Some commentators believe that FF will disappear into oblivion (managing a mere 17% of first votes and vastly outnumbered by both FG/L), but even if this proves premature the political landscape has certainly changed. From a Northern perspective it is especially important to note SF success (strengthened by their association with the far left) and FF rumours of becoming an all-island party themselves.
- (b) *The 'Stubby-pencil Revolution'* – commentators outside Ireland have been amazed at the people's acquiescence during these last three years of economic mayhem. They have looked at Greece and wondered why the Irish have not been rioting. The General Election, given its resounding dismissal of the government, has been described as 'the stubby-pencil revolution', but don't think for one moment that the electorate is satisfied. There is a variety of grass-root movements determined to challenge the old order and to build a republic worthy of the name. Some are economists and businessmen who uphold the

tenants of free-market capitalism while accepting the need for brave unilateral and collective policies to realign the economy. Some are virtual Communist and anti-capitalist agitators who interpret the crisis as proof of their long-held criticisms of inherent injustice. It is rather strange to find voices from both ends of the spectrum agreeing on some fundamental strategies.

- (c) **Programme for Government** – FG/L coalition has a massive majority in the Dail to push through their agreed programme. Given the unpopularity of some policies down the line, this majority will certainly be required. The programme for government contains measures in respect of the following: EU-IMF Deal, public finances, political reform, banking, jobs and enterprise, taxation, mortgage debt, health, public sector reform, social policy, environment and climate change, crime and justice, education and Irish language. Certain of these areas will inevitably remain in the headlines and much has already been said about them, so the Church should take note of one or two matters that might slip unnoticed. **Under Social Policy:** Labour has pressed for a referendum on same-sex marriage and on a referendum on children's rights. Much of the respective legislation has been developed by the previous administration, however that government had assured representatives from PCI that 'civil partnership legislation' would not be confused with calls for 'same-sex marriage'. The measures proposed include: LGBT people who teach in schools should be supported; all State boards to have at least 40% of each gender; legal recognition and extension of equality legislation to transgender persons; enacting measures relating to taxation and social welfare for those in civil partnerships and addressing anomalies relating to children in the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabiting Couples Act 2010. The issue of same sex marriage will also be examined. There is no reference to legislation in response to European Court of Human Rights ruling on abortion. **Under crime and justice:** the abolition of automatic entitlement to remission for prisoners. Under a new system, violent criminals and sex offenders will have to "earn" remission; sentencing and penal reform, less use of prison for non-serious offences, for sentences under one year, judges obliged to consider Community Services Orders; Legislating for the use of 'soft information' in implementing the Child First guidelines; Modernising family law; strengthening Freedom of Information legislation; comprehensive reform of the immigration and asylum system, including sharing of DNA profiles with other EU countries; promotion of social inclusion for those from minority and immigrant backgrounds. Following a recent ruling in Brussels (March), the government will also be considering the deportation of non-Irish parents of Irish children.

10. It is more important than ever that Presbyterians in the South get informed and get involved in the movements that are sweeping across the land. There is a sense that a new Ireland must and will emerge from the economic

catastrophe. There is also a danger that passions could spill over and minorities be made the whipping boys for frustrated hopes. The Church should not underestimate the relevance of biblical principles and the transformative power of the resurrection hope that Christians can bring to proceedings.

NORTHERN IRELAND

11. Despite change in the socio-political and economic climate across these Islands there are some things that seem to remain unchanged. The threat arising from the variety of dissident Republican groups has been of concern for some time. Last October the Home Secretary raised the terrorist threat level and many across the community experienced anger and fear.

12. The Committee is conscious of the anxiety in which some members of this society live, of the threat to members of the PSNI and the Prison Service and of the threat to the future stability and rebuilding of society that comes from dissident groups. It believes that falling back into the ways of the past must be resisted. Violence did not pay in the past and it will not pay in the future but can wreak havoc in a society and bring suffering to many. It is concerned that all who can should bend their efforts to bring those who are disenchanted to see that society has already come a long way, based on mutuality and respect and that violence will mean further division, separation and unnecessary destruction.

13. Across the Island of Ireland citizens continue to find themselves in the grip of the economic downturn. Banks have to be rescued, individuals continue to suffer, and no-one is certain if things have stabilised or have still to get worse. The Committee is concerned for the impact on people and concerned too that local Congregations will find ways to support those who may increasingly be out of work.

14. In October last year the General Board asked that the Youth and Children's Ministry Board and the Board of Social Witness look at ways to help Congregations to use the resources they have, e.g. their buildings, to provide space for those who are unemployed and need something to do and that they prepare themselves to provide volunteering programmes to help people with a sense of value as they seek for employment. The Committee realises that there is still considerable wealth and talent in the Presbyterian Church and emphasises that talent has not been lost because economics have gone awry. Wealth can still be used, and should be used, for the good of others. Talent comes in many forms and without financial wealth the Church has many ways to celebrate God's gift and blessing.

15. The Committee is considering how to encourage debate across the Church about alternative economic mindsets. It is concerned too about who shapes culture and about how gospel challenges are brought to bear on the present situation. At present the Committee is working towards a symposium with informed Christian economists. Some of the early work is in the section – Presbyterians and Economics.

16. Concern was raised with the Committee about the upcoming anniversaries, specifically the anniversary of the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant 1912 and of the Easter Rising 1916. The Committee recognises that there are many more anniversaries over the next few years. As the Decade

of Centenaries approaches it is vital to be careful in how they are remembered. There will be additional material available in the Supplementary Reports.

17. During the year the Committee had the opportunity to respond to the usual host of consultations. All of these responses can be viewed on the PCI website:

- Consultation on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration
- Draft Strategic Plan Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- Consultation on the Temporary Recruitment Provision which allowed 50/50 recruitment in policing
- Sunday Trading Consultation

18. Further consultations remain on the agenda and responses to these will be available by the time the General Assembly meets. See Supplementary Reports.

19. Over the year the Committee added to its Position Paper on Human Rights a paper on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration which it called, 'Building Good Relationships: Our hope for a more reconciled society.' This too can be viewed on the PCI website.

20. The Committee believes that the matters arising from how to share space and how to contribute as a Church to the 'shared future' debate is something that Congregations can give some consideration to. To that end it has prepared a paper which may be useful to Congregations either for individuals, groups or the Minister or youth leaders to use. The paper is attached at Appendix A (pp 37-45) and the Committee invites the General Assembly to agree to send this paper to all Congregations for their information and use.

21. The Committee continues with the round of meetings that has now become a cornerstone of the work. Meetings have been held with the DUP, Sinn Fein and it is hoped that by the time the General Assembly meets that it will have met with NICCOSA (Northern Ireland Catholic Council for Social Action). The Committee had hoped to have met also with the UUP and the SDLP but in the election period this is difficult.

22. At the 2009 General Assembly work was undertaken regarding sectarianism. A summary of Presbytery responses is available at Appendix B (pp 45-52). The Committee will bring specific resolutions to the General Assembly requesting action across the denomination in this area. See Supplementary Reports.

23. The Committee has added two further focus areas to its work:

- (a) **Prisons.** Dame Anne Owers was appointed by the Justice Minister, David Ford, in June 2010 to head up a team that is presently reviewing the conditions of detention, management and oversight of prisons. The full report is expected in June and it is anticipated that this will be a significant report. It is important to begin to think and consult with prison chaplains, among others, as the Committee prepares for this report. In the past work has been done on restorative justice which sits well with this focus area. This will be a major piece of work and the Social Witness Board will partner the Committee in it. A Panel is in the process of being put together for the purpose of giving this work the attention that it needs.

- (b) **Social Justice/Poverty.** There is little need to explain why this is a matter which the Church needs to have an eye to. The Committee is aware, that there are others in the General Assembly who may already be doing work in this area.

Presbyterians and Economics

24. The Church and Society Committee has undertaken the awesome task of understanding the nature and implications of the economic crisis from a Presbyterian perspective. Following the presentation of a discussion paper outlining important Christian principles and significant new trends in economic thinking, the Committee considered possible next steps.

25. The Paper opens with the following challenge: “A theology of economics, or at least a process by which to develop such a thing in order to inform our denomination, respond to policies and their effects, and offer workable and redeeming alternatives seems rather overdue. This paper is offered only as a stimulus to that process and as such it dares to offer a range of practical options to ground the discussion and stimulate debate. Neither of the authors pretends to have economics qualifications, rather they share a pastoral concern for the many Church members that are increasingly suffering the fallout resulting from the hegemony of Capitalism, or as Walter Brueggemann prefers, ‘technological consumerist militarism’. For too long the Church has not dared to question the macro-economic that has delivered such wealth and comfort, it is now time to think again.”

26. According to Michael Schluter, Corporate Capitalism is “one of the main drivers of social and moral breakdown in the western world.” He identifies **five moral flaws of Corporate Capitalism:**

- (1) ***An exclusively materialistic vision*** – The focus on capital lends itself to idolatry or wealth at a personal level, and the idolatry of economic growth at a corporate and national level. It invites Mammon to supersede God as the focus of human loyalty and thus to break the first and most foundational of the Ten Commandments. Shareholders pursue personal wealth with little knowledge of how it is generated, and senior management with scant regard for pay structures at lower levels of the company, while customers are persuaded by corporate advertising to pursue self-gratification in its many forms. At a systemic level, under Capitalism companies seek to expand current consumption beyond satisfied appetite, in order to generate supranormal returns for current suppliers of capital; they seek to generate this additional consumption through advertising, built-in obsolescence and expansion of debt...
- (2) ***Reward without responsibility*** – The business of provision of capital as investors with little interest in the company or institution seems to be an example of ‘reaping where we have not sown’... of taking no responsibility. This produces a relational distance, impersonal and without capacity to care for those people at the other end of the transaction.
- (3) ***Limited liability of shareholders*** – It is important in Biblical understanding that the individual is responsible and accepts

responsibility. However the corporation can now act as a legal person separate from its shareholders. By registering as a limited company shareholders have no liability beyond their capital in shares. This allows debts to remain unpaid and in the present climate is having a catastrophic effect on many people as insolvency increases and creditors are abandoned and even destroyed. Perhaps this is seen in the big scale with RBS, Enron and Worldcom. This is indeed part of the very painful story just now in UK and Ireland. It may free much capital for investment but at little risk and few penalties. Such big losses are now passed to the taxpayer.

- (4) ***People disconnected from place*** – Under Jubilee law and principles there was a mechanism of social unity ... property reverted back to the original owners every 50 years free gratis. As a result society was not splintered into fragments and relationships were sustained in a manner that reflected God's honour and human dignity. Capitalism separates people from place ... land is a commodity devoid of relationship. Mass urbanisation follows and this may succeed in providing a source of cheap labour for the industrial power ... such a move was witnessed in the collectives of the former Soviet Union and its satellite states ... to a tragic end. The price Western Europe has paid in the dismantling of family and the resultant loss of welfare roles is presently leaving a culture of lonely, dysfunctional people and causing burgeoning social welfare budgets that cannot solve the problem.
- (5) ***Inadequate social safeguards*** – Deregulation, the removal of government rules and regulations, which was a theme since the 1950s is blamed by some as a key factor in the crisis of 2007-09 but seen by others as beneficial to make supplies more competitive and efficient. Many regulations arose in the wake of the 'Great Depression' and these have slowly been removed since the 1980s (e.g. lowering the mandatory reserves required by banks etc). Originally entry to some markets was restricted to stimulate and protect the initial investment of private companies into infrastructure to provide public services, such as water, electric and communications utilities. With entry of competitors highly restricted, monopoly situations were created, necessitating price and economic controls to protect the public. Policies have certainly changed, and with a high social cost ... The deregulation debate is on-going but it seems that it is a crucial factor in the present sad story. With it has come the promotion of consumer credit leading to the enslavement of much of society to financial institutions.

26. Macro-economics is by its nature a complex and technical discipline and the Committee has no pretensions to expertise in the field; however, it believes it to be vital for the denomination to formulate a mind on the issue to facilitate meaningful contributions to the public debate. It is imperative that Church members get *informed* and get *involved*. The Bible has a great deal to say on matters of fiscal and social policy, the Christian Church possesses immense experience (good and bad) on the matter of wealth creation and wealth distribution, and Christians are called to be a people of grace and generosity. As

soon as the discussion paper has been prepared for circulation amongst those with relevant expertise, the Committee intends organising a symposium to garner their insight and apply this to the Committee's subsequent work.

APPENDIX A

BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS: OUR HOPE FOR A MORE RECONCILED SOCIETY

Paper for Congregations

With aching hands and bleeding feet
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
 We bear the burden and the heat
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
 Not till the hours of light return,
 All we have built do we discern.

Matthew Arnold 'Morality'

1. Introduction

In 1998 the signing of the Belfast Agreement brought hope across Northern Ireland for a better future. Clearly something better has been achieved, although not everyone is in agreement with the arrangements that have been made. However, in 2011, more than ten years after the Belfast Agreement, we as a society still struggle to hear or articulate our vision for a better society. The publication of the Shared Future Strategy in 2005 provided a step on the way, helping to put into words a vision for a future together into words and setting out a roadmap for achieving that new vision. The publication of the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy in 2010 has done little to further that hope. As a Committee we are in no doubt that a vision needs to be articulated and worked towards and this paper is intended to engender discussion of what a more coherent, shared and integrated society would look like and how we as a society, and as a Church in this society, begin to bend our energies towards building that new society. This paper is a small contribution, we hope, to that rebuilding process.

We want to recognise that many of those working in the field of 'reconciliation' have felt like giving up. They feel that the work that they have done has not been acknowledged by government in its strategy nor has the learning of the many years of work been integrated into that strategy. At the same time, funding for the work they have been doing and without which society would be the poorer in its relationships across divides, is being withdrawn. The little that remains is much harder to access than ever before.

We have no doubt that those genuinely involved in reconciliation work are involved because of their sense of vocation. They are sustained by the Biblical vision of a society at peace with itself, of a world in which shalom is the aim. They are kept going because they firmly place their feet in the footprints of the Lord who came to break down walls of division and to bring hope where hopelessness abounds. The notion of shalom which is aimed for is one which

comes from the Hebrew Scriptures and indicates the kind of peace which is more than the absence of war and conflict. To seek shalom is to seek the kind of peace where there is wholeness and a sense of being complete. This cannot happen without good relationships. Reconciliation, respect, justice, healing and trust all play their part in building a society in which there is wholeness and human flourishing, even where there is diversity and difference.

Now is not the time, then, to give up. It is clear that the work done in the past has not yet reached its conclusion - the vision has not reached outwards and upwards and the inspiration that many have experienced because of their work in every place where there is division has not yet inspired society or its leaders to the extent that the learning of such work can be included in a strategy for the way forward. We recognise that because of the shortages of funding and the added pressures that come from a critical economic situation there are those who may feel like giving up. We believe that this is the time for Christian people to reorientate themselves around a Christian vision, a vision drawn from the Scriptures and written into the history of our society through the Church of Jesus Christ. We are encouraged by the words of Galatians 6 v9:

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

We offer you this short paper as a conversation starter to help put words on the vision of a better, more peaceful society in which human beings can flourish, in which everyone can contribute to making a better society and in which each human person can discover value and worth.

2. God's people in God's world

The Biblical communities of faith, whether they were New Testament house groups or the people of God in exile or living in Jerusalem, were communities built around a shared value base. That value base was expressed since the time of Moses in the Ten Commandments. While the Commandments provided the value base for the Christian community there were also values imparted to God's people as being key to how they were to live in the world.

2.1. God's people are to live in the world with respect to those who are unable to represent themselves.

Those who are weak in the sense of being unable to access the power structures of a society and who are quite simply unable to meet the needs that they have each day, are to be the concern of God's people. There is no instruction to discriminate just to, 'look after orphans and widows in their distress' (James 1 v27) and in this way to live the kind of religion that is pleasing to God. As God's people in God's world, therefore, there is a call to be committed to those who are found on the edges of a society.

2.2. Those who are different, known to us as 'other', are also to be a matter of concern.

On more than one occasion the instruction to God's people is to take care of foreigners or strangers as some interpret the word. In-so-doing a value base is developed which is one of movement to those who are different from us and to their inclusion. (Deuteronomy 10v18, 26 v13) In the New Testament Jesus develops this into the challenge of loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us. (Matthew 5 v44; Luke 6 vv27 & 35) As God's people in God's

world we are, therefore, to be concerned for those who are different from us. They are not to be ignored, overlooked or denigrated.

2.3. New ideas are to be welcomed.

If those who are other to us and those who are on the edge of our society are to be included it can be extrapolated that new ideas are to be welcomed rather than received as threat. For Presbyterians this is more classically expressed as refusing to 'receive light from any quarter.' This is only possible if the people of God have, first and foremost, a strong and foundational identity in Jesus Christ which throws all other identity forming aspects of life into its shadow. So in the letter to the Romans we read:

So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Our utter and complete belonging to God above all other belongings is further emphasised in chapter 14 v8:

If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

New ideas are never a threat, be they political, social or economic. Different world views and people who are different from us are equally no threat. Rather they are to be engaged with so that the values we own, and indeed often discover that we share with others, become more deeply embedded as a shared society is built.

Out of these three values Christian people can situate themselves in the world in a way which enables them to engage with others, including those who are different from them. These values mean that Christian people can both give and expect respect and can develop relationships both with those who are of like mind and with those who are not of like mind. There is no question of compromise but rather of honest relationship through which shared values are sought and out of which new relationships emerge to weave a new, shared and reconciling fabric to society.

While living in the world with these values God's people are at one and the same time a people reconciled to God in Christ, discovering what that reconciliation means and sharing that mission of reconciliation with God in the world. The letter to the Corinthian Church helps us to understand both how to view the world and ourselves in it given the work of God in Christ:

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

This ministry and work of reconciliation has clear challenges in a society where there is brokenness coming from the past. In our meetings with those who are victims and survivors and with those who work with them it is clear that the sores run deep and the memories resist reconciliation with those who have hurt

families and damaged communities. This is an area in which there has often been hurt heaped upon hurt. As a Committee we have heard the hurt of those who are different from one another, those who blame one another and those who cannot forgive one another. We commend the work of all those who are focussed on assisting in this area to give victims and survivors the support and help they both need and deserve. Sometimes that will be justice, sometimes it will be company and listening, sometimes it will be challenge and sometimes it will be practical responses, particularly from government, to meet the needs of those who continue to face health challenges. It is our view that Presbyterian Ministers and Congregations should continue in offering pastoral care and support to victims and survivors, that those working on behalf of victims and survivors should continue to do all that they can to provide a context in which there is healing and that government should make realistic provision for the ongoing and changing needs of those who have been damaged by the divisions that for too long dominated our society.

We as God's people are invited and encouraged to be involved with others in developing and building a cohesive, shared and integrated society. It is a challenge to us to develop good relationships with those who are different from us and to work with them in three specific areas which we believe will move society toward a better future. These three areas of work are clarified in the next section.

3. Key elements for building good relationships

3.1. Developing community around shared values, challenge and opportunities.

Working towards a reconciling and more shared community will require hope, trust and mutuality, all of which take time to develop. This process does not require trust to be built before anything can be done. It is important to recognise that sometimes trust comes from working together and develops as enemies have to look one another in the eye around a common task. Emerging trust is inevitably fragile but when it is acknowledged it can provide a foundation for more action. This mutuality of trust and action together move society forward in small but significant steps. The process is not always one of steady building. Trust is given and withdrawn throughout the process, testing fragile developments before committing to on-going trust. Every dimension of a society's life has to participate for a balanced growth and development - economics, social policy and action, health, education and the Churches too. Participation is key and the degree to which participants are committed to the on-going process of building is a measure of how far there is yet to go.

The key value in developing community is respect. Alongside respect there needs to be a commitment to honesty. Relationships have to face the challenges of suspicion, diverse political viewpoints and different cultural approaches. What is sought is trust which then also becomes a value in developing good relationships. As it develops trust also becomes an opportunity and therefore a challenge. Values, challenges and opportunities are integrated as community is developed, good relationships grown and a more reconciled society constructed.

The challenge for Irish Presbyterians is to identify relationships which are not good, or not good enough, and to do something about them, building

community where the opportunity arises. This may be within Congregations or between Congregations, as a matter of our own integrity. But for society as a whole this begins locally. Congregations are encouraged:

- to identify groups with which they share values and to work with them in whatever way possible for the good of the whole community, and
- to identify groups which they distrust and to begin to talk with them in exploration of new ideas, which need not threaten us.

3.2. Learning how to share space

Shared communities built on good relationships are communities no longer torn apart by disparate groups and ambitions. These communities provide tools for building together, negotiating goals and embracing those goals across diversity. All of that requires the space to talk, to disagree, to negotiate and to reach agreement together with a real hope that what is being planned can be achieved. The process requires access to as many people as possible to represent as broad a cross-section of society as possible. Ultimately the 'big' vision is a vision for everyone, although groups may come to the process with separate or more local visions. This does not happen by chance but has to take place in environments which are safe and where there are at least some explicitly shared values.

In a community learning how to share space it is a vocation to provide space in which sharing can happen. Churches have done this over many years and in a variety of ways. Individuals have provided meeting space for gathered groups of disparate people who need to talk with one another in a safe environment. Congregations have opened their doors to groups of people who are different from them and sought to become friends with them. Committees have sat down with groups from different sections of the community. But the shared space challenge is not over. It includes the challenge to share geographical space, to be prepared to live next door to people who are different from us and to learn to trust our neighbours, to assist in the provision of resources which are accessible to all and which everyone feels safe to go to. Shared space also includes sharing the spaces that we have, not least our Church buildings which are too often only for our own. The challenge to share space also requires us to turn our attention to areas where sharing is a matter of raw contention, along so called 'peace-lines' for example. Evidence shows that investment in shared spaces is beginning to pay dividends.

If we as a Church want to make a contribution to shared space we can consider opening up our premises where and when possible to those who would not traditionally be found within the walls of the building. This is already being done in many Congregations. Over the years the General Assembly has encouraged members of PCI to become involved where possible in resolving contention relating to space and territory. In the Presbytery responses on sectarianism land and territory were pointed to as still being significant issues which cause division and separation. Sharing is about space, about land and territory, but not simply about dividing and distributing. Sharing is about co-operating to share in a way which benefits society as a whole and brings that society to a better place. This we do in the knowledge that the land is not ours

but is given into our care by God. It is not for us to take such a generous gift to ourselves without consideration for others.

The past rings loud in certain communities where territory has been occupied by others and Presbyterians feel they have been driven from the land. There is considerable work to be done in learning about each other, in learning what we have done to each other, in spreading out the responsibility across the board for taking and not sharing. In different parts of the country the takers have been of different shades of political opinion. To continue to carve up and to take back is to avoid the invitation to share and to build better and reconciling relationships. But the journey will be long and at times painful. In the meantime we are invited to share what we can and to push ourselves a little bit further than we think we can go.

3.3. Facing the challenge of integrating groups who are minority or excluded

One aspect of integration which is well known to us in Northern Ireland is that of integrating minority groups who have come to live here. But integration can mean so much more - the integration of groups who see each other as different and who once were suspicious of one another, economic integration and the sharing of wealth etc. Any understanding of integration is shifting and fluid depending on the circumstances in which a society finds itself and will, therefore, have to be unpacked at a particular point in history and in a particular geographical location.

For the building of a more shared society all parties within society will need to accept that there are those on the margins who have to be included and whose voices need to be heard. There are those who are different from us who are to be welcomed and accepted. As we move towards them in the attempt to build better relationships and to seek a reconciliation for our times, then there will be a sharing and acceptance of new ideas, even if that means those ideas are renegotiated and reshaped as relationships form and develop. Governments CSI strategy does not, for example, deal with sexual orientation and OFMDFM have agreed to publish a separate strategy. Our Social Witness Board has already done considerable work on this issue. The document approved by the General Assembly The Church and the Homosexual can be viewed at <http://www.pcibsw.org/downloads.html>. A separate Race Relations Policy also remains to be developed by OFMDFM.

It is undoubtedly the case that walking the way of reconciliation for our society is a difficult and challenging one. As the Church takes up these three ways to help bring society to more cohesive and reconciled place then some commitments have to be made. These commitments are made not as a way to compromise or dilute who we as Presbyterians are but as a means to share this geographical space, to integrate others into our lives and us into theirs and to build a society which holds together in a way which allows the weak to be heard and attended to, those who are different from one another to come to appreciate each other and new ideas to be aired and developed.

4. Key commitments for building good relationships

On this way to a more reconciled society it is essential that:

4.1. Good relations are at the centre of policy making and action at every level in society and in every institution within society.

As a central aspiration of policy making Good Relations is hindered by a feeling across society that ‘they’ are getting everything and ‘we’ are getting nothing. Or to put it another way – ‘everything is being held up because of them’. Good Relations requires a sense of joint enterprise, of joint responsibility, of shared privilege, of willingness to engage. But Good Relations is not just a matter for policy makers. In our own family and congregational lives it is often only too glaringly obvious how drastic the cost of broken relationships is. Good Relations, as a central value and building block of society, begins in our homes, on our streets and in our fellowships.

4.2. Commonalities are seen to be as important as differences when we seek to define ourselves in relation to others.

If commonalities are to be valued across society then they have to be cherished and valued by government, by Church leaders, by leaders in every area of society. We share a very small piece of ground and in sharing that space we have to at least acknowledge that there are things we hold in common. These need to be given priority e.g. a desire for peace, hopes for our children, willingness to help neighbours in distress, security in our homes and on our streets, good public representation etc.

4.3. Reconciliation is valued and sought after.

The dominance of the rights agenda as we build our society while essential and to be valued has sometimes skewed society and its hope of reconciliation. The way in which the rights agenda has been used politically and its tendency to abdicate notions of responsibility, means that reconciliation is subverted both as hope and as reality. Human rights is not about a legal arrangement but about human relationships and the elevation of those relationships to a place in which they are said to be the best that they can be. Reconciliation depends upon mutual respect and civility which ultimately change the very nature of relationships so that they are mended rather than broken, elevated in importance rather than collapsed into a legal arrangement. It is obvious that reconciliation is not easy and that there are many reasons given not to even start down the road. But if we are to be obedient to Scripture then we have no option but to start out on that journey for Scripture teaches us:

5. Key outcomes as good relationships are built

5.1. There will opportunities available to everyone equally within society and steps will be taken to create a context in which those offered opportunities may be accepted and developed e.g. through education and its delivery into a context in which it can be received and effective. The Church must continue its work to see that social justice is done and to provide every opportunity for human flourishing. The public role of the Church will be understood to be important, whether at Congregational, Presbytery or Assembly level.

5.2. Building relationships will be more important than emphasising divisions or defining identity by difference alone e.g. people will be able to articulate another’s point of view as clearly as their own and to work to address the concerns of others with the same vigour as addressing their own. The Churches at least might learn how to speak for one another and to articulate one

another's concerns as well at their own. This would be an excellent prerequisite to speaking together and perhaps and even more powerful witness.

5.3. Trust will matter both locally within and between communities and in government at all its levels. Building this trust is absolutely essential to building a cohesive, shared and integrated society. Putting projects in place to build trust and taking actions to build trust between those who do not know each other must, therefore, become a key aspect of congregational life and in a Congregations life locally. Relationships of trust between people of different cultures, backgrounds and experiences have to be seen to matter to us in our Congregations.

5.4. Society will be more defined by how it is reconciling than by how it has been separated. In other words, the future will come to be more important than the past. How do we know if we are being more defined by what is bringing us together? The media will be a good guide for whatever progress is being made for there is no doubt that the media provides what the majority wants. So if the more regular stories are of progress towards reconciliation rather than of division and its consequences, then we will know we are on the way. The media will, on behalf of society, then come to challenge the notion that we are a fatally divided society.

6. Conclusion

In Paul's letter to the Church at Colossae he urged the people of God to put to death all that belongs to the earthly nature because we belong to Christ. We should not, having died with Christ and belonging to him, live as if we still belonged to the world, dominated by its rules. (Colossians 2 v20) In our culture and context there are adopted norms which have to be resisted if witness is to be given to the Gospel which belongs to no one culture and no one context. In Northern Ireland today that has everything to do with resisting division and sectarianism which lead to violence and murder and instead turning towards good relationships from which a shared and reconciled society can be built.

At Cape Town 2010, The Lausanne Movement agreed a confession of faith and a call to action. They call us to adopt lifestyles of reconciliation and to become beacons and bearers of hope.

Adopt the lifestyle of reconciliation. In practical terms this is demonstrated when Christians:

forgive persecutors, while having courage to challenge injustice on behalf of others;

give aid and offer hospitality to neighbours 'on the other side' of a conflict, taking initiatives to cross barriers to seek reconciliation;

continue to witness to Christ in violent contexts; and are willing to suffer, and even to die, rather than take part in acts of destruction or revenge;

engage in the long-term healing of wounds after conflict, making the Church a safe place of refuge and healing for all, including former enemies.

Be a beacon and bearer of hope. We bear witness to God who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. It is solely in the name of Christ, and in the victory of his cross and resurrection, that we have authority to

confront the demonic powers of evil that aggravate human conflict, and have power to minister his reconciling love and peace.

This is our Christian vocation in our diverse community as we, together with society, seek to be reconciled and built together in our diversity.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF PRESBYTERY RESPONSES ON SECTARIANISM

In 2009 the General Assembly passed the following resolution:

That accepting the reality of sectarianism and its widespread effects, the General Assembly support further work in this area, direct Presbyteries to examine the nature and extent of sectarianism within their bounds and to develop ways to address sectarianism, and report back to the Church and Society Committee by the end of February 2010.

The Committee provided a definition of sectarianism which Presbyteries could choose to use - some did and some didn't. The definition was developed by Liechty and Clegg in their study of sectarianism, *Moving Beyond Sectarianism: Religion, Conflict, and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland* (Columba Press 2001). They understood it to be a useful analytical tool when considering the nature and extent of sectarianism.

Sectarianism ...

... is a system of attitudes, actions, beliefs and structures

At personal, communal, and institutional levels

Which always involves religion, and typically involves a negative mixing of religion and politics

.. which arises as a distorted expression of positive, human needs especially for belonging, identity, and the free expression of difference

... and is expressed in destructive patterns of relating:

Hardening the boundaries between groups

Overlooking others

Belittling, dehumanising, or demonising others

Justifying or collaborating in the domination of others

Physically or verbally intimidating or attacking others.

This definition is a generic one, i.e. it has elements that could equally well be applied to other types of 'isms' such as racism, of which sectarianism is a close relative. It is an attempt, which some may regard as unwieldy, to focus attention on the different layers of the system, without allowing anyone the luxury of imagining that they are not somehow implicated in it. It is also an analytical tool, which can be used by individuals and groups to help them make judgments about the sectarian nature of actions or events, their own or other people's. One of the keys to making judgments about whether actions of events are sectarian is the relationship between intentions and consequences.

Responses were received from the following Presbyteries:

Ards, Armagh, Ballymena, Derry & Donegal, Newry, Omagh, Route and South Belfast.

Understanding Sectarianism

Some aspects of the Liechty and Clegg definition were pointed to as being particularly pertinent in understanding sectarianism:

- when boundaries between groups are hardened
- when others are overlooked
- when others are belittled, dehumanized or demonized
- when dominating others is justified or collaborated with
- when others are physically or verbally attacked or intimidated
- when difference is maximised
- when difference is minimised.

The Ballymena Presbytery developed its own understanding of sectarianism:

loyalty to any group, philosophy or creed before loyalty to Christ.

They emphasised that these misplaced loyalties can be seen in the lives of Christians as well as in society. So, for example, the kind of behaviours which lead to violent acts against people of other cultures or traditions cannot be set apart from the behaviours of Christians which might be driven by cultural loyalties and ties. This is to say that sectarianism is something which effects everyone and can even be seen in the simplest of comments e.g. 'that's more Protestant looking.'

The insidious nature of sectarianism was noted and a warning given by more than one of the responding presbyteries that when it comes to sectarianism everyone needs to be vigilant lest they fail to identify the beam in their own eye. Sectarianism is no respecter of class or creed. The Ards Presbytery wrote of 'soft' sectarianism to emphasise that no one escapes it and they defined this type of sectarianism as:

attitudes differentiating ourselves from others, without justification, (which) exist within all levels of society ..

It was important for most Presbyteries to state that sectarianism is not simply about holding a belief which conflicts with someone else's. There is a right to culture and a right to a different opinion or worldview. What matters is how rights and cultures are expressed and experienced by others. Culture and opinion are passed on from one generation to another, as is sectarianism. Sectarianism has to be addressed as each new generation can be hampered by baggage it doesn't understand. When it is passed on friendships are restricted and decided along sectarian lines and the potential for movement away from sectarianism is decreased. Thus sectarianism becomes historically rooted and fed by parallel interpretations of history it sustains and builds itself with perception playing a dynamic role in its continuation.

It was also pointed out that at times sectarianism can be confused with anti-social behaviour. Equally, all events defined by the PSNI as sectarian may not, on further examination, actually be of that nature at all as the process of defining them can sometimes be subjective. Presbyteries acknowledged therefore, that sectarianism can be difficult to pin down.

Experiencing Sectarianism

Across the presbyteries the experience of sectarianism is broad and deep. It is played out on the traditional stages of housing, education, politics, marriage and religion, although in every area improvement can be seen, not least because of the development of laws to counter sectarian practices. For many, however, there is a deep memory of sectarianism which makes it alive for them every day:

- the empty chair reminds families of sectarianism at its worst in the murder of a loved one because of a uniform they wore or a community they belonged to. From individual murders to atrocities such as Kingsmills and Tullyvallen sectarianism has a shocking outworking when left to run its course. Sectarianism at its worst has scarred families, Congregations and communities leaving them with a ‘legacy of suspicion.’
- parading and the experience of being dismissed, overlooked, pushed into a corner
- language and the campaigns associated with it e.g. the campaign to change the name of Londonderry or for bi-lingual signage which some experience as sectarian
- the forcing of a community out of its area e.g. the movement of the Protestant community out of Derry’s City side and the consequent feeling of being under siege by those who remain; the change of some rural towns to being predominantly or entirely Catholic. In rural areas in particular sectarianism is still very much played out around land and territory. Intimidation and attack, particularly in border areas, with the intention of driving out the Protestant population led to a destruction of both trust and respect. Incidents of attack and intimidation against Protestant businesses and homes were sometimes mirrored in similar attacks by Protestants on Catholic homes and businesses but it would have to be said that there was never such a sustained campaign.
- shared space is sometimes the point of sectarian experience, even over such seemingly non-threatening spaces as play facilities. But in every area of leisure there can be tensions, seen not least in the difficulties around the support of teams and the wearing of team colours whether that be Gaelic Sports or Football
- housing segregation is a remaining and on-going evidence of sectarianism as we find it hard to live comfortably together. It is not now always the case that families will be ‘put out’ but it is the case feeling comfortable is a factor in what neighbours we choose to live beside. While the act of ‘putting out’ may not be so prevalent, and presbyteries welcomed this, the housing situation remains a challenge to a society seeking to move beyond sectarianism
- targeting was a word that emerged a number of times to describe the experience of sectarianism, whether it be the targeting of homes, businesses, Orange halls or other symbolic buildings

- the undertow of paramilitarism remains, in many areas, as a sign that sectarianism is alive and well on both sides of the community

One Presbytery drew on the work of the local councils within its bounds to communicate how people ranked a variety of actions as sectarian. It was interesting to note from these figures that emblematic representations of a community's culture and identity were high up the list i.e. territorial markings such as kerb painting, murals and flags. Also high up the list were a lack of dialogue and respect. These things were viewed as militating against good relations within and across communities. Other figures drew attention in particular to parading and to all that goes along with it - flags, dialogue and the lack of it, for example.

From the perspective of the Omagh Presbytery it is impossible to speak of sectarianism without referencing the Omagh Bomb. Clearly that one event has had a deep and significant effect on the local community. It is important to say that bringing the perpetrators to justice would help the movement towards closure for those who continue to grieve and suffer and also give a resistance to ongoing sectarianism.

Some were careful to note that sectarianism is an experience that Presbyterians inflict on others as well as experiencing it for themselves. The notion that what we have is for our 'own' excludes others and that moment of exclusion is a moment of sectarian experience e.g. in some areas the BB is not considered to be for Catholics. The way in which we negatively label others can also mean that bad behaviour toward them is permitted in a way which undermines good relations. Parading is not only a matter about which Presbyterians can be offended but also a matter by which they can cause offense.

While identifying the experience of sectarianism across the Presbyteries it is also clear from the responses that there is an improvement which has to be welcomed. Improvements were attributed to:

- demography
- a transition among paramilitary organisations
- a reduction in sectarian symbolism
- the efforts Churches make to facilitate conversation and dialogue
- the existence of peace groups and 'clergy' groups
- joint vigils and events to discourage sectarianism and encourage better relationships,
- the willingness to make some moves on the parading issue e.g. bands agreeing to play music which is not perceived to be sectarian
- the Women's World Day of Prayer and various joint worship activities e.g. on Good Friday
- joint bowling clubs held in Church halls

Some Presbyteries drew particular attention to projects within their bounds. e.g. Cheers Drop-in Centre in Ballymoney brings young people of all denominations and none together and they report the formation of a cross-community Youth Council; Good morning Ballycastle; the iprod project run by The Link in Newtownards; the formation of a 'Community Issues Panel' in the Ards Presbytery to look at trends and concerns and formulate and propose responses. The Church wide initiative 'Preparing Youth for Peace' has also

made its contribution in enabling Presbyterians to move beyond sectarianism and where it has been used as a cross-community course it may have assisted others who are not Presbyterian.

Given then, all that has been experienced, all that has been learned and the journey beyond sectarianism that is yet to be made, what have Presbyteries proposed to move the Church and society forward

The challenge that many face, particularly those who have been injured or bereaved over the years of the Troubles, has to be recognised. Presbyteries recognised the challenge but also emphasised the Christian obligation to reach out to others in Christian love and friendship and to co-operate without compromise.

Proposals to the Statutory and Governmental levels of society:

1. Presbyteries should encourage councils to develop their community relations work;
2. Ensure that social service provision is not situated in localities where people cannot access it because of feeling threatened but in space where everyone feels not only safe but welcome;
3. Develop contact between Churches on a range of social issues;
4. Support shared places and neutral venues;
5. Encourage greater understanding, participation and integration of schools from diverse religious backgrounds;
6. Develop more effective cross party and multi sectoral approaches to the problem of sectarianism;
7. An interdepartmental initiative should be developed to encourage mixed social housing areas where work can be done to understand and appreciate cultural diversity
8. Community policing should be given a high priority in resource allocation thus undermining any perceived need for paramilitaries.

Presbyteries

1. Should explore how they can give voice to the marginalized as this will help mitigate against a poverty of aspiration and will combat lethargy thus assisting the building of more cohesive community.
2. Mission Plans should recognise the particular challenges of Churches located in low income, historically entrenched communities and seek to resource those Congregations accordingly. Partnerships with stronger Congregations may be worth considering.
3. Mission Plans generally should address themselves to the problem of sectarianism.
4. Consider ways to become facilitators of listening to one another's stories. As long as stories remain unheard across the sectarian divide they feed exclusive ideologies.
5. Should consider setting up interaction groups.
6. Encourage Congregations to support anyone who has been the victim of sectarian incident. This could include helping to clean up buildings, sending

letters to those suffering and messages to the wider community that such things are unacceptable.

7. Should continue in dialogue with local representatives in areas where symbols are being used offensively and attempt to develop new understandings of the impact this can have and therefore new behaviours.

8. Encourage its members to go as far as they can in sharing in community events and making the most of opportunities to be bridge-builders for the sake of the Gospel.

9. Encourage Congregations to help families to address sectarianism in their homes - it may even be helpful for materials to be developed.

10. Local Congregations, many of them quietly, are trying to build bridges with those who are different from them. This should be continued and extended.

11. Ministers and priests/clergy have to give a lead.

Denominationally

It is recognised that in 1965 the General Assembly passed a resolution asking Catholics in Ireland to forgive Presbyterians for, 'attitudes and actions ... unworthy of our calling as followers of Jesus Christ.' But more can always be done. Words of condemnation and commiseration across the denominations over the years of the conflict are also to be appreciated and commended as attempts to stand against sectarianism. Additionally as a denomination we should consider:

1. Setting up a working group with the remit of looking at the problems experienced by single identity communities who have a history of conflict and sectarianism.

2. Including in ministerial training imparting skills and tools so that if they choose to work in single identity contexts they will be able to assist people to both understand and work at engaging with others who are different from them. The 1994 Peace Vocation should take a prominent position in this education.

3. That the PCI should bring pressure to bear on government to hear the voice of marginalized loyalist communities so that further sectarian conflict can be resisted. Overt displays may have reduced, but it would be a mistake to assume that the problem has gone. Sectarianism will re-emerge if poverty of aspiration, together with the fears and concerns of loyalist communities are not recognised and articulated.

4. The wording of public statements should be weighed carefully so as not to imply any sectarian attitude or motive.

5. Support courageous activity in the political arena.

6. Look at how to impact primary school children for good and against sectarianism.

7. Move some Peace and Reconciliation events out west, out of Belfast.

8. Consider how to help those who have suffered in the Troubles.

9. That the General Assembly correlate the results from each District Council in Northern Ireland of their good relations surveys with the aim of making the results available to Presbyterian. The purpose of this is to identify

what each side of the community think, to further identify common fears and desires and in the process to lessen and weaken sectarian views.

10. Consider producing material for youth groups and schools which draws out the biblical meaning of loving our neighbours. There is the need to try to reach beyond Church members on this.

Generally across the denomination at every level:

1. Everyone should endeavour to treat their neighbours without distinction and with Christian love.

2. Ministers and Church leaders, while recognising differences in doctrine and practice, should be seen to meet on social, domestic and more general religious issues.

3. Faithful and consistent biblical teaching about the necessity of full and foremost commitment to Jesus Christ and about love of our neighbour.

4. Encouraging everyone who claim to be Christian to be Christlike in behaviour. This is perhaps especially important to emphasise among those whose evangelical conviction does not permit participation in 'ecumenical' worship. So those who are theologically different as well as culturally and experientially should not be excluded from being treated in a Christlike manner. (This is seen, for example, in the story of the woman at the well and Jesus response to her John 4)

5. Support of the PSNI and provision of information through crime-stoppers. All members should be encouraged to provide the information necessary for the police to continue to work against the violent outworking of sectarianism in society.

6. We must ask ourselves whether our identity is in Christ or in culture. While we are all beings who are culturally situated and therefore influenced by the culture in which we find ourselves, being firmly rooted in Christ and his mission would dispel fears and confusion about our identity and purpose and enable the Church to have a greater impact on the lives and culture around us.

7. Developing an approach in which we attempt not only to express ourselves but also to stop and try to see ourselves as others see us.

Education

Presbyteries recognised that some within the denomination feel strongly that as a society we should be working towards integrated education. It is with some sorrow that it has to be acknowledged that for the Catholic Church this is a non-starter. One Presbytery pointed to research which shows that there is peer pressure among young people to remain separate from one another during their years in education. The separation could be seen in some sectarian incidents such as the shouting of abuse at one another and occasional violence linked to the wearing of school uniforms etc. Sectarianism would be diluted by the nurturing of more cross-community links through education and cultural events.

Some saw integration as one of the factors in undermining sectarianism.

Sport

Presbyteries believe this is one area in which sectarian attitudes can be broken down. The NI Football Association have set a good example and rugby is becoming a sport in which people from all backgrounds are involved. Every attempt through sport to allow people to be together and to build friendships of respect is to be commended and encouraged.

Politically

Presbyteries spoke of the need to foster a more generous spirit in politics. It is clear that difficulties are very real for some politicians as they work together. Some were once in fear of others and are now asked to work alongside them as if nothing happened. More generous words would help to break down mistrust and crack the sectarian grip.

The Gospel Solution

Presbyteries looked for the Gospel Solution to sectarianism. We are all sinful people and Paul wrote about our sinful nature in terms which echo the sectarianism about which we are concerned - hatred, jealousy, discord, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissension, factions etc. Sectarianism, as it plays on our sinful nature, does what it can to drive people apart and set them against one another. Ultimately the solution will require a spiritual dimension to it - this is the only way to complete the picture as we turn ourselves towards the eradication of sectarianism in society and in our hearts. That will require the word from God about Jesus, prayer that former enemies will be reconciled to God and to one another and that God's grace will do the work of transformation in our hearts. Our own prejudice and intolerance also need to be a matter of prayer so that they will be revealed to us and the work of God accomplished, by His grace in us.

LESLEY CARROLL, ALAN BOAL, Co-Conveners

GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

1. This report will focus on four areas of the work of the Committee
 - Building Good Relations (Peace and Peacemaking)
 - Environment Panel
 - Race Relations' Panel
 - Christian-Muslim Relations
2. Concern has been expressed in the Committee about the fact that the Global Concerns Committee work on global matters relating to Ireland, but not necessarily on global matters in general. The area of international relations as part of the work of this Committee has been mentioned. Since there are many overlapping areas between Committees and Boards in this area, an on-going discussion on the Committee's work and future involvement in international relations is taking place. The focus and task of the Committee's work will also be determined by the possible review of the work of the Committees of the General Assembly.

BUILDING GOOD RELATIONS (Peace and Peacemaking) PANEL

1. An annual morning Conference took place on Saturday, 27 November 2010 in Lowe Memorial. It was well attended as usual. The Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Norman Hamilton and Mr Joe Campbell spoke at this Conference.

2. An on-going discussion took place on the future name and task of this Panel. It was decided that “Building Good Relations” would be the new name. The Rev Stephen Johnston has been appointed the Convener of the new Panel. At this stage, this Panel will report to the General Board through the Global Concerns Committee.

ENVIRONMENT PANEL

The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:

1. Two members of the Environment Panel represented PCI at the meeting of the 8th Assembly of the European Christian Environmental Network in the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Jeneralka, Prague (9-13 June 2010). The theme was “Our Daily Bread - Living in a Time of Climate Change.” The Assembly gave delegates the opportunity to hear keynote speakers reflect on the issue of climate change and how it both affects and is affected by modern food production. Areas of interest covered included, Climate change, Eco-management, Food, Lifestyle transition. Delegates attended Creative workshops dealing with issues across the environmental spectrum and there were visits organised to see how Czech Churches are addressing Climate Change and Care for Creation. Areas such as consumption of food, the effect of transport (food miles) and excess food packaging were also subject to consideration by delegates. It was challenging to see comparisons in the quantity of food purchased for a typical week by a typical European (German) family with that by families in Africa, South America, Indonesia, and other parts of the world. Not only was the quantity many times greater, but the distance the food had travelled was very much greater. It was stressed that local food production and consumption should be encouraged where possible combined with an emphasis upon sustainable farming methods, as this had a beneficial effect upon local agriculture and the environment. It also had a benefit for the people in many third-world countries where cash-crop production for export had a detrimental effect upon local agriculture, environment and social issues.

2. It is important to build on the links developed with other Churches throughout Europe, many of whom are much more advanced in their witness to society through care for God’s Creation. The website, www.ecen.org has much more information available.

3. Delegates were to encourage their Churches to celebrate “Creation Time” (1 September – 4 October) in keeping with the UN International Year of Biodiversity. This, of course, falls within the time that many of our Presbyterian Churches celebrate their Harvest Thanksgiving Services. The Committee decided to ask the Panel to look into the possibility of having an “Environmental Sunday” in PCI.

4. The Environment Panel visited more local sites of environmental interest over the winter session, including a waste management plant, and have set up an Environment Panel page on the PCI web site which will be developed throughout the coming year. Future visits planned include a fisheries agency and a commercial power station.

5. The Committee recognise the importance of youth involvement in this area and would like to encourage future involvement of SPUD in environmental issues. The Panel will look into the matter.

6. The Panel also worked on guidelines for environmentally friendly Churches, in conjunction with the Church Architecture Committee.

7. 2011 is the UN International Year of Forests.

8. The Panel is seeking to encourage the Presbytery environmental agents, by inviting them to attend local site visits by the Panel so that these agents can raise environmental issues at their Presbyteries.

RACE RELATIONS PANEL

The Rev Richard Kerr reports:

1. Over the past year the Panel has been engaged in a strategic review. The main purpose of this process is to clarify the role, direction and priorities of the Panel. Much progress has been made and the Panel is convinced of its strategic importance to our Church's mission with immigrants and minority ethnic people.

2. In September 2010 Ministers were sent an e-mail making them aware of a number of resources available for encountering Immigrants and Black and Minority Ethnic people in local communities and enabling them to find a home in Congregations. Those interested in this or additional information are encouraged to contact the Convener.

3. The Larne Detention unit is to go ahead despite protests and scare-mongering from a number of parties. The Panel is of the view that detention is not desirable and should only be a last resort. However, detention in a central, fit-for-purpose unit is preferable to detention in PSNI cells across NI. Meetings have been held with UK Border Agency officials regarding proposals for providing chaplaincy services to this facility.

4. The economic situation has had a significant impact on immigrants, many of whom are on short term contracts and most vulnerable to redundancy. Although both jurisdictions are affected, immigrants in the ROI have been hardest hit. Agencies and Churches providing support are seeing additional social challenges while often operating on reduced budgets.

5. Although the recession has contributed to changing immigration patterns; the picture is complex. Many immigrants have left to find employment in other EU countries or returned home. Many others have stayed; especially those who have ties here such as families, education, mortgages.

6. Relationships with other agencies and groups have been maintained. Of particular importance are our links with Embrace, The All-Ireland Churches Consultation on Racism (AICCMR) and the Churches Asylum Network (CAN).

These networks have been invaluable for the sharing of information and resources.

7. The Panel maintains its support of Vuleka Trust and the Diakonia Council of Churches in South Africa as they continue their work of inter-racial reconciliation. In March the Convener met with two representatives of Diakonia who were attending a conference in Belfast.

Christian-Muslim Relations

1. Meetings took place in Dublin between representatives of the Abrahamic faiths. In PCI it was agreed earlier to establish a group with BMO and BMI representatives to try and take this area forward. On-going discussion is taking place in the Committee. The Committee agreed that the relations between the Abrahamic faiths should be the focus area. The Committee acknowledged that this issue is of utmost importance in our context, but that there are important questions to be addressed. Some of these questions were mentioned by the Committee:

- How does the Church relate to issues in the Middle East?
- Do these issues belong to the sphere of work of the Global Concerns Committee?
- Should a separate Panel be established to look into the area of the relationship between Abrahamic faiths, or should it be an inter-Board Panel?

The Committee is therefore looking into the possible review of the Panel's work.

ANNES NEL, Convener

PANEL ON THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. At the time of writing this report the Administrator of the Presbyterian Mutual Society has just issued his Scheme of Arrangement to PMS members. The members themselves must vote, but the Panel hopes that the Scheme will now map out a clear way forward, in which all PMS savers will receive most of their funds without further delay. The Panel pays tribute to the patience of many savers, but also to the hard work of responsible lobby groups, politicians, Executive ministers, civil servants, the Administrator, his staff and many others who have worked hard to bring this tragic episode to a point where a resolution seems possible.

2. The Church also played an important role and thanks are expressed to members of the Panel and to the informal group of "advisers" who gave enormous time and commitment in seeking a solution. Gathered together by the Very Rev Dr John Dunlop were Sir George Quigley, Mr Frank Cushnahan and Mr Ross Reed. Without their particular expertise and insights the pressure for genuine engagement would have been so much more difficult. The media role of the Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson was also a significant and demanding one.

3. In the months after the last Assembly not much seemed to be happening as the new Westminster government settled into power. The Church therefore updated and resubmitted its arguments for a "commercial" solution as

the best way forward. It increasingly became evident, however, that it was not likely to happen. In meetings during the Autumn with both the Secretary of State and Executive ministers it became clear that while the “commercial” option was still on the table, government was really working up a Plan B.

4. The scheme which emerged, however, was significantly different from the Plan B that had been outlined to the Church at the time of the Special Assembly. At that time the Church was asked to contribute to a “Hardship Fund” which “would meet the test of use of funds for charitable purposes” and very willingly agreed to contribute £1m. It was becoming clear that what was being called a “Mutual Access Fund” would not be charitable in law.

5. It was also clear, however, that the new arrangement would be of greater benefit to savers and so the Church did not want to oppose it. The nature of the fund was confirmed in a letter of 26 January, 2011 from the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment which also asked the Church to “give careful consideration to the principle of increasing the contribution from £1m to £5m”.

6. The General Assembly’s Solicitor confirmed that on the basis of the briefing note supplied by DETI the fund would not be charitable and so it was decided to apply to the Attorney General for permission to use charitable Church funds to contribute the £1m. The Attorney General decided that in the circumstances it would be preferential to have the matter dealt with by the Chancery Court. The Hon Mr Justice Deeny heard the case on 18 March, 2011 and generously agreed to give a verbal judgement in time for the General Board meeting the next day. He granted authority to the Trustees to “make an ex gratia contribution of £1m from its unrestricted charitable funds to an access fund which is being proposed as part of the Government’s ‘rescue package’ in respect of the Presbyterian Mutual Society”. For information, his full written judgement is appended.

7. At the General Board the following resolutions were passed:

(3) That the General Board confirms the contribution of £1m agreed at the Special Assembly would now be paid to a Mutual Access or other Fund which is part of the scheme of arrangement of the Presbyterian Mutual Society and asks the General Assembly’s Trustees to make payment, as appropriate, when the scheme is finalised.

(3) That the General Board encourages the Financial Crisis Panel to seek ways to enhance the Presbyterian contribution to the scheme of arrangement beyond £1m, so that our long-term goal to enable small savers (up to £20,000) to have their shareholding paid back in full may be achieved.

Responding to the General Board the Trustees have agreed that payment of £1m will be made from the Discretionary Fund when the Scheme is finally agreed.

8. The General Board also considered if an additional contribution should be made. The Panel had previously had discussion with the Administrator to see if the Church could help to ensure that all those who were simply shareholders in the PMS received back all, or virtually all, of their savings. The Panel was of the view that this would best be achieved by encouraging creditors to voluntarily defer up to an additional 10% of their loan. The Administrator has allowed for this in the scheme which is at present being put to members. The General Board passed the following resolution:

That the General Board understands that there may be an opportunity for creditors to voluntarily defer the return of a slightly larger share of their capital than will be proposed in the scheme of arrangement and asks congregations and other Church agencies, where their particular circumstances make it possible, to consider this as a significant contribution.

9. The PMS crisis has indeed been difficult for everyone, but above all for those who needed their savings and couldn't get access to it. At times there have been misunderstandings and hurts but many involved have also shown remarkable resilience and patience. The Panel asks that it be continued for a further year to reflect and report on lessons to be learned.

APPENDIX

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

CHANCERY DIVISION

**IN THE MATTER OF THE TRUSTS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN IRELAND**

-and-

IN THE MATTER OF THE CHARITIES ACT (NI) 1964

BETWEEN:

THE TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Plaintiff;

-and-

**HER MAJESTY'S ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR NORTHERN
IRELAND**

Defendant.

DEENY J

[1] In this Summons brought by the plaintiff, the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland ("the Church") seek authority from the court to make an ex gratia contribution of up to £1,000,000 from its unrestricted charitable funds to an access fund which is being proposed as part of the Government's "rescue package" in respect of the Presbyterian Mutual Society (In Administration) ("the Society"). Ms Sheena Grattan appeared for the Trustees. The defendant to the action is Her Majesty's Attorney General for Northern Ireland who is represented by Ms Denise McBride of counsel. She confirmed to the court that the Attorney's role in this matter was confined to his role as a custodian of the public interest in regard to charities and not in his capacity as advisor to the Northern Ireland Executive.

[2] The plaintiff had asked for this matter to be listed for early hearing before the court as an urgent decision was required to facilitate the creation of the access fund prior to the adjournment of the Assembly on 24 March. The

court was told at the hearing on 9 March that the General Board of the Presbyterian Church was actually meeting the next day 10 March and were anxious to have a judgment by then. This is far from ideal. The court has been able to facilitate this request by announcing its ruling on 10 March. These are the underlying reasons.

[3] It is necessary, for present purposes, to recall the factual background to this application. The Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited received monies by way of investments or loans akin to deposits from persons, largely in Northern Ireland. It was not, but might have been mistaken for, a building society. Rather it was a Society governed by the provisions of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (NI) 1969. This meant that it was not covered by Government guarantees extending to banks and similar institutions when there was a run on such institutions after they had lost the confidence of the public. The Society went into administration on 17 November 2008.

[4] By the Rules of the Society the persons who invested up to £20,000 in the Society were credited with shares in the Society. Indeed that was the maximum shareholding. Sums invested over and above that level, attracted by the interest rates which the Society paid, were treated as loan capital to the Society. This had an unintended effect that these different investments, without the original investors very largely being aware of it, had a very different status in law once it became apparent that the Society would be unable to recover all its loans. While loans had been extended to Presbyterian congregations, individuals and various enterprises who had owned or acquired buildings paying a secure rent, much of the Society's money had gone to developers on schemes which proved speculative and currently worth less in aggregate than the monies advanced. As I had to conclude in *Boyd v Howie* [2010] NI Ch 2 the shareholders could not be creditors in law and therefore the Administrator was not enabled to distribute a dividend he had accumulated to them. Furthermore they could only ever recover after the loan capital holders were repaid in full, which was regarded as an unlikely scenario.

[5] It was subsequently indicated that public money might be available from both the Northern Ireland budget and the general body of taxpayers in the United Kingdom through HM Government to assist the investors. A contribution was sought from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

[6] The Presbyterian Church in Ireland had no legal responsibility for the Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited. That is clear. But I accept the averments of the Rev Dr Donald Watts, Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland that this distinction was not apparent to very many members of the Church. They tended to consider the Church responsible for the Society.

[7] "Enormous pressure" was put on Moderators, in succession, of the Church and others such as himself because of, in particular, the hardship which many persons were suffering because they had committed their modest life savings solely to the Presbyterian Mutual Society. They were in the very unhappy position that they could not gain access to these modest savings, even for their day-to-day living. Furthermore there was virtually no prospect of them ever doing so given the state of the Society.

[8] It is important to bear in mind, as I pointed out in my earlier judgment, what the membership of the Society was. This was governed by Rule 4 of the Rules. It reads as follows:

“Membership shall only be available to members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland over the age of 18 years and their families together with officers and employees of the Society but the Board of Directors of the Society, (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Board’), has the absolute right to refuse any application for membership without having to furnish any reason for the refusal. Any Corporation or unincorporated body shall be admitted to membership if the Board is satisfied that the Corporation is representative of members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.”

Therefore the perception that the Presbyterian Church owed a moral obligation for the Society is not only a matter of nomenclature or encouragement to invest but also because members of the Society had to be Presbyterians.

[9] As appears from the first affidavit of Dr Watts, sworn on 22 February 2011, a Special General Assembly of the Church was convened on 13 April 2010. The Special General Assembly passed a resolution to contribute £1m towards a hardship fund. I set out the resolution which was apparently passed unanimously by the General Assembly:

“That in the event of the Government failing to secure a ‘commercial’ solution and the Northern Ireland Executive bringing forward a final comprehensive proposal which includes a ‘Hardship’ Fund element, the General Assembly agree in principle to contribute £1m while affirming their view that the members of the PMS are thrifty savers and not risk taking investors.”

[10] While looking at these minutes of the General Assembly it is interesting to note that immediately prior to this resolution the Assembly also recorded, inter alia:

“That the General Assembly welcomed the commitment of the Prime Minister (Mr Gordon Brown) to seeking a resolution of the PMS crisis and his acknowledgment of a moral obligation to do so.”

[11] It is common case that the use of the monies held by the Church to relieve the poverty of its individual members who happened to be small investors in the Society and were now suffering hardship as a result would be charitable in nature for that reason.

[12] However, in the events that have transpired the proposal emanating from Government is wider in nature. It has been described by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in her letter of 26 January 2011 to Dr Watts as a “mutual access fund”. The Minister acknowledges, and I am informed by counsel now, that the final details of the scheme are not in the public domain and are indeed not fixed. However what can be said is that the fund would consist of the £1m from the Presbyterian Church (subject to the approval of the court), some £25m from the Government of the United Kingdom and a further £25m from the Northern Ireland Executive. The administrator of the Presbyterian Mutual Society is confident that this would give a high return for small savers. These grants are coupled with the offer of a loan from the Government of the United Kingdom of a further £175m. The effect of this in combination with the

grants just mentioned would be to also substantially recompense the loan capital holders who are creditors of the Society.

[13] The difficulty for the Church is that as its money could not be identifiably only used for the relief of poverty it would not in law be a charitable disposition which it was entitled to make without more. It is common case that if the legal test to which I shall turn in a moment had in the view of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland been met he could have authorised this expenditure. He was empowered to but he thought it “preferential” (i.e. preferable) to put the matter before the court. I have considered not only the written submissions of Ms Grattan but the written submissions of Mr Larkin QC and Ms McBride and the oral submissions of both junior counsel.

[14] The general principle is that a charity is not allowed to make disbursements for non-charitable purposes. That would be inconsistent with the purpose for which the charity was set up. Furthermore it would be an abuse of the privileged position in tax which a charity can enjoy. However in Re Snowden Deceased (1970) Ch. 700 the High Court was invited to consider whether there was an exception to this general rule. It is interesting to note the submissions of NCH Browne-Wilkinson QC, as he then was, counsel for the Attorney General at page 706:

“It has been a long established view that the Attorney-General has no power to authorise application of the funds of a charity for non-charitable purposes. This precise problem has been put to counsel for the Attorney-General for over 40-50 years. Each counsel has treated it as clear law. In the present case the point of moral obligation has been raised. The Attorney-General thinks there is something wrong if a charity cannot given effect to a ‘moral claim’” [in appropriate cases].

[15] In the event Cross J, as then he was, was persuaded that a moral obligation, in that case in relation to wills, could ground such an exception to the general rule. He said, at page 710:

“In the result I am satisfied that the court and the Attorney-General have power to give authority to charity trustees to make ex gratia payments out of funds held in charitable trusts. It is, however, a power which is not to be exercised lightly or on slender grounds but only in cases where it can be fairly said that if the charity were an individual it would be morally wrong of him to refuse to make the payment.”

[16] It was suggested on behalf of the Attorney that this was a high hurdle for the plaintiff here to meet but I prefer to content myself with the actual language of Cross J with which I agree. It is common case that the principle is one that has wider application for charities and is not confined to the facts of the particular cases before Cross J.

[17] A further case referred to by counsel was Attorney General v Trustees of the British Museum [2005] Ch. 397, a decision of Sir Andrew Morritt V-C. In that case the British Museum had acquired four old Master drawings after the Second World War. It was established to the satisfaction of the Trustees by the heirs of Dr Feldmann that they had been seized from Dr Feldmann by the Nazis in occupation of Czechoslovakia after the invasion of that country by Germany and because he was Jewish. Therefore the Trustees felt morally obliged to address the claim of the heirs. However, they were bound by the provisions of

Section 3 of the British Museum Act 1963 which prohibited the disposal of objects in the museum's collections, save for certain exceptions which were not applicable. The judgment of the Vice Chancellor includes the following:

"[46] In the case of the Benevento Missal the Spoliation Advisory Panel concluded that restitution by the Trustees of the British Library was barred by Section 3(5) of the British Library Act 1972 applying Section 3(4) of the British Museum Act 1963. In the report dated 23 March 2005 (HC 406), at para. 77, the Panel under the chairmanship of Sir David Hirst, recommended to the Secretary of State that legislation should be introduced to amend the British Museum Act 1963, British Library Act 1972 and the Museums and Galleries Act 1992 so as to permit restitution of cultural objects of which possession was lost during the Nazi era (1933-1945). The Panel also recognised the possibility that legislation might relate to a specific object or objects. I have, in fact, reached the same conclusion. In my judgment only legislation or a bona fide compromise of a claim of the heirs of Dr Feldmann to be entitled to the four drawings could entitle the Trustees to transfer any of them to those heirs."

[18] As it happens I have the honour to serve as a member of the Spoliation Advisory Panel under the wise and distinguished chairmanship of The Rt Hon Sir David Hirst, a former Lord Justice of Appeal. I am happy to find that my view has not changed from the view collectively expressed in that report and that it has been approbated by the Vice Chancellor. It is relevant to my jurisdiction here in that it might well have been the case that the role of the court was affected by the provisions of the Charities Act (NI) 2008 which came into force in Northern Ireland on 18 February of this year. If the provisions of the statute had expressly substituted the role of the Charity Commission for that of the court it would not have been open to me to deal with the application of the plaintiffs here. In the absence of such an express provision I accept the submissions of counsel that the application is properly brought before the court.

[19] The attention of the court has been drawn to the briefing note regarding the mutual access fund which accompanied the Minister's letter of 26 January 2011. From that one learns that "there has been extensive opposition from PMS members to the use of means testing and lobbying that the fund should operate on a formula basis and Ministers are now prepared to adopt this approach." It is the absence of means testing which deprives the gift of the sum of £1m of its charitable character.

[20] What is a moral obligation? The industry of counsel did not discover any accepted definition. It might be said that a person or organisation is under a moral obligation to act in a particular way towards another not by reason of law or force but because, on account of some earlier promise or the relationship with that other person or some other reason, their own conscience or that of right thinking people generally would consider they behaved honourably and well if they acted in that way but badly and wrongly if they failed or neglected so to do. How would that apply here? In his affidavits Dr Watts gave a few moving examples of the hurt felt by some of these small savers deprived of an investment, modest by some standards but substantial to them. These people will benefit by the scheme proposed to a considerable extent. If the Church does not contribute it may well be that the scheme does not proceed and therefore the

persons exposed to poverty will not be assisted. By operation of law and the realities of the state of the Society it is extremely unlikely that they would receive any of their money back without such external assistance.

[21] It is interesting to note that the resolution of 2010 referred to the gift going to a solution which included a hardship fund i.e. that it would not be exclusively for those in hardship. I bear in mind that any saver who finds themselves deprived of money which they had invested in an apparently reputable financial institution in the United Kingdom may be aggrieved to find themselves deprived of it when others in apparently similar circumstances have been compensated or indemnified.

[22] Perhaps the matter goes further. It can be seen that the contribution of the Church is a modest one compared to the contribution to be made by taxpayers in Northern Ireland and throughout the United Kingdom. It would be paradoxical if the general body of taxpayers consisting of Anglicans, Catholics, atheists, agnostics, Moslems and Jews (as well as Presbyterians and many others) contributed to this solution but the only Church to which the members of the Society could belong did not make any contribution. I am satisfied that Dr Watts' apprehension that the Presbyterian Church would be considered very widely to have acted badly in such circumstances is a correct one. I am satisfied that the surrounding circumstances, including in particular the promise previously given by this resolution, constitute a moral obligation on the Church which enables and allows the court to authorise the payment of up to £1m towards this mutual assistance fund.

[23] As indicated above, as it happens the Charities Act has come into force within the last month. As the Commission was only in the process of being set up and the Attorney General had previously been applied to it is quite understandable that the plaintiffs continued with their application to the High Court. The court has been able to give them an expeditious hearing of their application. I have decided this matter on the basis that moral obligation does exist here. However for the avoidance of doubt I find that it would be proper for me to take into account the most recent statutory enactment on the topic. The relevant provision is Section 46(1) of the Act of 2008. It reads:

“Subject to the provisions of this Section, where it appears to the Commission that any action proposed or contemplated in the administration of a charity is expedient in the interest of the charity, the Commission may by order sanction that action, whether or not it will otherwise be within the powers exercisable by the charity trustees in the administration of the charity; and anything done under the authority of such an order shall be deemed to be properly done in the exercise of those powers.”

[24] Both counsel submit that expedient means something more than convenient. Ms McBride referred to the guidelines published by the Charity Commission in England and Wales at page 132 of these papers as follows:

“Expedient means something more than ‘convenient’ and means that there must be a definite advantage to the charity.”

Without dissenting from that I would be inclined to think that the language of Cross J was applicable to a decision to be made in this regard i.e. that the power was one “not to be exercised lightly or on slender grounds”. It may well

be that the intentions expressed in any original Trust or other instrument establishing the charity would have to be very carefully taken into account. The expenditure must be expedient in the interests of the charity, not those of its trustees or employees.

[25] It is not for me to usurp any future decision of the Commission and I do not so do, although their decisions are likely to be subject to judicial review. Suffice it to say that I am satisfied that this new statutory test would be one which the plaintiffs here could meet consistently with the decision at which I have arrived. I take into account that there is a loss to the funds of the charity i.e. the Church by the disbursement of this money but that the disbursement will lead to very considerable benefit to a considerable number of members of the Church and thereby in both the reputational and in all likelihood financial sense to the Church itself, bearing in mind Dr Watts' report of some diminution in contributions which may be caused not by the current economic difficulties but by the controversy over the Presbyterian Mutual Society. It is in the broader interests of the Church.

[26] I therefore grant to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland the authority they seek pursuant to this summons to make an ex gratia contribution of up to £1,000,000 from their unrestricted charitable funds to the mutual access fund which is proposed to assist the investors, whether shareholders or creditors in law, in the Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited (In Administration).

FOOTNOTE

Source: The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland v Her Majesty's Attorney General for Northern Ireland, In The High Court of Justice In Northern Ireland, Neutral Citation No. [2011] NICH 4, Author Deeny J. Year 2011, Crown Copyright protected. This reproduction of Crown Copyright information is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>). Northern Ireland Court and Tribunal Service (http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/24772B93-02E6-4736-A922-586F67084818/0/j_j_DEE8126Final.htm accessed 20/04/2011).

PANEL ON PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Introduction

As part of the consultation on the proposals of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel, Congregations were asked to respond to the following question:

Do you support, in principle, the move from assessments being based on stipend to assessable income so that Congregations contribute according to their means?

207 Congregations responded to the consultation and in relation to the above question, 73% of Congregations supported the change, 21% did not support the change and 6% did not respond to the question.

Written responses to this question indicated concern

- at the increased assessments Congregations with larger income would have to pay and the consequence this would have for local mission and specifically for present staffing levels
- that the definition of assessable income needs to be clarified
- that some Congregations might seek to divert income to non assessable sources
- about the on-going level of assessments

A. Current Assessment Arrangements

1. At present assessments are based on the full year stipend “paid” to the Minister in the previous year. Where a Congregation is vacant, the previous stipend is used or if leave to call has been issued in the previous year that figure is used. The Funds currently financed by way of assessment include:

- (a) Central Ministry Fund
- (b) Retired Ministers’ Fund
- (c) Widows of Ministers’ Fund
- (d) Incidental Fund
- (e) PCI Pension Scheme (2009) Fund
- (f) Prolonged Disability Fund
- (g) Sick Supply Fund
- (h) Church House Repairs Fund
- (i) Ministerial Development Fund
- (j) Student Bursary Fund

2. Provisional rates of assessment for the incoming year are set annually by the Board of Finance and Personnel at its stated October meeting e.g. the provisional rates for 2011 were set by the Board at a meeting in October 2010. These provisional rates were applied from the 1st quarter assessment of 2011. The General Assembly will be asked to confirm the provisional rates for 2011 in June 2011.

B. Proposed Arrangements

1. It is proposed to change the basis of assessment for all funds except the PCI Pension Scheme (2009) Fund from stipend to assessable income (see section C below and Appendix 1).

2. The change is not intended to result in an overall increase in assessments being collected from Congregations as a whole.

3. It is evident that to apply a uniform percentage on all Congregations would mean the assessments on some Congregations could double. The Panel affirm the view expressed in some of the consultation responses that this is not desirable as those Congregations may not be able to respond without e.g. the need to reduce the number of staff employed in local mission.

4. The Panel fully support Congregations with larger financial resources assisting Congregations with limited resources but recognise that Congregations

have a responsibility to endeavour to be as self sufficient as possible and not become over dependent on support from the Central Ministry Fund.

5. In order to address some of the issues raised during the consultation it is proposed that a sliding scale of assessments be applied (with the exception of contributions to the pension Fund – see 6 below). All Congregations will pay the same rate of assessment up to a certain level of assessable income, but that reduced rates of assessment apply to income above agreed levels. The proposed table is as follows:

Assessment Band	Assessable Income (£)		Assessment Rate
	From	To	
1	0	75,000	16.50%
2	75,000	150,000	12.25%
3	150,000	225,000	8.00%
4	225,000	300,000	3.75%
5	300,000	and above	0.00%

For Congregations in the Republic of Ireland the above rates will be converted to Euro at the average rate of exchange ruling for the year of assessable income.

6. One further change that is proposed is in relation to the pension assessment. It is proposed that the assessment for the pension fund does not change to be based on assessable income. Instead, it would be charged based on the stipend paid using the pension scheme “employers” contribution rate (currently 27.4%). In other words, Congregations would pay contributions based on the stipend paid to their Minister. **No pension assessment would therefore apply during a vacancy.** The Central Ministry Fund will bear the pension cost on amounts paid to Ministers through that fund i.e. augmented and incremental grants and the payment due to Ministers under The Code Par 315(2). The assessment for the Central Ministry Fund will reflect the pension costs of these amounts.

7. Associates

Under the present arrangements assessments are collected for the Central Ministry Fund, Retired Ministers’ Fund, Widows of Ministers’ Fund and Prolonged Disability Fund in respect of Associates. These are calculated as 5% of the normal assessment rates based on the current “salary” up to ministerial minimum. Full assessment on amounts in excess of the minimum are collected. No pension assessment is collected up to the minimum, but is thereafter. National Insurance is payable on the “salary”. It is noted that most Congregations now pay the full salary of their Associate.

It is now proposed that Congregations only contribute to national insurance and pension based on the “salary” set by Union Commission.

8. Ordained Assistants

Under the current arrangements, Congregations are charged for part of the “salary” of their Ordained Assistant, the national insurance on the full salary and half the house allowance. There is no assessment for pension but an assessment for the Prolonged Disability Fund is collected on the proportion of salary paid by the Congregation.

It is now proposed that Congregations contribute to national insurance and pension based on the “salary” set by Union Commission.

9. Licentiates

It is proposed that the present arrangements continue and Congregations contribute to part of the “salary” of Licentiates, the national insurance on the full salary and half the house allowance or as determined by Union Commission.

The changes in 7, 8 and 9 would not affect the entitlement of Associates, Ordained Assistants or Licentiates to grants from the Central Ministry Fund or to eligibility for the Prolonged Disability Fund or Ministerial Development Fund.

C. Impact of Change

1. In order to gauge the possible impact on Congregations of such a change the assessment for 2010 based on the present system has been compared with the assessment based on assessable income (*using specified sources for 2009 as this is the closest figure to assessable income readily available*).

2. Overall, 270 Congregations assessments would have increased and 264 would have decreased. Of these 141 Congregations assessments would have increased by less than 10% and 191 Congregations assessments would have decreased by less than 10%

The following table summarises the results for the 534 Congregations included in the comparison exercise

	Increase	Decrease	Total
Increase or decrease	270	264	534
Increase or decrease of 0% -10%	141	191	332
Increase or decrease of 10% -15%	40	43	83
Increase or decrease of 15% -20%	38	21	59
Increase or decrease of 20% -25%	15	4	19
Increase or decrease of 25% -33.33%	20	3	23
Increase or decrease of 33.33% -50%	8	1	9
Increase or decrease of greater than 50%	8	1	9
TOTAL	270	264	534

4. The Panel proposes that no Congregation’s assessments should **initially** increase by more than 10%. Therefore, where a Congregations assessments increase by more than this amount on introduction of the scheme a “Transitional Rebate” will be applied for a four year period. The transitional rebate will be calculated on introduction of the scheme, but will not be recalculated each year thereafter. The “Transitional Rebate” will be the difference between assessments calculated on the new basis and the previous year’s assessments plus 10%. The transitional rebate will be reduced by 25% each year. In Year 1 (year of introduction), the rebate will be 100%, Year 2 - 75%, Year 3 - 50% and Year 4 - 25%. Thereafter no rebate will apply. Example:

Assessments on proposed basis	£19,000	A
Assessments on current basis	£15,000	B
Increase	£4,000	C (A less B)
Increase limited to 10%	£1,500	D (B x 10%)
Transitional Rebate – Year 1		E (C less D)
	£2,500	
Year 2	£1,875	E *75%
Year 3	£1,250	E*50%
Year 4	£625	E*25%

5. It is proposed that the approved rates of assessment will be applied to assessable income for the year preceding the year just finished e.g. if implemented on 1 January, 2013 the rate would be based on 2011 assessable income.

6. The arrangements for setting the rates of assessments, as outlined in Section A above, will continue to apply.

D Assessable Income

The proposed definition of Assessable Income is as follows

Included	Excluded
Weekly Freewill Offering (WFO)	Amounts received where the donor has included a restriction that it cannot be used for general purposes e.g. collections for Property, United Appeal, Mission Funds, World Development, Third Party Charities.
Gift Aid on WFO	Grants from outside bodies.
Loose Offerings	All Bequests and Legacies.
Special Collections for general purposes	Income which is passed on to a third party e.g. leaving gifts, presentations.
Gifts and Donations for general purposes	
Surplus rental Income (i.e. rental income retained for general purposes less related expenditure including financing cost on related loans)	

Income on bequests for general purposes	
Any other income on which no restriction has been placed by the donor	

Congregations should note that they are not permitted to create designated funds to excluded income from “assessable income”. Designated Funds should be approved by Presbytery with reference, if necessary, to the Pensions and Assessments Committee of the Board of Finance and Personnel.

E. Implementation

It is proposed that the above changes are implemented on 1 January, 2013. A resolution is appended seeking the approval of the General Assembly for the change and relevant Code changes will be brought in the Supplementary Reports.

The Annual Statistical Return for 2011 will be amended so that Congregations are required to report their assessable income figure.

PENSIONS

Following the decisions of last year’s Assembly the Panel considered some additional issues:

National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) and Auto-enrolment

1. In October, 2012 the government plans to launch the NEST scheme and auto-enrolment for all those not in a pension scheme. At present the recommendation would be that the Church should offer an enhanced contribution to the NEST scheme, but a definite decision should be left to the Board of Finance and Personnel when details of the scheme become available.

Cross Border Issue

2. The Panel noted that there would be a difficulty for the Pension Scheme if any member working in the Republic was designated as employed. At present that is not the case, but Boards need to be aware of the issue.

Pensions and Salaries “Commission”

3. As reported last year a concern raised during the Pensions review consultation was that beneficiaries of the scheme are also involved in decision-making on behalf of the “employer”, i.e. the Church. The idea of a “Remuneration Commission” was suggested, but it was not possible in the time available to explore this fully. The Panel hope to bring a carefully considered report to the 2012 Assembly.

APPENDIX 1

Under the provisions of the Code Par 235 Specified Sources are defined as follows:

235. (1) **Within the total income of a Congregation** certain items are designated income from "Specified Sources, to include contributions in respect of -

- (a) *Weekly Freewill Offering;*
- (b) *Stipend;*
- (c) *Central Ministry Fund;*
- (d) *Sunday and other collections for general congregational purposes.*

(2) Money received by way of repayment of Income Tax on a contribution shall be treated as part of that contribution.

(3) Other income not under Specified Sources may include collections for building and repairs, repayment of debts, and other designated objects, monies raised in Sunday School or Church organisations (other than for general congregational purposes), collections for the United Appeal or other religious and charitable objects, endowment income, etc.

The Panel propose that the definition of specified sources is changed to be the same as the proposed definition of assessable income. This is to avoid having separate definitions for "specified sources" and "assessable income". The proposed Code changes would be as follows:

235. (1) Within the total income of a Congregation certain items are designated as Assessable Income and include –

- (a) Weekly Freewill Offering;
- (b) Income for Stipend;
- (c) Income for the Central Ministry Fund;
- (d) Sunday and other collections for general congregational purposes.
- (e) Rental income retained for general purposes less related expenditure including financing costs on related loans
- (f) Income on general bequests
- (g) Any other general income on which no restriction has been applied by the donor

(2) Money received by way of repayment of Income Tax on a contribution shall be treated as part of that contribution.

(3) Assessable Income does not include: collections for building and repairs, repayment of debts and other designated objects, monies raised in Sunday School or Church organisations (other than for general congregational purposes), collections for the United Appeal, World Development or other religious and charitable objects, bequests, grants, restricted endowment income.

PANEL ON PASTORAL CARE OF MANSE FAMILIES

The Rev Gabrielle Farquhar reports:

1. ***Who cares for the carers?*** A question used when thinking of those who care for people who are physically or mentally in need. But how many ask this question when thinking of their Minister?

How many ask their Minister, the person who cares for their spiritual needs, this question:

2. *'Who cares for you/your family'?* This is the question which drives the work of the Panel for Pastoral Care of Manse Families. Over the past 18 months an information leaflet has been distributed to Ministers and Spouses of Ministers detailing the care that is available and in particular from members of the Care Panel.

3. The Panel is concerned about the lack of uptake of what is available. In 2010, one Minister and three spouses availed of what is offered. This is despite issues arising, for Ministers in particular, where support could have been given by talking the matter through in a safe, neutral and confidential place.

Current observations and known needs were highlighted by the Panel:

- lack of support for Ministers following difficult Pastoral issues in a Congregation: e.g. Mental Health, Suicide, or a family leaving the Congregation in dissent.
- lack of necessary Management Skills to deal with the conduct of meetings coupled with some instances of bullying and aggravation by members of session resulting in extreme pressure for some Ministers.

What was more revealing was the following:

- expression of feeling isolated. (A real lack of Fellowship appears to exist for Ministers – sometimes due to re-location but more often because friendships have not been maintained as their ministry has developed)
- questioning of their call to Ministry. (When some have been in a Congregation for a couple of years disillusionment about their call appears and expectations of what they thought would have happened through their Ministry, are often crushed.

4. The Panel now intends to re-issue information about the 'Care Panel'. It also agreed to request a meeting with the Ministerial Development Committee to discuss some of the issues highlighted so that together we care for each other in a healthier and more Christian manner.

5. The Panel also wish to note their appreciation of the response to a request and issue by Union Commission on 'Guidance in situations of bereavement in a Manse family'.

PANEL ON THE FUTURE OF PEACEMAKING

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. The Panel to consider the Future of Peacemaking continued to meet this year. It recognises the progress that has been made since the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking was first formed and acknowledges the dedicated effort that has gone into establishing this work at a difficult time in Ireland's history. It appreciates the contribution of the two full-time Peacemaking Officers – one concentrating on youth and the other on adult development. This has given the Church a strong foundation on which to build.

2. The nature of the society to which the church bears witness, however, has changed over the past twenty-five years. Even though the underlying issues

and tensions remain, society in Ireland, on the surface at least, is much more at peace with itself. It may be a superficial peace which is easily disturbed, but the perception is of a peaceful accommodation. The Panel is convinced that the gospel imperative of building good relations with all who are our neighbours still remains central to the Church's witness. This is not just a task for the few but one which is essential to effective mission in society, therefore the Review Panel believe it is important to mainstream this work and root it in our mission to the world.

3. For this reason the Review Panel recommends that a core Panel remains, under the General Board, to stimulate thinking and challenge the Church to build good relations at every level, showing good practice. Each of the Mission Boards should also be invited to appoint a representative to the Panel, in order to encourage and co-ordinate work within the Boards and share experiences. The Panel would be called the "Building Good Relations" Panel, with the role of promoting a culture of good relations within the Church and society. It is recognised that the complementary role of speaking prophetically on societal issues is largely that of the Church and Society Committee. The Panel is very pleased that the Rev Stephen Johnston has agreed to convene this work.

4. In discussion, the Review Panel recognised that the reporting mechanisms within the General Board are not ideal and was pleased to learn that the General Board Business Committee is being asked to consider this matter. For the moment the Building Good Relations Panel will report through the Global Concerns Committee.

5. The Review Panel considered a brief outline of the remit of the Building Good Relations Panel. This is –

TO PROMOTE good relationships at all levels in society and in the Church.

TO FACILITATE, support and share ideas with those who want to explore ways to reach out to others.

TO EDUCATE ourselves and the Church on the gospel necessity of being good neighbours and particularly what that means in Ireland today.

TO TRAIN those who are willing to act as enthusers and facilitators of this work.

TO CONSIDER PASTORALLY how those who are hurting through past experience may be supported and encouraged.

6. The Review Panel is aware that for this vital work to be given the impetus which the gospel demands it needs someone to be working at it in the Church, preferably full-time. At present the application of the Inter-Church Peacemaking Project to the Special EU Programmes Body is still being considered, although it would seem that a favourable outcome is likely. That would provide a worker in this field within the Presbyterian Church as part of a larger project. However, it is not certain that funding will be available and the Review Panel has asked the Priorities Committee of the General Board to consider how support to the Panel on Building Good Relations may be secured.

PANEL ON ASSEMBLY STRUCTURES

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. Last year the Assembly passed a resolution to “encourage the General Board to continue its thinking on how the Courts of the Church, including General Assembly Boards and Committees, may effectively support mission and ministry”. This has resulted in two Panels reporting directly to the General Board.

2. The first of these is looking at the structure of Boards and Committees which enables the General Assembly to carry out its policy-making and executive role. While there have been some changes over the years the basic shape of the Boards was formed in the 1960’s and so the General Board has asked for a fundamental review.

3. The Panel membership is: Moderator, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Very Revs Dr Alastair Dunlop, Dr Donald Patton; Revs Tony Davidson, Sam Finlay; Mrs Rosemary Hamilton, Mrs Pauline Kennedy, Mr John Hunter.

4. The General Board has agreed the following remit for the Panel:

To consider the structures and processes that are needed to ensure:

- *That the General Assembly is able to formulate policy effectively and in relation to its identified priorities at any given time;*
- *That the structures are sufficiently flexible and adaptable;*
- *That the structures allow for both representation and effectiveness;*
- *That there are agreed lines of leadership responsibility;*
- *That a positive relationship is established and maintained among the Boards, Presbyteries and Congregations;*
- *That the process of decision-making in Boards will encourage the wide engagement of congregational members;*
- *That the wider talents of congregational members are identified and utilised.*

5. At present, to further refine its own thinking, the Panel is holding a series of conversations with Board Conveners and Secretaries. As the process develops it would plan to hold discussions either with individual Presbyteries or representative groups. Its substantive report should come to the 2012 Assembly.

PANEL ON CONSULTATIONS

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. The other Panel appointed by the General Board is to consider the Consultation Process, especially in the light of Mission Plans and a possible Presbytery Mission Audit. This Panel has just begun its work and is consulting Presbytery Clerks and the Board of Mission in Ireland.

2. The present thinking of the Panel is that any mission audit should be part of the consultation process, but that the consultation should perhaps have a more specific mission focus. The Panel asks the permission of the General Assembly to trial a new consultation process during the year, having first

received the approval of the General Board. It will then report fully to next Assembly.

PANEL ON JUDICIAL APPEALS

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. When the ad-hoc Panel on Judicial Appeals reported in 2010 there were a few outstanding issues, including an easy-to-follow Guide to the Judicial Process; whether an opportunity to appeal is necessary where the Judicial Commission is the Court of first instance; and the interpretation of Code Par 126(3). It is hoped to report more fully in the Supplementary Reports.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Financial Crisis

2. That the General Assembly give thanks for the progress in finding an acceptable solution to the Presbyterian Mutual Society crisis and gratefully acknowledge the contribution and commitment of many people in Government, Civil Service, the Administrator's office and the Church in reaching this point.

3. That the General Assembly acknowledge with gratitude the patience and forbearance of the vast majority of savers in the Presbyterian Mutual Society throughout this difficult period when there was no access to their funds.

Priorities

4. That the General Assembly accept the five aspirational headings noted in the Priorities Committee report as five Assembly themes for the years 2012-2017.

5. That the theme for the 2012-13 year be, "A Prophetic Voice" and the 2013-14 year be, "A Place of Transformation".

Pensions and Assessments

6. That the General Assembly approve the proposed arrangements, as outlined in the report of the Pensions and Assessments Panel.

Church Relations

7. That the General Assembly appoint the following:
to the Irish Council of Churches Executive: Revs John Brackenridge, Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, Dr Donald Watts;

to the Irish Inter-Church Committee Revs Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, Dr Donald Watts.

8. That the following grants be made available from the Incidental Fund:

Irish Council of Churches	£19,000
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£10,000
World Communion of Reformed Churches	£13,000

Conference of European Churches	£5,000
Church and Society Commission (Brussels)	£2,000
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe	£3,000

Reception of Ministers and Licentiates

9. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee on Ministers and Licentiates without charge.

10. That the Rev Colin Harris be appointed as Acting Convener of the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee

Pastoral Care of Manse Families

11. That Ministers and Manse families be encouraged by Presbytery Clerks and colleagues to avail of the care available.

Church and Society

12. That the General Assembly, recognising the awesome and God-given responsibility which political leaders have, do not want to abandon them to the task but assure the political leaders of the Assembly's prayers and willingness to engage with them.

13. That the General Assembly encourage Congregations to continue to pray for those given leadership in society.

14. That the General Assembly express concern for the citizens of the Irish Republic and for fellow Presbyterians in particular, wish them well in these challenging times and assure the new government, under the leadership of Mr Enda Kenny, of their concerned prayers and good wishes.

15. The General Assembly, conscious of the anxiety in which some members of this society live, of the threat to members of the PSNI, the Prison Service and others, and of the threat to the future stability and the rebuilding of society that comes from dissident groups, encourage the wider church to pray without ceasing for those who remain afraid and anxious because of the divisions in this society and to work for peace in every way possible.

16. That the General Assembly affirm the talent with which God has gifted members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and that this talent remains despite our economic difficulties, enabling them to continue to joyfully and willingly serve God.

17. That the General Assembly commend the Church and Society Committee on its determination to stimulate meaningful responses by the Church to the broad and deep economic issues being faced across the island.

18. That the General Assembly note the consultation responses made by the Church and Society Committee during the past year.

19. That the General Assembly adopt the position paper, 'Building good relationships: our hope for a more reconciled society' and ask that a version prepared for congregational use be provided and circulated as a cost to the Incidental Fund.

20. That the General Assembly encourage the Church and Society Committee, together with the Social Witness Board, in its work on Prisons.

Global Concerns

21. That the General Assembly note the Environment Panel is considering the possibility of initiating an “Environment Sunday”.

22. That the General Assembly encourage the Race Relations Panel as it resources the strategic mission of the Church with immigrants and minority ethnic people.

23. That the General Assembly approve the following grants from the Incidental Fund:

Vuleka Trust (South Africa)	£750
Diakonia Council of Churches (South Africa)	£750
Emrace (NI)	£5,000
Churches Asylum Network (ROI)	£500

24. That the General Assembly encourage the on-going discussions of the Global Concerns Committee on Abrahamic faith relations.

Panel Reports

25. That the General Assembly instruct the General Board to appoint a new Panel on Building Good Relations, with the remit outlined in the Future of Peacemaking Report.

26. That the General Assembly note the work of the Panel to review Board and Committee Structures.

27. That the General Assembly note the work of the Panel to review the Presbytery Consultation process and authorise the General Board to approve for trial any new Consultation process.

General

28. That the General Assembly approve the following budgets from the Incidental Fund:

General work of the Board	£6,000
Church and Mutual Society	£2,000
Building Good Relations	£8,000
Environmental Issues	£2,000
Pastoral Care of Manse Families	£2,000

29. 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 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 25 of the Code an additional sub-paragraph (3) be added:

(3) Remunerated employees of the congregation may be members of the Kirk Session but shall not sit and deliberate with the Session when matters affecting their employment, and that of other remunerated employees, are under discussion.

Anent Par 48 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 48 of the Code an additional sub-paragraph (5) be added:

(5) Remunerated employees of the congregation may be members of the Committee but shall not sit and deliberate with the Committee when matters affecting their employment, and that of other remunerated employees, are under discussion.

Anent Par 33 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 33 of the Code the following sub-paragraph (3) be added: "A ruling elder who has reached the age of 65, or is in special circumstances, may retire from their duties in a congregation with the consent of the Presbytery, who may if it so wishes, in consultation with the Kirk Session, deem the elder to be an 'elder-emeritus' of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland." and subsequent sub-paragraphs re-numbered.

DJ WATTS

Anent Par 81 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 81 of the Code the following sub-paragraph (6) be added:

Par 81(6) The minister emeritus of a congregation shall not exercise any pastoral role or conduct any services in connection with the congregation without the specific prior permission of the minister of the congregation, or in a vacancy, the convener of the Vacancy Commission.

JW LOCKINGTON

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

1. At the time of writing the Judicial Commission had met five times during the year. Often these meetings are long and demanding, with crucial decisions to be made. Thanks are expressed to all the members and especially the Chairman, Mr Mervyn Morrow QC and Assembly's Solicitor, Mr Alastair Rankin, who give invaluable advice.

2. The Judicial Commission has noted the reports of the two Panels on Church Courts and Judicial Appeals. The officers of the Commission are always available to clarify and explain its findings or decisions.

REFERENCE

3. The Ahorey Commission of the Armagh Presbytery referred a number of matters arising out of the previous Appeal to the Judicial Commission for investigation and determination. Advice was also sought on the matter of the Presbytery Clerkship. In accepting the reference the Judicial Commission noted that its concern would be to look towards the future on-going ministry in both Ahorey and Clare.

4. On the matter of the Clerkship, the Commission noted that The Code, Par 64(1) and Par 65(2), makes clear that the Clerk of Presbytery shall be chosen and appointed by the Presbytery. The Judicial Commission advised that these paragraphs should be followed. The determination of the reference will be reported at the Private Session of the Assembly.

APPEAL (BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY)

5. An Appeal against a decision of the Ballymena Presbytery with regard to the leadership of the Junior Christian Endeavour in Cairnalbana Congregation was brought by the Junior CE Leaders. The Finding of the Judicial Commission will be reported at the Private Session of the Assembly.

APPEALS (DOWN PRESBYTERY)

6. The Down Presbytery transmitted two Appeals against a decision of the Kirk Session of Killinchy Congregation, based on a recommendation in a Finding of a Presbytery Commission. The first was from fourteen members of the Kirk Session, the second from the former BB Captain.

7. In the former case, while the Appeal has been competently notified under The Code, Par 163, it is also possible under The Code, Par 145, for members of a Court to alter or rescind any existing decision of the Court. The Judicial Commission is very reluctant to hear any Appeal until other provisions of The Code have been fully explored.

8. In the second case, while an Appeal against a Kirk Session would normally be heard by Presbytery the Judicial Commission accepted that in the special circumstances of this case it would accept notice of the Appeal. However, it was reported that the appellant was considering action in the civil

Courts. It is established practice of the Commission not to hear any matter which is before a civil Court until that Court has dealt with it. The Appellant was asked to clarify the position.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev Dr S A MATTHEWS

Secretary: Rev Dr IAN HART

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report deals with the following:

- The continuing debate on the issues outlined in the document “Ministry Finance and Mission” which challenges PCI to think through how the limited number of ordained ministers and the finance available to support ordained ministry can best be used in Congregations to further the mission of the Church (pp 79-80)
- The working relationship between the Commission, BMI and the Board of Finance and Personnel (pp 80-81)
- A list of leaves to call a Minister granted (pp 81-82)
- Terms of linkages and amalgamations (pp 82-85)
- Work of Commission Committees: Reviews, Additional Pastoral Personnel, Expenses and Fees, Manses (pp 85-89)
- Guidelines for a Scheme for Part-Time Ministry (pp 90-93)

INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 2010 – February 2011.

MINISTRY, FINANCE AND MISSION

2. In 2009 The Commission set out to stimulate a Church-wide debate concerning the wise use of (a) the limited number of ordained Ministers and (b) the finance available from the Central Ministry Fund for the support of ordained ministry where that cannot be funded from local sources. After the 2009 Assembly the document “Ministry, Finance and Mission” which explored these issues was sent down to Presbyteries for discussion. After the 2010 Assembly a version of this document was sent down to Kirk Sessions so that the spiritual leaders in each Congregation might have an opportunity to reflect on this new situation in which PCI finds itself. A response to the document was not obligatory but 32 Kirk Sessions did respond and the Commission would acknowledge the serious way in which these matters were debated and the helpful comments which were made.

3. The responses clearly demonstrate that there is a growing awareness of the challenge the Church faces with regard not just to mission but also to ministry and finance. In that the Union Commission is made up of Elders and Ministers it is not surprising that the responses from Kirk Sessions also reflected the tension felt by Commission members when they meet delegations seeking Leave to Call. Not only by direction of the Assembly but also through the conviction and vision of its members, the Commission is committed to supporting and encouraging Congregations to develop their mission to the community around them no matter what the context. Clearly that means that in

some situations financial support for ordained ministry from the Central Ministry Fund must be provided. Isolated Presbyterian communities in any part of Ireland where there may be an absence of an alternative Reformed witness in the immediate area are a matter of particular concern.

4. However the Commission also has to take seriously the strong feeling throughout the Church about the need to address the issue of assessments. The amount of augmentation or support for ordained ministry being paid from CMF is directly related to the level of one of the assessments applied to the finances of every Congregation. The Commission has to ensure that the time and energies of our limited number of ordained Ministers are fully used. As one Session put it: "It is a waste of a Minister's talents to serve such a small number of families that he or she is not fully occupied". Decisions made should not be seen as a negative comment on past ministries where responsibility for a smaller number of families was acceptable and where very faithful service was given.

5. God has now brought us to a different place and in some situations there has to be openness to a reconfiguration of ministry rather than simply trying at all costs to maintain the former pattern of ministry. There rightly is a concern that all Congregations coming to the Commission should be treated fairly. As one Kirk Session responded: "Whatever principles are applied it would be important that they are consistently applied". Sessions rightly pointed to key questions at the heart of the debate: "What is a reasonable number of families for one Minister to serve?" "What constitutes a strategically significant missional situation which merits financial support?" Sometimes the answers to those questions involve very difficult decisions. Given the wide variety of circumstances in which different Congregations exercise their ministry the Commission has to balance all kinds of factors; it cannot do its work in a standardized or formulaic way.

6. The Commission believes that this is one of the particular tasks delegated to it by the Assembly, namely to apply one consistent policy to the allocation of ordained ministry and the allocation of augmentation from the CMF throughout the Church. The Commission endeavours to do this in a way which will not only be visionary but which will also have the support of the broad membership of the Church. In rendering this service, Union Commission members come each month to Commission meetings as representatives of their Presbyteries, they read the documents produced by each Congregation, they listen to the case presented by each delegation, they prayerfully consider the matter and then they decide, sometimes by majority vote, acting on behalf of the General Assembly. The Commission would echo the words of one Kirk Session. "We recognise that the Union Commission is in a difficult and often unenviable position and we trust that God will guide all of us to the right outcomes as we seek, as a denomination to be good stewards of the personnel and financial resources that he has put at our disposal".

CO-OPERATION WITH BOARDS OF THE CHURCH

1. The phrase, "Ministry, Finance and Mission" points up the fact that the Commission has a close working relationship with several Boards of the Church.

2. **Ministry:** In trying to create solutions for situations where leave to call a full-time ordained Minister is not appropriate, the Commission has become aware of the need to explore other forms of ministry. Members of the Commission have served on the Ministries Panel which has produced proposals concerning Part-Time Ministry, and Auxiliary Ministry. These schemes were adopted by the General Assembly in 2010. This year the Commission agreed “Guidelines for the implementation of the Scheme for Part-Time Ministry”, which are published as an appendix to this report.

3. **Finance:** A representative of the Central Ministry Fund sits on the Commission and the Commission is conscious that its decisions have implications for that Fund. Representatives of the Commission serve on the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel and the Commission this year provided the Panel with a response indicating the potential impact of the proposed new scheme for the remuneration of Ministers would have on the process of granting leave to call if approved by the Assembly. There have been consultations with representatives of the Board of Finance and Personnel concerning a number of Congregations now defaulting on quarterly assessment and stipend payments. There has been reflection on possible changes to the Code which might be brought to the Assembly for decision to address this difficult issue.

4. **Mission:** The Commission benefits from the presence amongst its membership of representatives from the Board of Mission in Ireland. Those representatives have opportunity to bring their particular insights to all the meetings at which Leave to Call is considered. The Board also has particular responsibilities for one group of Congregations in the General Assembly – the Home Mission Congregations. The Commission sees its work as bringing together the priorities of these different Boards, sometimes balancing different emphases and applying them in a practical way in the lives of different Congregations.

LEAVE TO CALL A MINISTER

Note: This is only a summary; there may well be conditions attached to the Leave to Call which are not recorded here (e.g. Reviewable Tenure, Restricted List, additional income for the Minister). Expenses are “Initial Ministerial Expenses” and are to be kept under review and paid in accordance with the procedures agreed by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

Congregation	Stipend		Expenses
Cooke Centenary	£28,000	[2010]	£6,600
Ebrington	£32,000	[2010]	£7,200
West Kirk	£26,000	[2010]	£6,600
Dunmurry	£26,000	[2010]	£6,500
2nd Dromara	£22,417	[2010]	£7,000
Albany	£3,825	[2010]	£1,088
Brigh	£11,475	[2010]	£3,262
and 1st Stewartstown	£10,200	[2010]	£2,900
Harryville	£32,000	[2010]	£7,200
Alexandra	£27,000	[2010]	£7,000
Immanuel	£30,000	[2010]	£7,200

St James's, Ballymoney	£35,000	[2010]	£7,505
Waringstown	£37,000	[2010]	£7,500
Clogherney	£16,800	[2010]	£4,500
and Sixmilecross	£11,200	[2010]	£3,000
Ballycastle	£20,000	[2010]	£5,200
and Croaghmore	£5,600	[2010]	£2,250
Letterkenny	€32,500	[2011]	€7,375
and Trenta	€8,000	[2011]	€4,000
Garryduff	£19,000	[2011]	£5,000
and Dunloy	£9,000	[2011]	£2,500

LEAVE TO CALL AN ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Wellington	AMM	£3,500
1st Portadown	AMM	£3,000
1st Comber	AMM	£4,000
Mourne	£25,000	£7,200

(Note: AMM = Appropriate Ministerial Minimum)

STATED SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS

During the past year the Commission, in co-operation with the appropriate Presbytery, has nominated a Minister as the Stated Supply in 1st Castleblayney, Frankford and Corvally; and Crumlin. Also, a number of previous nominations were extended for a further period.

CONGREGATIONS LINKED

Clogherney and Sixmilecross

The Union Commission linked these Congregations on the following terms:

1. That the Congregations of Clogherney and Sixmilecross be linked as from the date when Leave to Call is granted by the Union Commission.
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. There shall be stated services each Sunday as follows: Sixmilecross at 10.30 am and Clogherney at 12 noon or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends (2010) be: Clogherney £16,800 and Sixmilecross £11,200; and initial ministerial expenses: Clogherney £4,500 and Sixmilecross £3,000.
7. That Holiday Supplies, and other shared expenses not included in 6. be borne in the proportions 60% Clogherney and 40% Sixmilecross.
8. The cost and ownership of a new manse shall be shared in the proportions 50% Clogherney and 50% Sixmilecross.

9. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of the manse (or residence for the Minister) be borne in the proportions 50% Clogherney and 50% Sixmilecross.

10. That the Minister shall reside in rented accommodation until a permanent manse is provided.

11. That the directions of the Union Commission be observed in respect of the manse and manse property.

12. With regard to sale of the manses: That the Congregations agree in principle to the proposal as outlined in the correspondence between the landlord and the Education Board of the Omagh Presbytery to place both properties on the market and the net proceeds to be split equally between the Personal Representatives of the Late CNM Rountree and the Education Board of the Omagh Presbytery.

CONGREGATIONS AMALGAMATED

Ravenhill and 1st Ballymacarrett

The 2010 General Assembly amalgamated these Congregations; the Union Commission set the following terms:

1. That the Congregation of First Ballymacarrett be amalgamated with the Congregation of Ravenhill from 31 October 2010, or some other suitable date agreed by Presbytery under the name Ravenhill.

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

3. The assets to be dispersed are defined as First Ballymacarrett Church building and surrounding grounds, First Ballymacarrett manse, any other property owned by First Ballymacarrett Congregation and any investments and bank accounts in the name of First Ballymacarrett Congregation.

4. Dispersal of assets:

10% Presbytery's continuing expenses

(any surplus to be transferred to BMI)

5% Board of Mission in Ireland

35% amalgamated Congregation

(25% without stipulations + 10% "for additional pastoral support for as long as the Kirk Session deems it necessary")

50% Presbytery Mission Fund in BMI

(25% without stipulations + 25% "for work with Youth and/or families in the Ballymacarrett/Ravenhill area")

5. That all future assets including legacies and bequests subsequent to the amalgamation become the property of the amalgamated Congregation.

6. That the amalgamated Congregation will remain responsible for any First Ballymacarrett liabilities following dispersal of the assets.

7. If any of the assets referred to in clause 3 are not in place for dispersal prior to the amalgamation, on the date of the amalgamation those assets will be transferred to the ownership of the Presbytery, who will be responsible for any liabilities up to the point at which the dispersal of assets in 4 is complete. The

Amalgamation Commission, appointed by Presbytery, will then become responsible both for the sale of such assets and the subsequent distribution, following the proportions in clause 4.

8. That the Stipend and initial ministerial expenses of the new amalgamated Congregation will be set by the Union Commission.

2nd Derry (Strand and Buncrana) and Carlisle Road

The 2010 General Assembly amalgamated these Congregations; the Union Commission set the following terms:

1. That Second Derry (Strand and Buncrana) Congregation be amalgamated with Carlisle Road Congregation from 11th October 2010, or other suitable date as agreed by the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal, under the name Carlisle Road.

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

3. (a) That the assets to be dispersed as a consequence of the amalgamation are estimated to be:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| (i) PMS – held by Second Derry | £48,400 |
| (ii) PMS – held by Presbytery Education Board | £23,943 |
| (iii) War Stock (Second Derry) | £4,394 |
| (iv) Presbytery Education Board Investments | £2,863 |
| (v) PMS – Buncrana Trust | £89,000 |
| (vi) War Stock (Buncrana) | £1,600 |
| (vii) Manse – 24 Bridgewater, Caw, Londonderry - holding trustees being the Education Board of Presbytery | |
| (viii) Congregational Property at Strand Road - School Hall, Church and Church Hall on 999 year lease from the Honourable the Irish Society, with a reversionary clause - holding trustees being the Education Board of Presbytery. | |

(b) All the above assets to be transferred to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and to be managed by the Education Board of the Presbytery from the earlier date of either (i) the discontinuance of services of worship in the Church building at Strand Road from the 11 October 2010 or (ii) the amalgamation. When the market conditions are favourable the manse at (vii) is to be sold and the net proceeds added to the other investments, (i) – (vi), until such time as they can be dispersed, after the Central Ministry Fund is reimbursed for the deferred assessments in 2010, as follows:

- (i) 25% to the amalgamated Congregation formed at 1. above
- (ii) 5% to the Board of Mission in Ireland (BMI) as a direct contribution
- (iii) 10% to fund mission approved by the Kirk Session of Fahan Congregation in the enlarged parish area of Fahan, Inch and Buncrana; monies to be held and managed by Fahan Congregational Committee

- (iv) 10% to fund mission approved by the Kirk Session of Burt Congregation; monies to be held and managed by Burt Congregational Committee
 - (v) 25% to be transferred to a special account in the name of Derry and Donegal Presbytery Mission Support Fund (or its successors) to support mission under the direct supervision and management of the Presbytery, especially in the Strand Road, University and Business Districts of Londonderry. This fund to be managed by the Education Board of the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal.
 - (vi) 25% to be held by the Presbytery for continuing expenses (e.g. insurance, maintenance, legal and advertising fees) – any surplus on completion of the transfer/disposal of assets to be transferred to the amalgamated Congregation.
 - (vii) That the future use of the property at Strand Road be explored by the holding trustees, the Education Board of the Presbytery, in consultation with the Honourable the Irish Society.
4. All other accounts in the name of Second Derry (Strand and Buncrana) or associated organisations are to be closed and proceeds transferred to the amalgamated Congregation.
5. That all future assets including legacies and bequests subsequent to the amalgamation become the property of the amalgamated Congregation.
6. That the amalgamated Congregation will remain responsible for any liabilities following dispersal of the assets.
7. That the stipend and initial expenses of the new Congregation be the present stipend and expenses of Carlisle Road with no increase (apart from the Tyrone Memorial increase) until a review by the Union Commission of the 2012 Stipend and Expenses. Arrangements in the Union with Crossroads remain unchanged.

REVIEWS COMMITTEE

The Rev Dr Michael Barry reports:

The Reviews Committee of the Union Commission is tasked with examining the stipends of Congregations after each seven years of ministry (Code 236(2)). Also included are retrospective reviews of Congregations, and Congregations which request a review.

8. 7 Year Reviews:

Congregation	Stipend
Sinclair Seamens's	No Change
Irvinestown	No Change
Pettigo	No Change
Tempo	£3,600
Downshire Road	£24,600
Crumlin Road	No Change

Congregation	Stipend
Kirkpatrick	No Change
Duneane	£11,208
First Randalstown	No Change
First Ahoghill	£32,004
Grange	No Change
Dunboe Second	No Change
Ringsend	No Change
First Larne	No Change
Killymurriss	No Change
Drumreagh	No Change
Dromore	No Change
Ryans	No Change
Brookvale	No Change
First Donegore	£24,600
Portavogie	No Change

9. 14 year review:

Second Broughshane	£32,004
Newmills	No Change
Hydepark	No Change
Lylehill	No Change
Garryduff	Vacant
Dunloy	Vacant
Kilbride	£32,400
Carryduff	£33,000

10. On-going Reviews:

Bessbrook	No Change
Carnalbana	No Change
Glenarm	No Change
Tobermore	No Change
Draperstown	£4,200
Castlereagh	No Change

11. Reviewed under new legislation:

Ballycrochan	No Change
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Congregation	Stipend
Ballygilbert	No Change
Ballywalter	No Change
Shore Street	£33,600
Helen's Bay	No Change
Millisle	No Change
Ahorey	No Change
Clare	No Change
First Armagh	No Change
Richhill	No Change
First Broughshane	No Change
Cloughwater	No Change
Harryville	No Change
First Portglenone	No Change
Abbey	£28,008
Abbots Cross	No Change
Ballysillan	No Change
Eglinton	£26,400
Woodvale	No Change
Gt. Victoria Street	No Change
Newtownbreda	No Change
Saintfield Road	£30,600
Windsor	No Change
Orangefield	£34,248
St Andrews Belfast	No Change
Ballycarry	No Change
Ballyclare	£34,200
Loughmourne	No Change
Woodburn	No Change
First Dunboe	No Change
Main St Garvagh	No Change
Killaig	No Change
New Row	No Change
Kilfennan	No Change
Magheramason	No Change
First Ballynahinch	No Change

Congregation	Stipend
First Dromara	No Change
Railway St	No Change
Sloan St	No Change
Newcastle	No Change
Annalong	No Change
Tyrone's Ditches	No Change
First Newry	No Change
Kingsmills	No Change
First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass	No Change
Trinity Ballymoney	£33,240
Second Donegore	No Change
Lucan	No Change

ADDITIONAL PASTORAL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Rev Peter Gamble reports:

1. The past year has seen approval given for the creation of 16 new posts and the extension of two others in a variety of roles. Some Congregations have availed of the Irish Mission Fund to support their applications.

2. Failure to follow the Union Commission Guidelines issued in 2008 remains a problem. This often leads to unnecessary delays in approval for posts. The Union Commission has adopted new Request Forms. All future requests for the creation of new APP posts, or the extension of existing posts, will require the completion of the appropriate form. These have been designed to help Congregations and Presbyteries to provide the documentation and approvals necessary in accordance with the Guidelines.

3. New Guidelines are being drawn up to help Congregations and Presbyteries in the process of employment of Additional Pastoral Personnel. When used in conjunction with the Peninsula Business Services website the creation or extension of APP posts should be more straightforward.

4. Each year a number of Ministers make requests to undertake part-time work outside their normal pastoral responsibilities. The Union Commission has defined extra-parochial work as: "Remunerated work outside of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland undertaken by a Parish Minister that amounts to more than six hours in any week." Approval for paid work in excess of six hours in any week will be required for every occasion that this will happen. Since all Ministers are under the authority of their Presbytery, it will be the responsibility of Presbyteries to inform the Union Commission of any such occurrences.

EXPENSES AND FEES SUB-COMMITTEE

The Rev Robert Bell reports:

Travel Expenses

1. The Commission, through its Expenses and Fees Sub-Committee, gives guidance to Congregational Committees about Travel Expenses. This is informed by information available from the motoring organisations, and based on an average of 14,400 business miles per year. For 2011, in the context of increases in motoring costs, the recommended figures were set as follows:

Northern Ireland: £6,000 Republic of Ireland: €9,100.

Ministers doing a higher mileage should be paid more, and those doing a lower mileage should be paid less.

Supply Fee

2. The level of the Supply Fee is determined by the Code, Par 238, and for 2011 this remains at £60 (€100) single, and £90 (€150) full.

Travelling expenses should be paid in accordance with the rate set for attendance at Assembly Boards, currently 14 p (22 cents) per mile.

MANSES COMMITTEE

Mr A J Giffen reports:

1. Decisions on manse issues are generally made by the Commission after the required permissions from other bodies have been obtained and assurances given that the appropriate guidelines have been observed.

2. Through its Manses Sub – Committee, the Commission dealt with a wide variety of manse issues of which the following are the most significant.

3. The Congregations of Ballygowan and Scrabo were both given permission to sell their existing manses, and either to purchase or build a suitable replacement.

4. The Congregation of Second Killyleagh was given permission to sell its existing manse.

5. The Commission re-affirmed that, in view of difficulties caused in the past by a lack of certainty among some vacant Congregations regarding the future of their manse, it should be understood that generally Leave to Call will be delayed until firm decisions on this matter have been agreed. However for the exceptional circumstances where there cannot be certainty about the manse in a vacancy – such as, for example, when a complete redevelopment or relocation of the entire Church property is being considered – the Commission approved and adopted a guidance policy.

6. Waringstown Congregation was given permission to proceed in accordance with this policy.

7. The Congregation of Saltersland was given permission to change the way in which rental income from the redundant manse is distributed.

8. In addition, the Manses Convener gave advice on a variety of other matters relating to manses or manse land.

9. Finally, the Commission would remind Presbyteries that in the case of a major building or refurbishment scheme involving a manse, even where there is not a vacancy in the Congregation concerned, it is strongly recommended that another Minister of Presbytery should chair all meetings relating to manse issues until the work is completed and the manse is ready for occupation.

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME FOR PART-TIME MINISTRY

The Commission agreed the following guidelines:

A. Introduction:

1. In June 2010 it was resolved, “That the General Assembly adopt the Scheme for Part-Time Ministry”, (2010 General Assembly Minutes p 71, res 35). The scheme referred to was included as Appendix 1 of the report of the Ministries Panel of the General Board, (2010 General Assembly Reports, pp 93-94), and is included in full as an Appendix of this report for ease of reference.

2. At the outset it should be clearly noted that, while there are lots of ways in which individuals can exercise a ministry which might be described as part-time in nature, e.g. Stated Supply or under Par 81(3) of the Code, the ‘Scheme for Part-Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament’ is the scheme as approved by the General Assembly in 2010. The following therefore apply:

- (a) The Union Commission has been authorised, after appropriate consultation, to declare a particular charge to be a “Part-Time charge” (Appendix 1, 2.1).
- (b) Such changes to the status of a charge can only be made at the time of a vacancy or of realignment (2.3).
- (c) The Union Commission has the responsibility of granting Leave to Call to such a charge (2.2).
- (d) Such charges are not open to licentiates but only to those “who are already ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament” (2.4).
- (e) Such charges are not open to those who have retired from the Ministry of PCI, in that a retired Minister is not eligible to be called to any vacant charge – once a pension has been taken a Minister cannot ‘un-retire’. However, a Minister could apply for a call to a Part-Time charge immediately prior to retirement, and indeed work in it until the age of 70 (the current compulsory retirement age for Ministers), not taking their pension until eventual retirement from that Part-Time charge.

B. Guidelines

1. In considering the creation of a Part-Time charge, the Union Commission shall consult with:

- The Presbytery concerned;
- The Congregation, or Congregations concerned;

- Any other appropriate bodies e.g. the Board of Mission in Ireland in the case of Home Mission Congregations, Urban Mission Congregations or 'Church planting' type situations.

Such consideration may be initiated either by the Presbytery or by the Union Commission.

2. After the conclusion of consultations, the Union Commission, in situations where it is clearly deemed appropriate, may declare a Congregation, or a linkage, to be a Part-Time charge. In doing so the Commission should specify the following:

- The proportion of appropriate Ministerial Minimum which would be paid to the Minister;
- The amount of pastoral and other work to be carried out;
- Any other necessary matters e.g. clarity regarding occupancy of the manse, holidays, other supplies etc. Particular attention needs to be given to envisaged arrangements for emergency cover outside the part-time hours period and the Presbytery will be required to ensure that the detail of this is fully understood and agreed prior to any eventual call being sustained.

3. The Congregation, or linkage, should then follow the normal vacancy procedures i.e. filling in vacancy forms, under the supervision of the Presbytery Commission, and seeking Leave to Call from the Union Commission. Where representatives of a charge have already appeared before the Commission, and Part-Time Ministry subsequently emerges from the ensuing consultations as the best way forward in the situation, then Leave to Call may be issued by the Commission if the details have been communicated to the representatives and they have been given opportunity to comment before a final decision is made by the Commission.

4. The Union Commission may grant Leave to Call for Part-Time Ministry as either 'reviewable tenure' or 'unrestricted', though it is envisaged that the former will be the norm. Terms will be set, as with a normal Leave to Call, taking account of all the details agreed when the charge was declared Part-Time.

5. Once a charge has been given leave to call for Part-Time Ministry, any qualified ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, who has not retired from the ministry, shall be eligible to apply for such a Part-Time charge. A Minister called to such a charge shall be a full member of the courts of the Church.

6. If a Congregation or linkage, which has obtained leave to call for Part-Time Ministry, but has not yet called a Minister, wishes to seek to have ministry delivered in another way e.g. by a Stated Supply or by a temporary assistant under Par 81(3) of the Code, the Congregation shall first apply to the Union Commission for withdrawal of the Leave to Call a Part-Time Minister before progressing any such arrangement.

Notes:

(a) Financial

- Both a Minister in a Part-Time charge and the Congregation(s) will pay the usual percentage of stipend as a contribution to

pension. The anticipated level of pension will obviously reflect the fact that only a part time salary will be paid. All other assessments will be paid as normal by the Congregation i.e. currently based on the level of stipend paid.

- A Part-Time Minister will only have the right to claim augmentation, or incremental grant, to bring his/her stipend up to the proportion of appropriate Ministerial Minimum set for the charge in which they serve.

(b) Extra parochial work

- It is recognised that a Part-Time Minister may be involved in part-time extra parochial work to supplement his/her income. This employment would require the approval of the Union Commission, through the Additional Appointments Committee, following normal procedures. The Additional Appointments Committee will consider the nature of the work and the time commitment involved. While common sense will prevail, clearly some types of employment would not be appropriate for a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
- Where information about the extra parochial work is available before the Call is issued this permission must be obtained before the Presbytery proceeds to issue the call.
- Acceptance of a call involves acceptance of the authority of the Union Commission to determine these matters, including the right to decline to authorise particular types of employment.

APPENDIX 1

Towards a Scheme for Part Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in PCI

1. Introduction

1.1 Over the past number of years it has become apparent that PCI needs to have more flexibility in its use of Ministerial resources. One such change that could prove helpful would be to permit the Union Commission to give leave to call for 'part-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament' to a charge where that was the most appropriate way to proceed.

1.2 While it is not envisaged that a large number of such positions would be created, such posts could be attractive to a number of Ministers and may prove a useful option for Presbyteries and the Union Commission to have available for specific situations. Such a part-time Congregational ministry could also be linked to a part-time non-parish ministry.

2. The Basic Scheme

2.1 After consultation, with the Presbytery concerned and other relevant bodies, the Union Commission, in situations where it is clearly deemed appropriate, should be authorised to create a position which is deemed to be a 'part-time charge'.

2.2 The Union Commission in granting 'leave to call' to such positions should both set the stipend at a suitable proportion of appropriate Ministerial Minimum and also specify the hours to be worked etc.

2.3 No current full-time position would be permitted to 'evolve' into a part-time position during a ministry. Such changes to the status of a charge can only be made at the time of a vacancy or realignment.

2.4 It should be clearly understood that any provision of posts in PCI which were deemed to be part-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament would be open only to those who *are already ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament*.

2.5 The Union Commission should exercise due care in creating such positions, taking into account not only the local need, but the use of ministry personnel throughout PCI.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES — 2011**

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

<i>Church</i>	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 2011 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Movilla	2001	236 (176)	264	70,588	132,605
New Mossley	2005	110 (85)	127	28,435	102,642
Ballysally	2007	159 (65)	97	38,666	82,806

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 2011

<i>Church</i>	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Spec. Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	<i>Total £</i>
Taughmonagh	—	13,435	4,031 (30%)	2,015 (15%)	1,343 (10%)	806 (6%)	8,195 (61%)

LICENTIATES — 2011

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £16,812 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, 2011

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Whiteabbey	* PA Bovill	30.05.10	36,137 (30%)	11,342	6,472
Stormont	* J Boyd	15.05.10	40,974 (30%)	12,793	5,021
Kilfennan	† J Cowan	20.06.10	31,526 (s/a)	9,809	13,871
Bangor - West	* P Douglas	20.06.10	39,000 (30%)	12,201	5,613
Ballygowan	† DTR Edwards	25.06.10	36,750 (30%)	11,376	6,138
Abbots Cross	* WI Ferris	27.06.10	29,452 (30%)	9,337	8,477
Harmony Hill	* HM Freeburn	06.06.10	35,840 (30%)	11,253	6,561
High Kirk	† RH Houston	06.06.10	36,484 (30%)	12,249	5,265
Second Comber	* GJ Maclean	06.06.10	41,100 (30%)	12,831	4,983
Carrickfergus - First	* G McConville	20.06.10	39,948 (30%)	12,485	5,329
Kirkpatrick Memorial	† WDS McCullagh	27.06.10	35,000 (25%)	9,101	8,413
First Newtownards	* DC Millar	06.06.10	31,170 (30%)	9,852	7,962
Cunningham Memorial	* NG Mulholland	13.06.10	37,822 (30%)	11,848	5,966
Newtownbreda	† PJ Nelson	27.06.10	34,270 (30%)	10,632	6,882
Legacurry	* M Proctor	13.06.10	34,072 (30%)	10,723	7,091
Ballyclare	* NL Smyth	20.06.10	34,200 (30%)	10,761	7,053
Kilbride	* JA Spence	13.06.10	32,400 (30%)	10,221	7,593
Ballywillan	* JP Stanbridge	06.06.10	33,201 (30%)	10,461	7,353

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

s/a Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 2011

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Licentiates are paid 80% of the ministerial minimum = £17,932.80 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, 2011

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend £</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>
McQuiston Mem (to 7/4)	* NRA Cooper	05.06.09	32,000 (32%)	2,891	2,206
Hill Street, Lurgan	* A Faulkner	05.06.09	35,676 (27%)	10,134	8,801
Rathcoole	† SWK Glendinning	21.06.09	25,703 (s/a)	0	18,635
Hamilton Road	* MWJ McKeown	07.06.09	41,520 (32%)	13,787	5,148
West Church, Ballymena	* RM Moody	21.06.09	39,900 (32%)	13,269	5,666
Ballygilbert	* I Steen	01.06.09	33,481 (s/a)	6,600	12,335
Fisherwick	* + K Viner	21.06.09	38,999 (32%)	2,163	2,856
First Comber	† L Wilson	31.05.09	32,807 (32%)	10,849	7,786
The Mall, Armagh	* MB Wilson	26.06.09	34,280 (27%)	9,757	9,178

* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

No House Allowance — House provided by congregation

s/a Special Arrangement

+ On maternity leave — no charge to the Congregation during the leave period

LICENTIATES — 2011

Licentiates are paid 85% of the ministerial minimum = £19,053.60 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, 2011

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend £</i>	<i>Congregations Contribution £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>
Glengormley	* TJ Bruce	08.06.08	34,475 (32%)	11,533	8,523
Ballymena - First	* WE Chestnutt	22.06.08	36,000 (32%)	12,021	8,035
Newtownards – Regent St	† G Fowles	13.06.08	36,157 (32%)	11,921	7,835
First Larne	*// LM Keys	22.06.08	36,484 (32%)		
Mourne (to 26/3)	# AD Mullan	25.05.08	43,510 (32%)	3,312	1,221

* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

s/a Special Arrangement

No House Allowance - House provided by Congregation

// On Sick Leave

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 2011

From 1st January, 2011

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</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> £
Newcastle	B Reid	20.10.06	33,459	95	22,295		22,295	10,707	11,588
Finaghy, Lowe Mem	BC Bower	01.10.00	35,885	90	20,174		20,174	9,689	10,485
Ballysillan	D Clawson	09.05.10	26,566	100	22,416	1,002	23,118	2,000	21,118

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS 2011

<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>		
		£	£	£	£
BJ Walker	Knock	25,000.00	25,000.00	n/a	1,727.00
DW Leach	Hamilton Road	22,416.00	22,416.00	2,000.00	325.00
DM Spratt	First Bangor	22,416.00	22,416.00	1,000.00	325.00
AJ Dunlop	First Portadown	22,416.00	22,416.00	1,000.00	325.00
AD Mullan (from 27/3)	Mourne	19,092.47	19,092.47	n/a	1,318.91

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That CMF be authorized to pay inadequate expenses grants towards expenses incurred by Ministers, up to a limit of NI £6,000 or RI €9,100, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70 General Assembly Minutes, 1988.
3. That the Union Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with par 128 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 57 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 57 of the Code be deleted and the following paragraph substituted in its place:

57(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (3) below, it shall be the duty of congregational trustees to carry out the lawful directions given to them on behalf of the congregation by the Congregational Committee and, in giving such directions and in administering the property of the congregation, the Committee shall be bound by the subsequent provisions of this paragraph.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3) below, transactions creating, transferring or affecting any estate or interest in congregational property shall not be entered into without the authorisation of the congregation and the sanction of the Presbytery being first obtained; save that the Kirk Session may, subject to this Code and to rules, authorise what meetings shall be held in or on congregational property.

(3) When deciding upon the terms of any amalgamation or dissolution the Union Commission shall have power to determine the future ownership or dispersal of property and assets belonging to both or either congregation and congregational trustees shall carry out such directions given to them on behalf of the Commission.

(4) All leases, declarations of trust or other assurances relating to the acquisition, disposal or use of congregational property shall before being executed be submitted to the Presbytery and shall not be executed without the prior approval of the Presbytery. It shall be the responsibility of the minister and the representative elder to ensure that this submission is made.

(5) The site and plans of all new buildings proposed to be erected on congregational property and of all proposed demolition, structural alterations of or structural additions to existing buildings thereon (including all proposals and designs for memorials, windows, artificial lighting and for seating and furnishings requisite for public worship) shall be submitted for the approval of the Committee on Church Architecture and of the Presbytery and, without such approval, and without the approval of the congregation, no such erection or alteration shall be undertaken or made.

(6) In all situations where augmentation or incremental grant is being paid to the minister of a congregation the Presbytery shall consult with the Union Commission and obtain the Commission's consent before authorising any project under section (5) above.

(7) Notice of the convening of a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of giving an approval required under sub-paragraphs (2) or (5) or paragraph 46(f) shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

Anent Par 106(g) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 106(g) of the Code the word “unite” be deleted and the word “link” substituted in its place, and that the word “unions” be deleted and the word “linkages” substituted in its place.

Anent Pars 128(3), 128(5)(d) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Pars 128(3), 128(5)(d) of the Code the word “united” be deleted and the word “linked” substituted in its place.

Anent Par 128(5)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128(5)(a) of the Code the word “union” be deleted and the word “linkage” substituted in its place, and that the word “unions” be deleted and the word “linkages” substituted in its place.

Anent Par 128(6)(b) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128(6)(b) of the Code the word “union” be deleted and the word “linkage” substituted in its place.

BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS

Convener: Rev SJ HANNA

Secretary: Rev WS MARRS

‘Serving a mission-hearted Church’

1. The General Assembly’s Board of Mission Overseas (BMO) upholds a vision *“to serve a mission-hearted Church, in step with the God of mission, reawakened to the missionary nature of God’s Word, placing mission at the heart of all it is and all it does, from the end of the pew to the ends of the earth.”* (Overseas Board Report to the General Assembly 2005, p142). The Board is committed to proclaiming Christ and his universal reign and to upholding values of being God-centred, people-focused, Church-based and forward-thinking.

2. As BMO seeks to mobilise the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) to this end, the Board’s Mission Review 2005 identified four areas of priority namely: Mission Engagement; Outreach Initiatives; Leadership Development; and Compassionate Ministries. These continue to provide clear foci for the ongoing work of BMO’s four Assembly Committees, which in turn are served by the Steering Committee operating as the Business Committee of the Board.

Steering Committee (SC)

Para 3 to 34

Main Issues: Edinburgh 1910 centenary conferences; Review of activities; Staffing; Partner Church visits and visitors; Mission personnel; Finance.

Outreach Ministries Committee (OMC)

Para 35 to 47

Main Issues: Sustainable development.

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Para 48 to 53

Main Issues: Evolving leadership development practice; Leaders in training.

World Development Committee (WDC)

Para 54 to 60

Main Issues: World Development Appeal; Moderator-supported special appeals.

Mission Involvement Committee (MIC)

Para 61 to 77

Main Issues: Resources, training and teams.

Steering Committee (SC)

3. **Edinburgh 1910 Centenary Conferences:** In the past year there have been four major international conferences to mark the centenary of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910, and many smaller local events as well. From 2-6 June, 2010 there was a centenary conference in Edinburgh itself, taking the theme of “Witnessing to Christ today”, and bringing

together a broad representation of Church traditions (www.edinburgh2010.org). The conference resulted in a 'Common Call' to mission that recognised the global nature of Christianity and the wide appreciation of the Edinburgh 1910 legacy across Churches and mission bodies. At Tokyo, 2010 two thousand global mission leaders and observers met from 11-14 May with the theme of "Making disciples of every people in our generation" (www.tokyo2010.org). From 16-25 October, 2010 the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation was held in Cape Town, South Africa, bringing together 4,000 Church and mission leaders from 198 countries, with the theme of "God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (www.lausanne.org). Finally in Boston, from 4-7 November there was a conference entitled, "The changing contours of world mission and Christianity". This targeted theological faculties and students from all over the world, seeking vision for mission in the 21st Century through summation and analysis of the three major conferences held earlier in the year (www.2010boston.org).

4. Of the above international conferences, PCI was represented at the Third Lausanne Congress, and also more locally at the Irish Council of Churches' Board of Overseas Affairs Study Day commemorating the Edinburgh 1910 centenary. This was held on 1 October, 2010 on the theme of "World on the Move – Migration and Mission", a subject that is very relevant for Ireland today.

5 BMO's membership of Global Connections enables it to keep up to date with new thinking and initiatives in world mission. The opportunity to work alongside other agencies and societies in the local context through the Mission Agencies Partnership (MAP) is valued. Further reflection on mission comes through membership of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS). All such forums and conferences have provided good opportunities to participate in discussion and be challenged on a broad range of mission related issues.

Review of activities

6 A day-conference was held on 15 January, 2011 in Wellington Presbyterian Church, Ballymena. This facilitated the fine-tuning of strategy in the light of key issues arising since BMO's previous review in 2005, including some highlighted by the Edinburgh 1910 centenary conferences, in particular the Third Lausanne Congress. There were 42 Board members in attendance, and uplifting worship led by Karen and David Campbell. The table-talk format proved conducive to fruitful discussion and fellowship, and a detailed report was presented to the Board in March 2011. In summary, the conference sought to:

7. **Review vision:** Reflecting further on the role of BMO and of PCI Congregations it was highlighted that the Board is responsible for seeing and sharing the 'bigger picture' in overseas mission, rather like the 'brain to the body', or the 'heart-beat to the circulatory system'. The Board should provide a window to the Church in the world, yet ensuring that the voice and concerns of the world-Church are heard clearly in Ireland; it is responsible for establishing and maintaining standards in partnership arising from many years of experience in relating to Churches and agencies around the world; the challenge remains to mobilize the wider Church to think globally yet act locally; to release

Congregations in mission, yet resist congregationalism by encouraging co-ordination and unity. While on one level the Board needs to be versatile and multi-faceted in serving the Church in global engagement, it needs to refocus on what is its distinctive role, bearing in mind that sometimes 'less is more', and we should not be ashamed to say there are things we cannot and should not do. Watchwords as BMO moves forward might be, "*maintaining relationships, developing partnerships, open to initiatives.*"

8. **Revisit values:** In continuing to be *God-Centred*, the Day-Conference revisited the importance of mission engagement being not so much interventionist as incarnational. While there is little doubt that real mission is costly, are PCI members willing to pay the price? PCI is set in a risk-minimising culture, much affected by a compensation and claim mentality, discouraging the Church from sending mission personnel into a world where globalisation has created a diversity of new situations of risk. It was agreed that the Board should continue to seek those willing to serve long-term, ready to give a lifetime to overseas service.

9. In continuing to be *people-focused*, how should the Church better prepare its members for costly discipleship, to be 'cruciform' Christians? In terms of risk, the Board needs to do further work on a policy that is based on sound mission theology, good practice that informs and inspires those called to go, and is well communicated to the wider PCI family.

10. In re-examining its value of being *Church-based*, BMO affirms that global mission is the responsibility of the whole Church. In PCI an increasing number of initiatives are congregationally driven, with many working in partnership with other agencies and societies. BMO recognises the value of mission work undertaken by other agencies and societies, indeed increasingly shares with them in mission training and promotional events. The Board also seeks to encourage the recognition of PCI members serving with other agencies and societies and plans to look at the possibility of introducing a 'mission associate' scheme. Support for those in PCI who travel widely around the world, encountering the Church in the world, whilst on business should also be considered.

11. It could be argued that PCI members have been more comfortable with trans-continental Church to Church relationships, whilst overlooking the potential for mission both local and global through building relationships with multi-ethnic, diaspora and migrant-led Churches on its doorstep. BMO sees this area to be a meeting point for the work of BMO and the Board of Mission in Ireland (BMI), as it seeks to reach the 'world' as it has come to Ireland through migration.

12. Exploring and taking forward each of the above initiatives is part of what it means for BMO to be true to its value of being *forward-thinking*.

13. **Refocusing strategy:** The Day-Conference recognised the need for fine-tuning in each of the four areas of strategic focus previously identified: outreach initiatives; leadership development; mission engagement; compassionate ministries.

14. **Outreach Initiatives:** The Day-Conference was informed of statistics highlighted at the Lausanne Congress:

- Only 3% of Church resources globally are directed to mission amongst unreached people groups, yet surely they have a right to hear the gospel, and there is an issue here of ‘spiritual justice’.
- 64% of those who come to faith in Jesus Christ do so before the age of nineteen. What does this mean for our focus on mission amongst children and young people around the world?
- One third of the world’s spoken languages does not have one translated verse of Scripture, and as such are experiencing ‘Bible poverty’.
- 70% of the world’s population are oral learners, and need to hear and see the gospel demonstrated in their midst.

15. There is work here that only the Church can do, and this must be prioritised. OMC was encouraged to hand over work that is mature and complete, and consider how best to engage in the ‘new’ and ‘not yet’ in the world. There needs to be more intentionality in endeavouring to make disciples who come into fullness of life in Jesus Christ. It will mean a rediscovery and sharper focus, both for PCI members and not least the mission personnel we send out, on being disciples who are salt and light, the aroma of Christ, distinguishable from the world, and working to make disciples in the world.

16. **Leadership Development:** The Third Lausanne Congress called Church leaders around the world to lives of “humility, integrity and simplicity”. It is not so much “better methods” that are sought from leadership, but for them to be “cleaner vessels”, rejecting the seduction of power and renouncing material gain. For those who come as ‘Leaders in Training’ to study in Ireland from PCI’s partner Churches, there needs to be continuing adequate support in prayer, good links to local Congregations and training opportunities that go beyond the strictly academic.

17. **Mission Engagement:** There were a number of practical suggestions to be noted: involvement in “overseas mission has to be viewed as an essential part of discipleship and of congregational life, prayed about, preached about, and illustrated using the best of today’s technology”. The need to challenge and encourage children and young people is seen as a key area of focus for the Mission Involvement Committee (MIC).

18. **Compassionate Ministries:** The World Development Committee (WDC) plays a significant role in encouraging a good response from PCI to meet the needs of many in the world. However, to what extent has PCI devolved the necessary work of education and challenge on a wide range of development issues to our specialist agencies and partners, Tearfund and Christian Aid, or to what extent should this be the responsibility of the Board and WDC?

19. BMO will continue to explore the implications of the above findings from the Day-Conference, not least through the appropriate Assembly Committees.

20. **Partner Church Visits and Visitors:** The following overseas visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by partner Churches and mission organisations, and to offer pastoral support and encouragement to BMO missionary personnel:

- Gordon Campbell to the Baltic Reformed Theological College, presenting lectures in Vilnius, Lithuania, 11-17 September, 2010;

- Norman and Evelyn Hamilton, and their daughter, Julie, on a Moderator's visit to South Africa and Malawi, 21 August to 17 September, 2010.;
- Uel Marrs to the annual meeting of CCAP Zambia Synod, Lusaka, Zambia and to Mseleni Hospital, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, 20 - 28 August 2010;
- Uel Marrs and Helen Johnston to attend the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation, Cape Town, South Africa, 15-26 October, 2010;
- Cheryl Meban and Marie Kane to Faculté Jean Calvin (FLTR), Aix-en- Provence, France, 2-5 November. 2010;
- Gordon Campbell, Deborah Ford, and Isobel McAuley to Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología (SEUT – United Evangelical School of Theology), Madrid, Spain, 26-30 October, 2010;
- Phyllis Spence and Caroline Hawthorne to Gujarat, India, 14-22 November, 2010 to attend anniversary celebrations of the Women's Guild;
- Helen Johnston to Forman Christian College, Lahore, Pakistan, 23 January-1 February, 2011;
- Uel Marrs to PCEA International Mission Conference, Mombasa, Kenya, 30 January-13 February, 2011;
- Stephen Richmond to SAT7 Network Conference, Cyprus, 8-12 March, 2011;
- Gordon Campbell to Faculté Jean Calvin, France, May 2011;
- Uel Marrs to UMN General Assembly, May 2011;
- Helen Johnston to Portuguese Bible Institute's Mobile Bible School, Algarve, Portugal, May 2011;
- Pamela Forster to Hope II Conference, Budapest, Hungary, May 2011.

21. BMO was delighted to receive the following visitors from partner Churches and mission organisations:

- The Rev Alvis Sauka and Mr Artis Clemins from the Baltic Reformed Theological College, 14-20 August 2010;
- Mr Nicolas Mwakasulu from Malawi, 21-26 August 2010;
- Miss Mphatso Nguluwe, Director of LISAP, from Malawi, 21 September-29 October 2010.

22. **Office Staff and volunteers:** BMO is once again very grateful to its full time staff, who, in handling a heavy workload, have carried out their work with great efficiency, enthusiasm, and adaptability given the move to temporary office accommodation in Fisherwick Buildings back in early September. In January 2011 Pamela Forster was appointed to the executive staff team as Overseas Mission Training Officer, and at present that team is comprised of the Overseas Secretary, Overseas Mission Development Officer, Personnel Officer (Overseas) and Overseas Mission Training Officer. Over the past year they have been ably supported by an administrative staff team which has included a Senior Administrative Officer, three Senior Secretaries, and a Secretary. Two administrative vacancies were filled in 2010, in July Miss Pamela Hopper being

appointed as Senior Secretary (Mission Training and External Funding) and in October Miss Julie Ann Crowe appointed as Secretary. No additional funding was requested from the United Appeal Board in order to fill these posts. We also extend appreciation to those who, from time to time, help out in the office on a voluntary basis.

23. BMO conveys its deep appreciation to the **Rev Dr Mark Gray** who has served for the past seven years as Convener of the World Development Committee (2004-2011). Mark has had a longstanding involvement with the Board, serving initially as a missionary in Malawi, followed by many years of faithful service to the World Development Committee, and as a Board member. As WDC Convener, his 'hands on' approach and ability to be 'one step ahead' of the task at hand have enabled WDC to move forward effectively. Mark has kept his 'finger on the pulse' of a broad range of aid and development related issues, and the insights he has drawn from Scripture have never ceased to challenge and guide the Committee in its business. In expressing its gratitude, BMO prays God's richest blessing on Mark and his family.

24. BMO conveys its deep appreciation to the **Rev John Hanna** who has served for the past four years as Convener of the Board (2007-2011). It is almost thirty years since John and his wife Joan set out for missionary service in Singapore, and thereafter in Timor, Indonesia. From 2002-2006 John was Convener of the Asia Committee, and played a pivotal role in chairing the Board's Review Committee in 2004 and 2005. BMO are grateful also for the overseas visits that John and Joan made as faithful ambassadors of PCI to Malawi, Romania and Indonesia during the past four years. John's insight and wisdom have proved invaluable to the Board, and his distinctively prayerful approach to meetings meant they were invariably blessed with a very real sense of God's presence. The Office Staff are much indebted for John's pastoral support and friendship over the years, and for the way he and Joan have shown such warm hospitality as they opened their home to BMO meetings and events. The Board is also deeply appreciative for John's commitment to fulfil his role as Convener even when suffering ill-health in more recent years. In expressing its deep gratitude, BMO prays God's richest blessing on John, Joan and their family.

25. **Personnel:** BMO thank God for his faithfulness and provision for all BMO mission personnel who share their lives, gifts and skills in different nations and continents around the world – see Appendix A. The Board continues to strive to encourage and support them as they share the good news and learn from people of different languages and cultures.

26. On 16 January, 2011 the Rev Eddie and Mrs Mary Dorrans were commissioned by the Congregation of First Coleraine for missionary service in Kenya under BMO's Ignite Programme to work with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) on WHEAT's Bridge of Hope and Well Digging Programme.

27. At the Board meeting on 9 March, 2011 Calls were issued to Dr Lyn and Mr John Dowds to missionary service in Malawi under BMO's Integrate Programme. Lyn will be serving as a medical doctor at the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) David Gordon Memorial Hospital. Together with

their children Cody (6) and Suni (3), they plan to depart for Malawi in August 2011.

28. On 27 March, 2011 Mr Matthew (Matt) Williams was commissioned in Hamilton Road Congregation for missionary service in Malawi under BMO's Involve Programme to work with CCAP Livingstonia Synod as a lecturer at the College of Theology, CCAP University of Livingstonia.

29. **Appreciations** are recorded for Mervyn and Raing McCullagh who served in Indonesia (Mervyn 1998-2010; Raing 2007-2010); and Linda Jackson, India (1996-2010), who resigned from the service of the Board during 2010/11. Grenville and Georgie Hopkinson resigned from missionary service in Nepal on 31 December, 2010 and have taken up a new post with World Vision in Singapore.

30. During the last year **memorial minutes** were recorded and sympathies expressed in respect of Miss Joey McCausland who passed away on 29 May, 2010, having served in China from 1936-1941, and Miss Hazel McClenaghan who passed away on 7 May, 2010, having served in India and Birmingham from 1953-1975. Full details of memorial minutes are held in the BMO office.

31. BMO is grateful for the ongoing services of its Pastoral Adviser Team. Three new couples have joined Brian Hughes and Dibbie McCaughan on the Pastoral Advisor Team: Stephen and Ruth McCracken; James and Willi Barton; and Tony and Valerie McGall.

32. **Finance:** The ongoing commitment by PCI members to support the work of mission in a broad range of ways brings much encouragement. Thanks are recorded to individuals and Congregations who year after year have provided financial support through the United Appeal, and for all that the United Appeal Board does to ensure that the target of honour for the total appeal is reached each year. BMO received £962,000 from the United Appeal Board in 2010, and £920,000 has been approved by UAB for 2011. Having budgeted for a cash deficit of £152,000 in 2010, the year end accounts show a cash deficit of £50,902. The married couples' furlough allowance, which is the benchmark to the setting of all other missionary allowances, was set at £22,087 for 2011 so remaining at the same level as in 2010.

33. Once again the Board of Mission Overseas is very grateful for the ongoing support of *Presbyterian Women (PW)* whose office bearers, Central Committee and members continue to contribute faithfully to the work of the Board. In 2010, the annual grant made by PW to the work of the Board was £190,000. BMO commends PW for their enthusiasm and commitment to the work of PCI in mission beyond the shores of Ireland, and thanks its members for their prayerful and practical support of BMO mission personnel.

34. BMO is once again indebted to the Board's Finance Officer (Overseas), Mervyn Whittle. In October 2010 Mervyn stepped down from this role on medical grounds, having served on a voluntary basis since 2002. He brought a broad range of financial skills, a depth of experience from the business world, and made an invaluable contribution for which BMO is deeply grateful. While retiring from the finance work of the Board, Mervyn continues to oversee an ongoing programme of maintenance for all BMO mission properties. The

Board is very appreciative of the ongoing support and guidance provided by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE (OMC)

35. The initial remit of OMC was to develop guidelines for OMC's work in what came to be described as:

- Hospital and community based healthcare mission
- Mission through education
- Specialist Service Agencies (SSAs)
- Evangelism and Church planting
- Sustainable development

36. Four of these sets of guidelines have already been brought before the General Assembly and this year's report consists largely of a fifth set of guidelines focusing on sustainable development.

37. **Sustainable development:** BMO supports two streams of development work. Under the umbrella of WDC we have a huge amount of sustainable development work carried out largely through PCI's partners, Christian Aid and Tearfund. BMO also have missionary personnel working in development roles with its partner Churches around the world. These guidelines are designed to be used in conjunction with partner Church development work. BMO has a rich history of holistic engagement with its partner Churches. Currently, overseas mission personnel are serving in very demanding situations and facing significant challenges as they seek to engage in mission to the whole person. The following eight guidelines are designed to focus BMO's thinking on the orientation and training of mission personnel as facilitated by BMO's executive staff, and guide future engagement with partner Churches:

38. **Christian development:** BMO is committed to holistic mission, recognising that a people-focused mission entails serving *the whole person* – physical, emotional, intellectual as well as spiritual needs. It also recognises that individuals live within *communities* and *environments*, which are in need of the transforming power of the gospel. Following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, BMO therefore affirm the importance of *holistic or integral mission*. All that PCI is and does should reflect the love of Christ and humankind and a desire to bear witness to him, that others may be led to love and serve him. Furthermore, BMO understands the call of Scripture is to proclaim the Kingdom of God in word and deed. Development projects carried out with PCI's partners should maintain a central focus on intentionally sharing the love of Christ and the building of the Church.

39. **Sustainability:** BMO is committed to supporting projects and programmes which have a positive and lasting impact, are owned locally, and are financially and environmentally sustainable.

40. **Partnership relations:** BMO is committed to working with its partners and to have them in charge at a national and local level. Partner relations can be challenging but are central to the work of the Board. In this regard, BMO is committed to promoting better understanding and co-ordination

between existing partners, other partners and relief and development agencies, so the development of a more effective network of partners can be supported.

41. **Capacity building:** BMO is committed to building the capacity of partners to enable them to be more effective in making Christ known. Part of this commitment may mean sending mission personnel on short or long-term assignments. Where possible the focus should be on sending personnel to specific roles, which build the capacity of partners to undertake sustainable development.

42. **Training:** BMO is committed to training to a high standard any personnel sent out. Ideally training should involve exposure to development theory and also some time spent in the field with both expatriate and local personnel already working in development.

43. **Support:** BMO is committed to providing a network of support for its mission personnel recognising that on occasions they serve in extremely challenging situations. Clarity needs to be established with partners about their important role in supporting, directing and protecting the well being of PCI's mission personnel. BMO will encourage peer support and networking between those working in development in different areas.

44. **Evaluation and monitoring:** BMO is committed to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of projects to ensure that the direction of the work is sustainable and strategic. This will involve clear channels of reporting and responsibility between BMO, the partner Church and mission personnel.

45. **Funding:** BMO is committed to establishing transparent and efficient systems of funding that promote sustainability and accountability.

46. When partnering with other Churches in holistic mission there are many challenging issues. These guidelines briefly touch on many significant and complicated issues and have led to the development of a further set of questions and topics that require deeper exploration and discussion. OMC are committed to addressing these questions over the next number of years. Executive staff have briefly examined some of the questions raised and will continue to do so. OMC will return to the whole question of sustainable development in the near future and a working group is being set up between WDC and OMC to look further at the related issues.

47. **Future work of OMC:** Since its inception OMC's work has largely focused on producing guidelines for five areas of strategic focus. Now that these guidelines are completed OMC is aware that a great deal of work needs to be carried out focusing on the delivery, evaluation and promotion of the Committee's work. It is proposed that special emphasis be placed on one of these five areas each year and cover all on a five-year rotational basis. This year-long focus would include an evaluation of work around the world, strategic thinking about new opportunities, and the promotion of specific projects. Some key questions that need to be developed and posed in future agendas regarding each area of strategic priority are:

- Is OMC seeing its vision fulfilled such that people are being made disciples and coming into fullness of life in Christ?
- Partnership – Where in the world should BMO be concentrating efforts to develop relationships given the vision and purpose of OMC?

- Mission Personnel – In what roles are they engaged and what new opportunities are available? Are they well equipped to serve? Geographically, where are PCI mission personnel being placed? How does BMO measure the effectiveness of their work? Mission personnel will be invited to attend and report to OMC meetings from time to time.
- Congregational Involvement – To what extent should OMC be liaising with MIC to highlight personnel and projects for particular support, as well as Good News stories that deserve broader publicity?
- Grants – What role do they play in the future of the outreach work of BMO? How should projects be prioritised and grant funding distributed?

STEPHEN RICHMOND, Convener

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LDC)

48. LDC continues to count it a privilege to be involved with PCI's partner Churches and institutions in the personal and professional development of adequately trained, committed Christian leaders for the Church in many contexts across the globe. At the time of writing BMO's ongoing leadership development work includes projects in Kenya, Sudan and Malawi in Africa; in India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan in Asia; in France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain in Europe; and in Lebanon and Israel/Palestine in the Middle East. For both 2010 and 2011 LDC has been in a position to allocate grants to our partners in line with a budget of £110,000. In the academic year 2010/2011 this was supplemented by £71,000 from the Lindsay Memorial Fund allocated by PCI's Trustees for studies in the United Kingdom of Leaders in Training (LITs) in Africa.

49. Each of the above contexts has its own peculiar dynamics and generates its own set of unique challenges. Part of the Committee's current policy, in line with the findings of the BMO review, is the pro-active prioritisation of work in non-African (especially Asian and European) contexts; to help meet this, and beginning in 2011, LDC intends to make a featured partner the focus for LD work each year. Another challenge, arising from long-term partnerships, is to achieve a desirable transition from unspecific block grants to more clearly designated funding projects with a marked people focus, especially as – in tension with this – there remains a need to offer some partners flexible funding so that they may maintain vital infrastructure (help which can be partly provided through the Ann Barker Bequest).

50. As part of BMO's overall provision of good materials for practising mission within the wider Church, one area of focus for LDC's efforts in 2010-11 has been the production of appropriate resources, in adaptation of materials developed as guidelines for LD work. With the aim of helping PCI Congregations get involved in leadership development work and in the support of leaders in training – including those who may be assigned to them while

studying in Ireland – Congregational guidelines are being made available (in conjunction with the MIC). Other resources are intended for use by PCI's partners.

51. LDC's 2010 report indicated LDC's awareness that PCI and her partners could collaborate better in LD work, for example in the process applied to the selection of candidates for leadership development (including appropriate interview questions) or in applying procedures such as a missional test to the assessment of projects for which PCI support might be sought. Accordingly, to help prospective leaders in training apply for PCI scholarships, new application forms for them and for their referees have been drawn up; at the same time, to help improve engagement by their sending Churches in their PCI-funded training (notably for purposes of improving accountability) a proposal form for partner Churches or institutions to complete is in planning, together with a procedure which will facilitate partners in evaluating a finished LD project, once their leader in training has completed studies and returned home. More focused conversation, involving face-to-face discussion, is needed with partners so that they may reciprocate and share with PCI their own philosophy and objectives for the discipling and training of leaders for their Church. In this way, partners will share in PCI's journey in mission, opening PCI up to the needs of the Church and the world as *they see it*; deferring to and listening to partners commits PCI to hearing what they have to say to us as a Church here in Ireland.

52. Again, as noted in last year's report, small LDC delegations undertook visits in autumn 2010 to two European training institutions with which BMO partners: the *Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología* (SEUT – United Evangelical School of Theology), in Madrid, and the *Faculté Jean Calvin* (FJC, formerly FLTR), in Aix-en-Provence. These visits provided LDC with insight into mission in Europe today as well as an impetus towards achieving greater focus in the Committee's work. Through direct engagement with staff and students in both institutions, participants gained valuable knowledge of the contexts in which they minister – Latin Europe, in both cases – and of the particular mission of each: SEUT's strength is its distance-learning programme, including links with South America, while FJC's strength is its engagement with evangelical, Pentecostal and new Churches in France, francophone Europe and West Africa. Although their contexts make both institutions precarious, the two seminaries show strong commitment to their mission and are grateful for help from PCI. The strategic importance of both partnerships emerges the more clearly when one considers both the extent to which Europe has progressively shaped PCI's own context, in recent decades, and the attendant priority of reaching the unreached in contemporary Europe. In the wake of these visits LDC hopes to be able to enhance the grants currently budgeted for FJC and SEUT. Based on the template devised for use in the visits to Aix and Madrid LDC's Guidelines Working Group will also seek to refine a framework for future LD-focussed overseas visits, whether undertaken by executive staff, by Committee members (as in this new exercise) or by other members of BMO.

53. Among prospective applicants for LDC scholarships in 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 are leaders in training from partner Churches in Asia (Pakistan, Nepal and Myanmar), Europe (Hungary and Romania) and also Malawi in

Africa. In the context of BMO's sustained commitment to helping valued partners develop their leaders, LDC also intends pro-actively to encourage future applications by adopting and publicising to partners a special focus on one continent and/or country in any given year. As with the award of grants, so the award of scholarships largely entails the ordinary exercise of wisdom, within budgetary constraints, yet in tandem with a prayerful listening for God's leading. The latter includes a readiness to be surprised: thus LDC was both pleased and able to help a student from the Presbyterian Church of Korea receive key short-term input from the Irish context into her Master's Degree at the University of Geneva, training for "understanding mission as peace and reconciliation".

GORDON CAMPBELL, Convener

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (WDC)

54. The Biblical witness of Old and New Testaments underpins and informs the work of WDC, whatever the specific developmental focus of a particular Appeal or series of Appeals. This witness directs attention to the importance of the primal necessities of life – to bread, clothing, shelter, welcome, community, education, health care, justice – in a fully developed Christian understanding of life in all its abundance. To struggle for them is an integral part of our spiritual calling.

55. **World Development Appeal:** In the second year of the "**Credit Where Credit's Due**" World Development Appeal the focus was on projects in Burkina Faso (Christian Aid) and Tanzania (Tearfund). In a departure from what has been the format of the World Development Appeal, two projects were highlighted rather than four. Within this, materials were sourced in Burkina Faso for a series of PowerPoint presentations, which told in detail how access to credit was transforming lives. These were of a high standard and thanks are extended to Stephen Lynas for travelling to Burkina to obtain story lines and photographs before shaping these into the presentations.

56. To date, around £450,000 has been contributed to the World Development Appeal. Out of this, WDC has disbursed grants of £200,000 to Tearfund and £200,000 to Christian Aid. Contributions to the Appeal are somewhat down on previous years. This is indicative of the difficult economic context in which the whole Church is presently operating.

57. **Special Moderator Supported Appeals:** It should, however, be noted that PCI has responded with exceptional generosity to the **Moderator Supported Haiti Appeal**. Almost £920,000 has been received since its launch in January, 2010. Given that PCI does not have partner Church relations in Haiti this amount has been divided equally between Tearfund and Christian Aid. It has been used to good effect to meet immediate need and lay the groundwork for getting back to sustainable development.

58. Following the terrible flooding in Pakistan caused by unprecedented monsoon rains the Moderator launched a further special appeal, in August 2010, the **Moderator Supported Pakistan Earthquake Appeal**. To date £570,000 has been contributed to this. £275,000 has been sent to Tearfund and £275,000 to Christian Aid, with £10,000 sent to the Presbyterian Church in Pakistan. This

last amount was forwarded as a sign of solidarity to PCI's partners in the Presbyterian Church in Pakistan, and is a sum commensurate with the Church's development capacity. Around £10,000 remains in the account for further possible support of the Presbyterian Church in Pakistan, working in a context of hostility and marginalization.

59. **Board of Mission Overseas:** In 2010 the Board of Mission Overseas allocation of the World Development Appeal was £30,000. The Board has used this in support of the very worthwhile Livingstonia Synod Aids Programme (LISAP).

60. **Looking to the Future:** WDC has decided to focus on projects in Uganda (Tearfund) and Cambodia (Christian Aid) for the Advent and Christmas Appeal of 2011. Again, Stephen Lynas will be tasked with sourcing appropriate materials, this year from Uganda. Both of these projects contain core dimensions of good grass roots development. As yet, however, the Appeal has not been given a title. This is so that the new Convener, to be appointed at the General Assembly 2011, will be able to shape the Appeal in a significant way.

MARK GRAY, Convener

MISSION INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

61. BMO recognises that the Congregation is the fundamental unit of missionary endeavour. In order to help Congregations reach out from the end of the pews to the ends of the earth, MIC has been tasked by BMO to equip God's people for works of service (Ephesians 4:12) by (i) informing PCI Congregations regarding God's mission in the world today, (ii) envisioning the wider Church, especially Church leaders and mission agents, to adopt a global perspective, (iii) training and supporting mission hearted Congregations and (iv) providing opportunities for our members to serve overseas.

62. **Equipping through ... Informing:** The **BMO web-site** (www.pcimissionoverseas.org) continues to be, not just a very useful site, but a very well used one. The site is aimed primarily at PCI members and provides a comprehensive source of information and news about the overseas mission work of PCI – covering the countries, places and partners with which PCI and its missionary personnel are linked.

63. BMO's **Prayerline** remains a useful information resource that supplements the information on the work of the Board available through PCI's Points for Prayer. MIC would encourage members to make use of these resources in their own devotions, in congregational prayer meetings and in the Prayers of Intercession during Sunday worship.

64. Four regional '**Celebration of Global Mission**' evenings have been held since the last General Assembly. These were held in Carrmoney and Kilfennan Congregations in October 2010 and in Portrush and First Portadown Congregations in March 2011. MIC remains committed to ensuring that the location of venues reflects the wide geographical spread of PCI. Attendances were encouraging and the feedback positive for each of these events. MIC is aware, however, that the profile of those attending these events is not representative of PCI as a whole. MIC seeks the help of Ministers, Presbytery

and Congregational Mission Agents in encouraging people of all ages to attend these events in order that they might be envisioned for mission as they hear first hand of what God is doing in his world today. In addition, discussions with other Assembly Boards have begun as to how we can more effectively share the story of God's mission and our involvement in it with a wider audience.

65. MIC has not lost sight of the **SPUD** resolutions that were brought to the 2009 General Assembly and remains committed to sharing the stories of what God is doing globally through PCI personnel with the children and young people of our denomination. Some preliminary discussions have been held in relation to how BMO might do this both effectively and safely through the use of the internet, including social network sites.

66. **Equipping through ... Envisioning:** Recognising that the best advocates for global mission are so often those who are serving or who have served overseas, MIC continues to seek to equip mission personnel on home assignment for the task of deputation in order that the experience is a positive one for both speaker and listener alike. It is also MIC's desire to establish a broader pool of Mission Mobilisers who have a passion for sharing God's story with members of our denomination. It is hoped to be able to provide Mission Mobilisers with the resources and training necessary to enable them to envision PCI members in ways that are relevant and appropriate to the group they are addressing.

67. **Equipping through ... Training and Support:** In response to the increasing number of Congregations sending individuals and/or teams overseas – whether short or long term – MIC continues to help PCI's Congregations as they serve as both senders and those being sent. This training and support is currently provided through various training events and the provision of congregational resources. MIC welcomes the appointment of Pamela Forster as Mission Training Officer and, since this is a field officer post, MIC looks forward to the new opportunities for training and support that will be created through more direct engagement with Congregations.

68. MIC encourages Congregations to avail themselves of the various central training events that are available. This year BMO, in conjunction with the Mission Agencies Partnership (MAP), ran a rebranded training event under the title '**Prepared to Send?!**' This interactive workshop provided Congregational leaders with an understanding of the issues that they should be considering as they help teams or individuals prepare for service overseas.

69. With significant numbers of Congregational and Board teams going overseas each summer, BMO's **Overseas Teams Training (OTT)** day continues to be an important and well established event in the training calendar. OTT aims to provide relevant, practical advice and training on topics not normally or easily covered by individual teams in their pre-departure preparations. Feedback year-on-year has enabled the programme to be fine-tuned to suit needs. Overall, OTT is well-received and appreciated by those who attend and, again, MIC commends this training opportunity to all who are taking teams overseas.

70. Mission trips should not end when those involved arrive back in Ireland; taking time to debrief teams or individuals after they return home from overseas is very important, even if they have only been away for a week or two.

MIC understands that many in congregational leadership feel ill-prepared for this task and so the **Debriefing for Senders** training event aims to equip congregational leaders and team leaders for this vital task. This is now a well-established event in the BMO Training Calendar and has been deemed very worthwhile by those who have attended.

71. MIC is delighted to be able to launch at this year's General Assembly a new resource entitled, '**Do It Well**'; a toolkit for Congregations who are contemplating sending a team overseas. Through this resource, Congregations are encouraged to first of all address the question, "Is God calling us to go or stay?" For those Congregations who decide that the answer is 'Go', the toolkit will also provide, amongst other things, checklists and advice on matters such as developing good partnerships, understanding expectations, maintaining your spiritual health, travel, safety overseas and finance. MIC believes that this toolkit will help whole Congregations, not just the 'team', to be better prepared and less likely to make mistakes and heartily commends this to all who are considering sending a team overseas.

72. **Equipping through ... Engaging:** MIC acknowledges that the whole Church is called to engage in mission. It also acknowledges that that engagement can take various forms including praying, giving, sending, going and receiving. MIC is grateful to all those who faithfully pray for BMO's office staff and overseas mission personnel. It is also grateful to all those who contribute financially to the work of BMO through the United Appeal, through 'extra mile' giving and through the various boards and organisations within PCI.

73. This year, **YAC**, through its 2009/2010 Project, 'Missing Peace', was able to donate over £52,000 to the United Mission to Nepal in support of its conflict transformation work. **YAC's** 2010/2011 Project, 'On the Box', is seeking to raise funds for the work of **SAT-7**, an agency recognised by PCI as providing a specialist service in global mission, for its development of the 'SAT-7 Kids' TV channel that will beam into countries around the Middle East. **PW**, through its Birthday Fund 2010/11, raised £41,792 in support of the David Gordon Memorial Hospital, the Women's Empowerment Ministry in Ekwendeni, and Pre-school Play Groups in Mzuzu. **PW** is currently raising funds for the work and witness of the Church of North India, Gujarat Diocese, in particular the work of the Diocesan Counselling Centres in Ahmedabad and Surat, and also to help educate and support women and children throughout the Diocese, focusing mainly on the tribal areas. The **Junior BB** Project 2010 was able to donate £11,000 to support the work of 'Serve Afghanistan' in their work with deaf and blind children. The Junior BB Project 2011 is currently raising funds, through its 'Bridge of Hope' project, towards the building of a second footbridge across the Galana River in Kenya.

74. While many members of PCI have the opportunity to be engaged in mission through congregational overseas teams, opportunities also exist for individuals to join one of **PCI's Overseas Teams**. Indeed, centrally organised teams continue to be a necessary provision for individuals for whom the option of serving on a congregational team does not currently exist. MIC views PCI's central teams as being different, however, from a congregational team and so, when establishing short-term overseas teams, BMO focuses on doing what Congregations aren't able or choosing to do, thereby offering team opportunities

that complement what's going on at Congregational or Presbytery level. PCI's central teams also provide opportunities for those who wish to be part of a broader denominational or specialist team and for those who wish to 'Go See' a particular type of work or location with a view to establishing a longer term partnership or mission interest.

75. This year the sending of PCI's central overseas teams has come under the oversight of a single, united BMO/YAC working group – the Overseas Opportunities Group. This group is taking on an increasingly strategic role as it seeks to identify future team opportunities as well opportunities for those who wish to serve overseas as part of a GAP Year or Intern programme. Investigations also continue into how PCI might best provide opportunities for families who wish to serve together in short-term mission.

76. The practical issues that are involved in making our central teams 'happen' are dealt with by the appropriate BMO and YAC executive and administrative staff in conjunction with overseas partners and team leaders. MIC recognises that much hard work is done behind the scenes and is truly grateful to all who play such a significant role in making PCI central teams a success.

77. This summer, an all-age team will travel to **Ukraine** to lead an English-language teaching camp for young people in partnership with the Rev György and Mrs Enikő Szanyi of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church. Members will also have the opportunity to share their faith through music, drama and discussion groups. An all-age team will also travel to **Italy** in support of an evangelistic outreach event being organised by the Christian publishing company, Coram Deo and the Sola Gracia Church in Mantova. A Youth Team will travel to London to support the work of the Rev Edwin and Mrs Anne Kibathi and the PCEA Congregation in East London through the running of a children's holiday Bible Club and youth discipleship activities. A second Youth Team will travel to **Romania** to support Csaba and Ilona Veres in their work with young people.

MARK WELSH, Convener

78. Aside from the full-time staff in the Mission Overseas Office, many members of the Board willingly sacrifice of their time, energy, gifts and experience to serve on BMO's Assembly and Board Committees. Gratitude is extended 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 PCI Congregations about the work overseas.

79. The Board gives all honour, praise and thanks to God for his guidance and sustaining grace over this past year, and ever seeks to bring glory to his Name.

APPENDIX A

In the main report most of the names of BMO mission personnel have not been mentioned but their names, spheres and category of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

INTEGRATE PROGRAMME – service of two or more years

BRAZIL

Naomi Keefe	2004	Outreach programme, The Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB), Casa Caiada, Recife
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GREAT BRITAIN

Christopher & Nivedita Benjamin	1989	Ministry among Asians in Wembley, London
Edwin & Anne Kibathi	2009	Ministry among East Africans in East London

INDONESIA

Barry McCroskery	2004	International Partner Relations and Diaconal Work (social witness), Evangelical Christian Church in Timor (GMIT), Kupang
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KENYA

Stephen & Angelina Cowan	1985 1989	Outreach and Development Work, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuum
Naomi Leremore	1991	Teacher for Centre for Early Childhood Education and development of Sunday School materials, PCEA, Nairobi
Derek & Linda Roulston	1998	Outreach and Development Work, PCEA, Timau
Gary & Mary Reid	2000	Outreach and Development Work, PCEA, Olkinyiei

MALAWI

Diane Cusick	1995	Pre-school teacher training, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Livingstonia Synod, Mzuzu
Robin & Helen Quinn	2004	Lay Training Centre and Livingstonia Theological College, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Ekwendeni
Una Brownlie	2007	Nursing, David Gordon Memorial Hospital, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Livingstonia
Neil & Sara Kennedy	2008	Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics and Child Health – College of Medicine of the University of Malawi and Consultant Paediatrician in the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Blantyre
Fiona Innes	2010	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in Early Childhood Development

		Programme, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Mzuzu
Volker & JinHyeog Glissmann	2010	Executive Director, Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), Zomba

PAKISTAN

Ron & Hilary McCartney	2007	Teaching, Forman Christian College, Lahore
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PORTUGAL

James & Heather Cochrane	2008	Leadership training, Bible teaching and Discipleship, Portuguese Bible Institute (IBP), Faro
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ROMANIA

Csaba & Ilona Veres	2001 1993	Programme Co-ordinator, IKE-YMCA Mera Children's Project, Aksza Mission and Caleb House, Cluj
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SPAIN

Derek & Jane French	2000	Student outreach with Grupos Biblicos Unidos (GBU), Bilbao
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INVOLVE PROGRAMME – service of up to two years**MALAWI**

Matthew Williams	2011	Lecturer, Livingstonia Theological College, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Ekwendeni
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IGNITE PROGRAMME – service of up to one year**SPAIN**

Aimée Campbell	2010	Student outreach, Grupos Biblicos Unidos, Bilbo
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KENYA

Eddie & Mary Dorrans	2011	Outreach and Development Work, PCEA
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NEPAL

Joe & Janet Campbell	2011	Advisor in Conflict Transformation United Mission to Nepal, Kathmandu
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CANDIDATES IN MISSION

Lyn & John Dowds 2011 Doctor, DGMH, CCAP Livingstonia,
Malawi.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly give thanks for the faithful service and dedicated witness of PCI's overseas missionary personnel and their families, recognise the particular benefits of incarnational, long-term missionary service, and encourage BMO to equip missionary personnel for costly discipleship given the diversity of new situations of risk encountered.
3. That the General Assembly encourage BMO to explore further the possibility of offering associate missionary status to PCI members serving with other mission agencies and societies.
4. That the General Assembly encourage BMO to establish and maintain standards for partnering in mission, and prepare guidelines for PCI Congregations and presbyteries seeking to partner overseas.
5. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Mark Gray as Convener of the World Development Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and the Rev Katherine Meyer appointed in his place.
6. That the resignation of the Rev John Hanna as Convener of the Board of Mission Overseas be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and _____ appointed in his place.
7. That the General Assembly give thanks for the witness of all who come from partner Churches and agencies to study and serve in Ireland, recognise the role of overseas partner Churches in shaping PCI's journey in mission, and acknowledge BMO's commitment to consult with and listen to the voice of such partners in the process of forging genuinely reciprocal relationships of inter-dependency and mutuality.
8. That the General Assembly acknowledge the guidelines on sustainable development and affirm its continued commitment to encourage and assist PCI's overseas partners in this work.
9. The General Assembly affirm the work of World Development as an integral part of Christian calling and give thanks that the World Development Appeal continues to be well supported in an exceptionally difficult economic period.
10. The General Assembly give thanks for the exceptional generosity shown across PCI for the Moderator supported Haiti and Pakistan Special Appeals.
11. That the General Assembly encourage Ministers, along with Congregational and Presbytery mission agents, to make known the resources and opportunities available through BMO for informing and envisioning PCI Church members about what God is doing in his world today, in order that PCI might increasingly become a mission-hearted Church.
12. That the General Assembly give thanks for those Congregations sending teams overseas and encourage them to 'Do It Well', by making good use of the various training events and resources available through BMO.

13. 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:

BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Convener: Rev RA PATTON

Secretary: Rev DJ BRUCE

INTRODUCTION AND REPORT SUMMARY

1. The BMI Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the Board of Mission in Ireland is “Serving the Church, Enabling Mission”. The Board’s task is to describe a vision for Presbyterian mission in Ireland and to offer resources to help realise it. In the course of this, the Board works closely with Congregations and Presbyteries to enable them to retain and develop their focus on mission.

2. Mission Development

2.1 A central part of the report this year is a summary of the Presbytery responses to the Board’s proposals for Future Mission Development, brought to the 2010 General Assembly last year as “Appendix A”. The Board has listened carefully to Presbyteries and presents a revised approach, which the Assembly will be invited to consider this year.

3. Proposals regarding Church Planting

3.1 The Board has been active in supporting new Church plants in Donabate, Co Dublin and the Cliftonville Road in Belfast. These initiatives have taken different paths, which is what might have been expected due to their unique settings. Regulations for the governance of emerging Congregations within the denomination, especially when membership of new Churches may not be drawn from Presbyterianism, are under consideration.

4. Revision of the Book of Public Worship

4.1 The Panel and Working Groups revising this important publication will report on progress. The scale of the task means that a final report will not be ready this year. It is the Board’s intention that these revised resources will be available as downloadable files. In addition, the Board seeks to test the mind of the Assembly regarding some changes to practice at services of ordination. A draft service outline is included as Appendix B to this report. If agreed, some changes to the Code will be required. Overtures to this effect will be brought to the Assembly through the Supplementary Reports.

5. The BMI Team

5.1 The BMI team is made up of Home and Urban Mission Ministers, Deaconesses, Irish Mission Workers and other Church-based staff supported by BMI grants. We record thanks to Almighty God for the work being done across Ireland through the ministry of these people who serve so faithfully. A directory of their names and spheres of service is appended as Appendix A to this Report.

5.2 In addition to this, the office team continues to serve the needs of the Board, and do so with great fortitude. In the past year there has been the additional disruption to their daily routine brought about by the very welcome refurbishment of Church House. The Board records its special thanks to them: Lorraine Beatty (Property and Grants), Rev David Bruce (Executive Secretary), Evelyn Craig (Secretary pt), Nehru Dass (Finance Manager), Robin Fairbairn (Communications), Mandy Higgins (Office Supervisor), Elaine Huddleston (Secretary), Laura Whitcroft (Secretary pt), Rev David Thompson (Mission Development), and Marianne Trueman (Personnel pt).

STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEE

1. A Detailed Strategy for Future Mission Development

1.1 As a follow up to the Presbytery (2008/9) and Congregational Mission Plan (2009/10) processes BMI presented a Strategy for Future Mission Development to the General Assembly of 2010 (General Assembly Reports 2010, Appendix A pp187-192). The Board was keen to stimulate fresh thinking and suggest some new approaches aimed at *'harnessing the best of the new breeze of mission blowing throughout the denomination'*.

1.2 As the report to last year's Assembly states, "The Board recognises that any strategy for mission development needs to be tested as to its potential to add value to what is happening on the ground, and will benefit by being refined by the reflection of the wider Church". Thus the outline strategy was sent down to Presbyteries for their comments to be returned by 31 December, 2010.

1.3 The Board is grateful to Presbyteries for their considered responses and presents the following summary along with a revised strategy for future Mission Development.

2. What Presbyteries told the Board about Presbytery mission planning

2.1 Presbyteries have generally appreciated the experience afforded by the Mission Planning process and the Board's work in facilitating it.

2.2 The report to last year's General Assembly raised the issue of Presbytery **capacity**. Most Presbyteries acknowledged that they struggled to find time and resources to undertake the task of strategic mission development. Where Presbyteries are small and experiencing multiple vacancies there are many competing demands. Equally, where Presbyteries are larger, the scale of the task can be overwhelming. One Presbytery acknowledged that reorganising the way they operate and changing structures would free up some extra capacity. The Board is grateful for the work of Presbyteries in supporting and developing mission within their bounds and remain aware of the constraints of limited resources.

2.3 The report also raised the issue of **proximity** – the awkwardness Presbyters find in commenting on the work of neighbouring Congregations. This is acknowledged in most responses. Overall, the Board senses that some progress has been made in encouraging Presbyteries to comment on the work of Congregations under their care, but that proximity issues remain. Where specific

strategic issues are pressing and Presbyteries have to take action or decisions, they are more likely to welcome Board comment or facilitation. It is therefore anticipated that the Board's future role will be primarily reactive to issues arising from specific missional issues, rather than pro-active by way of stimulating a general, Church-wide Presbytery Mission Planning type initiative.

2.4 There remains a lack of clarity as to the role of Presbytery in supporting Congregations in mission. Some Presbyteries understand that this should be, and must increasingly become, part of their life. Where this is the case they welcomed the prospect of being empowered through having their capacity built to increase their effectiveness. Others are less sure. One Presbytery preferring to cast its role primarily in the legal language of being a 'Court of the Church', albeit with a secondary role in supporting and encouraging Congregations.

2.5 The Board notes that one of the specific goals identified by the Priorities Committee of the General Board in their report to the General Assembly of 2009 was a re-examination of the role of Presbytery. Until there is denominational consensus on this issue, it will continue to prove difficult to chart a way forward for Presbytery mission development. One Presbytery commented, that, '*BMI must strive not to convey an amalgam of a country-wide missional development strategy as the paradigm for each congregation or Presbytery*' (Omagh). The Board concurs and is committed to serving and enabling each Presbytery in an individual way specifically tailored to their needs.

2.6 The Board anticipates being in contact with each Presbytery on an annual basis to offer them an opportunity to suggest one specific means to serve and enable them in supporting Congregations in mission development.

3. What Presbyteries told the Board about congregational mission planning

3.1 Presbyteries have generally recognised the value of the Mission Plan process at congregational level and were grateful for the *Tell it Again* materials produced by the Board.

3.2 Presbyteries have appreciated the Board's encouragement to Congregations to take note of their context in shaping local mission. One Presbytery commented that more resources to help with this task would be welcome.

3.3 One of the ways the Board can serve and enable local Congregations in mission is by the production of good quality resources rooted in the variety of contemporary Irish contexts. Consequently, a priority of future Mission Development strategy will be to aim to produce at least one quality resource for use at congregational level each year.

3.4 The Board sought to encourage that mission planning take place within an atmosphere of worship and dialogue. There is a general acknowledgement that the need to strike a biblical balance between planning, prayer and the work of the Spirit has been taken seriously. There remain, however, different perspectives on how well PCI is striking that balance as a denomination. One Presbytery stated that, '*The statement regarding fostering an atmosphere of worship and dialogue is the most important aspect of the whole*

paper but Section 5 [the section on Presbytery Mission Audits] is the total antithesis of this' (Derry & Donegal). As a Church, there is a need to continue to work at ensuring that what God joins together in the responsibility to be his witnesses and depending on what only he can do in changing the heart are not separated in how the importance of mission is communicated.

3.5 To continue to foster this atmosphere, the Board is committed to exploring how the existing opportunity of Presbytery Mission in Ireland Evenings can better serve the purpose of stimulating worshipful reflection on the task of mission.

4. What Presbyteries told the Board about the outworking of Presbyterian polity and the role of the Board of Mission in Ireland

4.1 Last year's report drew attention to the potential of Presbyterian polity in facilitating the Church's ability to rise to the challenge of missional engagement:

A much undervalued strength of our Presbyterian polity is the interlocking relationship between the local congregation, Presbyteries and the Boards of the General Assembly. Nowhere is this more a strength to build upon than in the area of mission. The mission planning process modelled a positive working relationship in which mutual respect began to replace institutional distrust. As in all areas of Church life, unity is a fragile treasure, which God calls us to maintain and develop. We need to learn to become more comfortable with, and value, gracious creative tension. Our ability as a denomination to respond to future challenges and opportunities in mission may rise or fall on our aptitude in harnessing the latent strength of this aspect of our Presbyterian heritage.

4.2 The Board remains unwavering in its commitment to continue to explore how best to harness this potential, but recognises that interactions between the Board, Presbyteries and Congregations can be complex. The Board re-states again its commitment to serving the Church and enabling mission.

4.3 A number of Presbytery comments as to their view of the Board's future role are quoted below, even though it is felt that sometimes they may misunderstand the intent of the Board's suggestions in the initial report. The summary headings are the Boards.

Continue to strengthen Presbytery in their role

Overall, we are happy with the increased emphasis on mission and the need to strengthen the role of Presbytery in the tasks of the Gospel. (Ballymena)

Stimulate, encourage and challenge the Church to mission but with a light touch

This report on the whole is to be welcomed and endorsed but not without reservation because there are genuine concerns raised within the report. These proposals if adopted will result in BMI, Presbyteries and Congregations working more closely together for the cause of Christ on this island and this is to be encouraged as each plays its part in encouraging local Congregations to engage more effectively in mission. One of our strengths in PCI ought to be partnership. However as Presbyterians we do not always like to be told what to

do and there are still suspicions about an over-bearing presence of any Board of the Church on congregational life. Left to our own devices we have a natural tendency to look inward and it requires hard and creative work to develop our missional thinking and reach out with the Gospel. While some have done that and are doing that very successfully, we all need the challenge and the encouragement to do so and the proposals of BMI provide that encouragement and challenge. (Newry)

Frame future strategy against the background of some evident institutional distrust

This process has involved Presbyterian polity at every level: congregation, Presbytery, Board and General Assembly. BMI has gone out of its way to declare that in the process the centre is not imposing itself on Congregations and Presbytery accepts its sincerity in that. Sadly, however, we believe that BMI will need to continue to do this because there is a tendency in our denomination to distrust the centre, and we therefore ask Congregations to accept and trust the bona fides of BMI in this. (Carrickfergus)

Avoid an over bureaucratic approach

We do not need to be jumping through hoops to meet the targets set by BMI so much as we need to be actually working at telling the gospel to lost people. It is really important that any audit process should not get in the way of getting on with the work. (Tyrone)

Allow Presbyteries to take the initiative and call on BMI for support when required

We are not convinced that the Assembly should authorise the Board of Mission in Ireland to have a continued formal directive role in the working of Presbyteries. We resist the idea that a Board (which after all is simply a committee of the Assembly) should be given authority to exercise 'oversight' over Congregations, even if this is in conjunction with Presbytery. The mandate of the Board of Mission in Ireland has already developed from facilitation to administrating the Assembly requirement to compile mission plans. To give the Board the authority to supervise the implementation of mission plans is a step too far. There would certainly be a continuing role for Presbytery Mission Development Committees and it would be a sufficient function for the Board of Mission in Ireland to maintain regular contact with each committee to encourage and exchange information. We would encourage the development of such relationships. The way forward for mission development is for Presbyteries to take responsibility, availing themselves, when appropriate, with the resources the Board of Mission in Ireland is able to provide. This might avoid the danger of mission planning becoming a distraction rather than an aid to the mission of the Church. (Ards)

Take the opportunity to reassess our role in the light of where we are post-Mission Planning

We appreciate the work and expertise of the Board's Mission Development Officer, but this role for the future needs to be reassessed. (Derry and Donegal)

Assist Presbyteries and Congregations by supplying perspective and vision

We would welcome BMI's practical input to assist Congregations and Presbyteries implement activities particularly where needs have been recognised for which there is a deficiency of willing or available personnel and expertise. The Board must remain the servant of both Presbytery and congregation while they each welcome (the) Board's perspective and envisioning. (Omagh)

Stimulate the Church with good models of mission

The distinctive role of each body needs to be worked out and the Board should continue consultation with Presbyteries, enabling the Board to supply ideas and models of mission to help Congregations, but not by way of imposition. We wonder if the Board needs to clarify their role, as the current remit of the Board in the Code is significantly different from that which is stated in the report. Should it be to stimulate the formation of the right value systems for Congregations? (North Belfast)

Focus on achieving more by doing less and engaging with each Presbytery to meet specific challenges

In general, the South Belfast Presbytery is of the opinion that the BMI should see itself primarily as a resource for Presbyteries so that Presbyteries can be a better resource for Congregations. In doing so BMI should assign itself relatively few things to do - but they should make time to do those few things well. In that way, BMI could rotate through the various Presbyteries more efficiently and be available to the Development Committees on a more regular basis. (South Belfast)

5. What Presbyteries told the Board about the Strategy shift from Mission Planning to Mission Development

5.1 Presbyteries broadly welcomed the shift from Mission Planning to Mission Development described in last year's report as follows:

Mission development needs to be seen as a dynamic ongoing process to which we are always bending our minds and hearts and wills, rather than an exercise in mission planning to which we routinely return every five years.

5.2 This endorsed the Board's view that, post mission planning, there is a need to stop, take stock and have a greater degree of freedom as to how best to serve the Church and enable mission in future than would be afforded by being locked in to a five-year plan model which could easily become merely formulaic.

5.3 One Presbytery clearly grasped the importance of the shift in terms of changing denominational culture and commented as follows: *'We agree that the lasting impact of the initiative may in the longer term be measured less by the specific projects generated and more by the culture of new missional thinking created, what is commonly called 'mindset'. And it is vital that the gains of the*

last few years are not lost by a failure to follow through on commitments. So perhaps we need to think not so much about mindset, but heartset, to move from ambition to action, and if it's not stretching the concept too far, find ways of getting mission into our hearts so that it becomes the life-blood of the Church (Carrickfergus).

5.4 This is indeed the deeper and longer term challenge.

6. What Presbyteries told the Board about the proposals for Presbytery Mission Audit and Consultations

6.1 In the Board's report to the General Assembly last year, the Presbytery Mission Audit was envisaged as a possible tool to address the question of how the Board of Mission in Ireland and Presbyteries could work together in the support and oversight of Congregations in the task of local mission.

6.2 Although some Presbyteries interpreted this as affording the Board a role beyond its remit, the intent of addressing this question was for the Board to offer Presbyteries support in fulfilling their role by providing supplementary resources to deal with capacity and proximity issues mentioned above.

6.3 The concept of the Presbytery Mission Audit was outlined as follows in last year's report:

PRESBYTERY MISSION AUDIT. To assist Presbytery in exercising these roles more effectively, the Board proposes the development of a rolling process of Presbytery Mission Audit. Facilitated by the Mission Development Officer in conjunction with Presbytery Mission Development Committees, the process of Mission Audit would proceed as follows:

SCHEDULE

Four Presbyteries audited per year, beginning September 2011. One Presbytery Audit undertaken in each of the following periods Sept/Oct; Nov/Jan; Feb/Mar; Apr/May.

PROCESS

Two month review process facilitated by BMI Mission Development Officer along with Presbytery Mission Development Committee.

COMPONENTS: *With room for flexibility determined by local situations, the following basic plan is proposed:*

- *Gathering of congregational information by questionnaire;*
- *Joint Presbytery Worship service around missional theme (Sunday night, stated Presbytery meeting, or other);*
- *Preparatory meeting of Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer to examine congregational returns;*
- *Series of informal face-to-face interviews undertaken by Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer with Minister and one representative elder to review each congregation's mission and to pray together;*

- *Compilation of short, focused comment on each congregation's progress in mission with further suggestions to explore as appropriate;*
- *Identification of any particular common challenge or emerging opportunity for mission within the Presbytery area or within its Congregations;*
- *Production of Presbytery Mission Audit document;*
- *Audit document presented to Presbytery for discussion and approval;*
- *BMI/Presbytery facilitated training day on presenting issues for Congregations in mission development and/or to showcase potential models for mission;*
- *Twelve months later, Presbytery Mission Development Committee obtain a written review of congregational progress and follow up with personal contact where necessary;*
- *Any future missional issue arising within Presbytery bounds would then be considered in the light of the latest audit and by dialogue between all the parties concerned.*

6.4 Acknowledging the extra burden undertaking the Audit would put on Presbyteries for an intensive two month period once every five years, the report made the following recommendation with regard to Presbytery Consultations.

PRESBYTERY CONSULTATIONS

Recognising that there may be some overlap with the existing system of Presbytery Consultation, it is proposed that in the calendar year in which a Presbytery undertakes a Presbytery Mission Audit, the process of Presbytery Consultation be suspended.

6.5 The Audit proposal raised many questions. Responses varied from enthusiasm, to guarded acceptance, to rejection of the concept. The general consensus seems to be that it is vital that there is an effective process by which each Presbytery intentionally supports, encourages and oversees congregational development of mission in an ongoing way.

6.6 One Presbytery described their desire as follows: *'We are keen to implement our mission plans with the minimum of interference yet with meaningful support'* (Dromore). In terms of encouraging Congregations to implement mission plans another Presbytery commented on the need for this task to be handled with a light touch, *'the challenge therefore in these proposals is to get the right level of oversight and encouragement without making Congregations feel that they are living under a heavy burden'* (Newry). The Board completely concurs and, in the rolling out of the Mission Planning process at both Presbytery and congregational level the Board has sought to act as gentle encouragers and companions in mission development. The Board remains open to suggestions as to the best means, *'to support Congregations, in particular, in developing their local mission'* (General Assembly Reports 2010 p189).

6.7 As opposed to the introduction of the Presbytery Mission Audit, a significant number of Presbyteries are keen to explore how the present

Consultation process could be developed as a tool of mission development. A variety of views were expressed as below. The headings are the Boards.

Improve the Consultation process

Building another formal externally driven auditing process additional to Presbytery Consultations, (which already incorporates the Missional Theme), will divert Presbytery personnel from doing mission. Best to improve the Consultation process, including the Missional Theme, rather than bolt on another process. Capacity building of Presbytery personnel involved in Consultations would be preferable to direct external involvement from BMI. (Derry & Donegal)

Change the Consultation process to adopt more missional outlook

To have Presbytery mission audits while still retaining Consultations, even if not done that year, will result in a process of accountability that is too cumbersome. One alternative might be to change Consultations so that they have a more missional outlook. (Armagh)

Recast the Consultation process to account for progress in mission development

At present we are investigating how we can recast our consultation process to take account of the progress of mission development within the various Congregations. (Ards)

Retain the Consultation in its present form

However, one proposal of the BMI which may not need to be adopted in our Presbytery is the idea of a formal Presbytery Mission audit – which periodically would replace the normal Presbytery Consultation. Whilst we recognise that in many areas this would be a good idea, in Ballymena, it may not. This is because our Consultation process is clear on mission and thorough about the question of a congregation's outreach and commitment to the lost. (Ballymena)

Integrate the Consultation process with the Mission Audit

Presbytery is most concerned that Presbytery Mission Audits would replace the process of Presbytery Consultations, which are an invaluable way of ensuring that the finance and fabric of Church buildings, as well as the health and safety of our members is maintained. Presbytery asks that the BMI identify a way to integrate rather than separate Mission Audits and Presbytery Consultations. (Route)

Abolish the Consultation process and replace it with the Mission Audit

The report draws attention to an overlap with Presbytery Consultations. As mission is so fundamental to the life of a congregation, and the amount of time mission development will take in Congregations and Presbyteries, we recommend that Consultations be abolished, that the Presbytery Mission Audit replace it, along with a mainly documentation-based audit of records, finances and other administrative matters which used to be addressed in some aspects of

the Visitation and Consultation processes. It might be called a Congregational Administration Audit and could run over a rolling 10 year period through each Presbytery. (Carrickfergus)

Associate the Consultation process with the Mission Audit

We see mission as part of the Consultation process and suggest that it be worthwhile to explore how to associate Consultations with Audits. In South Belfast Presbytery the experience of Consultations has been most welcome. (South Belfast)

6.9 While welcoming the desire to harness the potential of a revised Consultation process as a tool for supporting Congregations in reviewing their missional effectiveness, the frequency of Consultations must also be considered. Derry and Donegal, the Presbytery with the largest number of Congregations under its care, drew attention to this, stating, *'a Presbytery Mission Audit is unnecessary if Consultations were conducted more frequently – every five years.'* The Board notes this, but recognize the limited capacity of Presbyteries to deliver this level of consultation.

6.10 Some Presbyteries suspended Consultations during the Church year 2009/2010 due to the work associated with the Mission Plan process. Using the Reports of Presbytery to the General Assembly in 2009 as the most recent example of the number of Congregations consulted within a typical year by each Presbytery, the figures reported are as follows:

● Ards	1
● Armagh	3
● Ballymena	2
● North Belfast	1
● South Belfast	2
● East Belfast	2
● Carrickfergus	0
● Coleraine	none reported
● Derry and Strabane	2 (both joint charges)
● Donegal	none reported
● Down	none reported
● Dromore	2
● Dublin & Munster	none reported
● Foyle	1
● Iveagh	none reported
● Monaghan	1 (three point charge)
● Newry	0
● Omagh	1
● Route	(NB: 'visited') 2
● Templepatrick	3
● Tyrone	none reported

6.11 Having reflected upon the comments of Presbyteries and, notwithstanding the above observations about the frequency of the Consultation process as presently practiced across the Church, the Board welcomes the work of the General Board in exploring a revision of the Consultation process, and

requests that the focus on helping Congregations reflect on the effectiveness of local mission be emphasised.

7. What Presbyteries told the Board about Networks

7.1 The concept of building and maintaining a series of networks to serve and enable contextualised thinking about mission at congregational level was overwhelmingly endorsed by Presbyteries.

7.2 The Urban Mission Network is already beginning to gain momentum and has been welcomed by many. An initial Rural Mission Conversation has paved the way for the adoption of a more regional approach to networking for those ministering in that context across the island.

7.3 The more general missional Church designation requires further work. To begin to further explore this area of work, a number of conversations on leading congregational change for mission will be piloted in the coming Church year.

7.4 The Board is enthusiastic about the potential of these networks and will prioritise their development as a key aspect of mission development strategy.

8. Conclusions. A revised strategy for the future of mission development

8.1 The Board has sought to listen to the views of Presbyteries and to respond positively to what has been heard.

8.2 The Mission Planning process has created momentum for developing mission as a denomination. The Board is thankful to God and the many individuals who have played their part in creating a new awareness of the missional challenge and a new conversation about missional opportunity. This is the platform on which it is essential to build.

8.3 The key element of last year's proposals was the shift in emphasis from Mission Planning to Mission Development. This having been overwhelmingly endorsed, the Board looks forward to transitioning to a strategy that engages in mission development in a low-key, long-term, intentionally relational way to positively impact upon the whole culture of the Church in mission.

8.4 The immediate future effectiveness of the Board in improving the missional output of the Church lies in accurately identifying the key issues facing Congregations on the ground, and helping them to address these appropriately and creatively, thereby stimulating still greater hunger for and imagination in mission.

8.5 The Board remains committed to harnessing the potential of Presbyterian polity for mission. To do so, it is proposed that the Mission Development Officer maintains annual contact with Presbytery Clerks and Mission Development Co-ordinators to offer support in mission development in whatever form they deem appropriate.

8.6 The Board trusts that the General Board Consultation review will adequately seek to address concerns about their frequency and offer a way forward that boosts the momentum of Congregational Mission Planning.

8.7 The Board commends to the Church the developing work of a series of networks built around urban, rural and missional designations.

8.8 In the service of the wider mission of the Church, the Board commits to developing a course for the training of Evangelists and assessing the potential of running a Missional Church style course, one aspect of which would address the issue of Church planting.

9. A summary of the Revised Strategy for the future of Mission Development

9.1 Engagement with Presbyteries

- Representatives of the Board of Mission in Ireland will contribute to the General Board review of the Presbytery Consultation process.
- The BMI Mission Development Officer will initiate conversations with each Presbytery to discern specific ways in which the Board might support local Mission Development.
- The BMI Communications Committee will constantly review the Mission in Ireland Evenings seeking to discern how they might be used more creatively to stimulate worshipful reflection on the task of mission.
- The Board will offer perspective or facilitation to Presbyteries on any missional issue arising at their request.

9.2 Engagement with Congregations

- The BMI Research and Resources Committee will aim to commission at least one high quality missional resource for congregational use each year.
- The BMI Research and Resources Committee will make it a priority to gather and share effective models for mission to the Church at large.
- The BMI Mission Development Officer, in conjunction with appropriate input from the Strategy for Mission Committee, will develop the series of networks around Urban Mission, Rural Mission and Missional Church.

9.3 Serving and Enabling the mission of the Wider Church

- The BMI Research and Resources Committee, in conjunction with the Board of Christian Training, will develop and deliver a course for the Training of Evangelists.
- The BMI Research and Resources Committee will assess the potential of developing and delivering a Missional Church style course, one aspect of which would address the issue of Church planting.

WILLIAM HENRY, Convener

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Committee's work has been largely shaped by seeking to develop focused resources aimed at meeting specific needs identified during the Mission Planning process.

1. WORSHIP PANEL

The Rev Karen Campbell reports:

1.1 Psalms Roadshows showcasing both metrical and contemporary psalmody as well as specially commissioned pieces from local composers were held in Bannside and Orangefield. Feedback has been positive and a request to hold another event in the North West area in the autumn is being considered.

1.2 The mentoring scheme for Church musicians continues to remain popular with three mentors operating to almost full capacity.

2. PANEL ON THE REVISION OF THE BOOK OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

The Very Rev Dr David Clarke reports:

2.1 Work on the revision of The Book of Public Worship is ongoing with the material now in second draft form. The Board intends to publish the completed work online as downloadable files, starting later this year, following which the completed work will be offered to the Assembly for consideration and possible approval at a future date. Presbytery responses to the first draft – some in considerable detail – have been carefully considered as work proceeds.

2.2 To help provide the framework for some decisions at the Assembly this year, the revised draft material relating to Services of Ordination is appended as Appendix B to this Report. Issues raised in this include the following:

2.2.1 Code Pars 10 – 14. As part of the work on Services of Ordination, the Panel is considering the wording of **The Standards of the Church** set out in Pars 10 -14 of The Code. While the wording of these paragraphs was amended in 1997 some feel that the time has come to review the wording again, not to change its substance but to make the meaning as clear as possible to all who may be present at a service of ordination or installation. A resolution to test the mind of the Assembly regarding the undertaking of such a review is appended.

2.2.2 Code Pars 204 and 210(1) The laying on of hands. Code Par 204, which deals with the ordination and installation of ruling elders, states that "...the Presbytery...shall appoint Ministers to officiate at the service." Code Par 210, which deals with the ordination, installation and induction of Ministers, similarly states that "...the Presbytery shall appoint Ministers to conduct the service." The question has now arisen as to whether, in services of ordination, ruling elders should join with the Ministers in the laying on of hands. The Book of Public Worship published by authority of the General Assembly in 1965, when dealing with the ordination and installation of Ministers, states that "*Every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and prayer, by*

those preaching presbyters to who it doth belong, that is by the Ministers of the local Presbytery" (Page 222). That wording closely follows the wording in two sections of "The Form of Presbyterian Church-Government" (*Touching the Power of Ordination and Concerning the Doctrinal Part of Ordination of Ministers*). The "Form" was agreed by the Westminster Assembly of Divines and was subsequently approved by Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, February 10, 1645, though it was not explicitly approved or adopted by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Some now feel that, notwithstanding the authorities cited here, ruling elders should join with Ministers in the laying on of hands at services of ordination; indeed it seems that that is already the practice in some Presbyteries. However, it is desirable (i) that the law of the Church and the practice of the Church should be in harmony; and (ii) that there should be consistency and uniformity of practice throughout the Church.

2.2.3 Code 205(2)(a) and 212(2) These sections describe the prayer constituting Presbytery which currently takes place during the service of ordination. Some have taken the view that this act of constitution might more properly take place prior to the commencement of the service when the Presbytery Commission meets to transact some necessary business described in Code Par 211. By providing for the moving this formal act of constitution to the period before the service, and in the interests of clarity, one further element of the service that may appear alien or strange to visitors may be removed.

2.2.4 Code Par 212(1) It is arguable that the sermon (as distinct from the charge to the new Minister and congregation) might be omitted, its function being fulfilled by a 'Statement of Order', the reading or readings from Scripture and the Creed. If so, the statement, readings and Creed could be introduced by suitable words from the Moderator, making clear that they give scriptural and historical warrant for the service as a whole.

2.2.5 Code Par 212(5) The Assembly will note the proposals to revise the wording of the questions put to the Licentiate. These revisions contain the substance of the current questions except that the penultimate question does not specifically name the Subordinate Standards. The Standards have been named prior to this in the service and the Westminster Confession of Faith is named in the requirement to subscribe, at section 11.

2.3 Should these revisions be approved by the Assembly, several changes to the Code will be required. Relevant Overtures will be presented in the Supplementary Reports.

3. DIVINE HEALING PANEL

The Rev JL Tosh reports:

3.1 The Panel is in the process of re-examining its means of delivery in terms clearly defining its work and the role of Presbytery Healing Agents. The Panel hopes to re-establish Divine Healing Agents in each Presbytery where the appointment has lapsed.

4. Course for the Training of Evangelists

4.1 A working group has been developing course structure, content and plans for delivery. It is anticipated that the first course will be advertised in August of this year and run for a ten-week period beginning in January 2012.

4.2 Aims of the Course

- Enable the identification of evangelistic gifting
- Empower evangelists to develop gifting
- Equip trainers to deliver evangelistic training

4.3 Timeline

- Advertise the course August 2011
- Preview day – late November 2011
- Application by mid December 2011
- Course – one 2 hour evening session weekly for 10 weeks Jan-Mar 2012, based in UTC

4.4 Cost

- £100 – The Board will encourage Congregations to fund all, or part of this, for nominated participants.

4.5 Requirements for participants

- A letter of recommendation from their Kirk Session
- Willingness for Kirk Session (or other Church or agency) to facilitate an outworking of some aspect of the training in a practical setting locally.

4.6 Purpose of the Preview Day

- To clarify the nature of evangelism within the wider framework of mission
- To offer a taster of the course material
- To offer the opportunity for participants to assess their gifting in this area

4.7 Draft Course Outline: 10 Units

- Theological foundation – What is the Gospel?
- Evangelism and the mission of the local Church
- Irish context(s) and making connections
- Conversational evangelism – listening, questioning, creating opportunities
- Evangelistic resources – what? where? why? how?
- Focused streams – Pastoral, Creative arts, Youth, Children, Street work
- Use of story in evangelism
- Handling the Bible evangelistically
- Initiating evangelistic response – contextually appropriate means, leading a person to Christ
- Mobilising God's people for evangelism

5. Other resources

5.1 AWAKE 2011: This year's AWAKE publication revolved around an exploration of key themes from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles under the title 'God Acts'. For the first time an audio version of the Bible passages and

devotions has been produced as well as supporting resources for children and youth and a series of sermon outlines. Demand for this resource continues to remain high.

5.2 AWAKE 2012: A proposal for production of the next AWAKE to coincide with the General Assembly of 2012, which may include Bible study materials linked to stories narrating models of mission from around the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and beyond, is under discussion.

5.3 A revision of a BMI resource previously entitled *100 Best Evangelistic Resources* has been uploaded to the BMI website and will be followed up by a series of articles in ReachOut magazine.

5.4 An evangelistic resource for use in non-book culture is at concept and design stage.

5.5 An initial 'conversation' on Rural Mission has been held highlighting:

- The importance of rural mission within PCI
- A definition of rural for the purposes of future focus
- Learning gained from the experience of Congregational Mission Planning in rural Congregations
- A suggested response by BMI to serve the rural Church and enable its mission
- A possible agenda for rural mission development

This is a first step towards the formation of a Rural Mission Network.

5.6 A six week resource to explore mission in Congregations operating in commuter contexts, entitled, *Tapestry: a Mission Woven Life*, is being piloted in Waringstown Presbyterian Church. It is hoped to make it available as a free downloadable resource in the autumn.

CHRIS KENNEDY, Convener

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs Cherry Poynton reports:

1. Website

1.1 The Committee has responsibility for the BMI website www.missionireland.org. In this technological age the website is becoming the main method for disseminating information about the Board's work, as well as providing downloadable resources including prayer bulletins. The site was restructured in 2010 to make it easier to navigate since it now contains much more information and many more resources including blogs and photographs on Flickr. Prayerfocus, while a downloadable resource, continues to be emailed to subscribers every week.

2. ReachOut

2.1 Six editions of *ReachOut* magazine were published during the year. 8,000 copies of each edition are printed for distribution but it has been noted that there is still a significant number of Congregations which do not promote the magazine. *ReachOut Connect*, the pull-out section in the magazine has been

redesigned. It contains a monthly prayer diary as well as information about field-workers and specific mission situations.

3. Conferences

3.1 The Board's Communications Officer, Robin Fairbairn organised Mission in Ireland events in 14 Presbyteries in March 2011. He was also responsible for the practical arrangements for conferences for the Deaconesses and for Irish Mission Workers. In addition there were meetings in connection with Urban and Rural Missions. Two Psalms Roadshows run in February (Banbridge) and March (Belfast) were greatly appreciated by those who attended.

4. Publications

4.1 The Committee's Publications Panel continues to look at the production of all of the Board's printed material, which this year included *Awake 2011 – God Acts* and the ongoing work of producing cards as an evangelistic tool for non-readers.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mrs Irene Younge reports:

1. Introduction

1.1 The Board deploys 8 Irish Mission Workers and 1 probationer.

1.2 In partnership with PW, BMI deploys 28 Deaconesses with a further 4 student Deaconesses on probationary year commencing June 2011.

1.3 There are currently 39 Ministers serving with the Board, including 2 Church Planters, 3 in Urban situations and 34 in Home Mission Congregations.

1.4 A full directory of personnel serving with the Board is listed in Appendix A.

2. Home and Urban Mission Ministers and Church Planters

2.1 The Rev Stephen Rea received a Call to serve as Minister of Carlow and Athy and was inducted by the Dublin and Munster Presbytery on 5 August, 2010.

2.2 The Rev Molly Deatherage received a Call to serve as Minister of Ballina, Killala and Ballymote and was Ordained and Inducted by the Monaghan Presbytery on 13 November, 2010.

3. Irish Mission Workers

3.1 Mr Stephen Wilson resigned from the Board on 14 July, 2010. The Board thanks Stephen for his period of service in Mullingar and latterly in Kells and wish Stephen, Karen, Patrick and Callum God's blessing in their future service.

3.2 Mr Harry Moreland has completed his deployment in Fermoy and Cahir and is awaiting redeployment to another location with the Board. The

Board records its thanks to Harry and Anne for their faithful work in the Cork area.

3.3 Decisions about the commissioning and deployment of Mr Eamon Doyle have been deferred.

4. Deaconesses

4.1 Mrs Elizabeth Matthews was called and inducted by the Dromore Presbytery to serve as a Deaconess in Elmwood alongside the Rev Andrew Thompson on 20 June, 2010.

4.2 Mrs Lynda McFaul was called, commissioned and inducted by the Presbytery of Carrickfergus to serve as a Deaconess in 1st Carrickfergus alongside the Rev Dr Cecil Grant on 5 September, 2010.

4.3 Miss Roberta Irvine resigned from 1st Comber and was subsequently called and inducted by the Presbytery of Templepatrick to serve as a Deaconess in Greystone Road, Antrim alongside the Rev Jonathan Moxen on 7 November, 2010.

4.4 Mrs Elizabeth Warnock resigned from service in Abbey, Monkstown and is a Deaconess without charge under the care of the North Belfast Presbytery.

4.5 Mrs Gillian Martin resigned as Deaconess in Woodvale on 31 March, 2010 to take up alternative employment. The Board records its thanks to Gillian for over 30 year's faithful service as a Deaconess.

5. Student Deaconesses

5.1 Mrs Amy Magee commenced a probationary year on 1 June, 2010 in Muckamore Congregation under the supervision of the Rev Peter Dickinson.

5.2 Mrs Eileen Black, Miss Joanne McCourt, Miss Tracey Nicholl and Mrs Hazel Reid commenced their 2nd year of training at Union Theological College in October 2010.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Mr Brian Knox reports:

1. Introduction

1.1 The Property Committee has met regularly and, in addition, numerous inspections of various Church properties have been made by Committee representatives, meetings held 'on location' with Congregational representatives, reports given and actions taken as appropriate. The following is a brief summary of the projects under current examination by the Committee.

2. Mullingar new Church building

2.1 Following discussion with local agents, the existing Church building has been placed on the market for sale, since it is too small for the growing Congregation. A site has been identified, and soil investigation tests are presently being taken. Dependant on receipt of satisfactory results of these and

other technical matters, it is proposed to have a planning application made in April 2011.

2.2 Purchase from the Westmeath County Council of the new site at Rathgowan, Mullingar, will only proceed upon receipt of Planning Approval.

3. Drogheda new Church building

3.1 Discussions/negotiations have continued over the months and it is hoped that these will be concluded in order that appropriate contracts may be put in place leading to commencement of building work on the new site at Bettystown.

4. Ballyshannon sale of old Church building

4.1 The Church building remains for sale and interest has been shown by some prospective purchasers.

5. Mountmellick old Church and adjoining manse

5.1 Despite some hopeful signs, a proposed sale did not proceed. This listed property is back on the market. Every effort is being made to sell the property and in the interim regular visits continue in order to monitor the condition of the property and those on either side given its terrace situation on the main street.

6. Lisbellaw manse extension

6.1 The extension and upgrading works have now been completed.

7. Arklow Church building extension

7.1 Exciting plans for the extension of the Church building in Arklow have been submitted and approved, and a grant has been made available to the congregation to assist in this project. The extension will add much needed capacity to the worship area, in addition to more halls accommodation and improved toilet facilities.

8. Irvinestown new Church building

8.1 A new Church building was opened for the Irvinestown Congregation in May 2010. BMI grant assistance was given towards this important project.

9. Strand, Belfast

9.1 Following an unfavourable insurance inspection, plans to vacate the Church building of the Urban Mission Congregation in Strand have been approved by the East Belfast Presbytery and the Board. The building is scheduled for demolition this summer, and in the meantime the congregation will relocate to a local school. Plans are in place to reconstruct a new suite of buildings on the site.

10. General

10.1 The Property Committee continues to progress other matters such as the preparation of a database of properties for which the Board is responsible; resolution of an insurance claim in respect of property at Kiltegan Park, Cork; verification of land ownership in Roundstone; upgrading/maintenance works at Galway manse, Ballina manse and a former manse at Nunns Island, Galway and a house in Letterkenny.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Douglas Cowan reports:

1. Introduction

1.1 The Finance Committee meets bimonthly to review the management accounts of the Board. Despite the difficult economic climate, the Committee is grateful to God that expenditure has been kept within the approved budgets for the year.

2. Capital Expenditure

2.1 The capital programme has fluctuated on a year to year basis because of the difficulties in predicting when the purchase of land and actual building projects will receive approval to commence. The Committee anticipates that the Board's capacity to provide further capital grants will be exhausted at the end of 2011, pending the sale of existing assets.

3. Properties

3.1 The Committee has reviewed present arrangements for the ownership and rental of accommodation for Irish Mission Workers. Beyond arrangements already agreed, it is not proposed to sell any surplus properties until market conditions improve.

4. Deaconesses

4.1 The Committee is in discussion with PW about the block grant donation from PW to BMI towards the total costs for deaconess salaries. The Committee reviews the contributions from Congregations towards these employment costs. A moratorium has been placed on the recruitment of new deaconesses.

5. Grants Panel

5.1 The Grants Panel consists of members from the Property and Finance Committees and meets three times per year. It disperses grants under the following headings:

- (a) Irish Mission Fund
- (b) Mission Support Grant
- (c) Home Mission Fabric Grant
- (d) Home Mission Car loan

(e) Home Mission Repair Grant

(f) Home Mission Capital Grant

5.2 With the formation of Mission Support Funds in some Presbyteries, the Board has agreed to provide administrative assistance for the dispersal of grants from these sources, using the existing grants mechanism or a variant of it.

APPENDIX A

Directory of Ministers, Deaconesses and Irish Mission Workers currently serving with the Board.

Home Mission Ministers

Congregations in brackets are not in the Home Mission.

Rev RS Agnew	(1st Monaghan) and Smithborough
Rev MRJ Anderson	Arklow
Rev SG Anketell	1st Bailieborough, Corraneary, (Trinity Bailieborough)
Rev Janice Browne	(Kerrykeel, Milford) and Rathmullan
Rev GD Campbell	(Blackrock) and Bray
Rev CFD Clements	Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo
Rev Molly Deatherage	Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
Rev CI Dickson	(Cavanaleck) and Aughtentaine
Rev JG Faris	Cork and Aghada
Rev CJ Gamble	Naas
Rev WJ Hayes	Tullamore and Mountmellick
Rev Kenneth Henderson	(Aughnacloy) and Ballymagrane
Rev G Hewitt (Methodist)	Christ Church, Limerick (Alternating scheme)
Rev HJ Honeyford	(2nd Castledearg) and Alt
Rev KA Jones	(Waterside) and Fahan
Rev Paul Linkens	(Ebrington) and Inch
Rev SJ Lockington	Corboy and Mullingar
Rev Dr DK McCrory	Maynooth
Rev GJ Mackarel	Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan and Bellasis
Rev Katherine Meyer	Sandymount (Alternating scheme)
Rev Dr JG Millar	Howth and Malahide
Rev NS Millen	(Dundalk, Castlebellingham) and Carlingford
Rev GA Mitchell	Sligo and Boyle
Rev DJ Montgomery	Greystones
Rev W Montgomery	Fermoy and Cahir
Rev DT Moore	Kilkenny
Rev Troy Morgan	Clones, Stonebridge, Ballyhobridge and Newbliss
Rev SW Rea	Carlow and Athy
Rev DW Reid	(Ardstraw) and Douglas
Rev SJ Richmond	Donegal
Rev John Rushton	Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount
Rev Dr RB Savage	Kells and Ervey

Rev RB Thompson	(Badoney, Corrick) and Glenelly
Rev JD Woodside	Drogheda
Rev GP Young	Moville and Greenbank
Vacant	Carndonagh and Malin
Vacant	Carrigart and Dunfanaghy
Vacant	Enniscorthy and Wexford
Vacant	(Frankford, Castleblayney) and Corvalley
Vacant	Maguiresbridge, Lisbellaw, Newtownbutler and Lisnaskea
Vacant	Galway (Alternating scheme)

Urban Mission Ministers

Rev Mervyn Gibson	Westbourne
Rev Robert Love	Taughmonagh
Rev Daniel Rankin	Strand

Church Planters

Rev DF Leal	Cliftonville Road
Rev Andy Carroll	Donabate, North Dublin

Deaconesses

Jenny Clegg	Ballycrochan, Bangor
Amanda Cooper	New Row, Coleraine
Muriel Cromie	Belfast City Hospital chaplaincy team
Doreen Draffin	Whitehouse and Hospice chaplaincy team
Eleanor Drysdale	Wellington, Ballymena
Lynda Gibson	NI Prison Service chaplaincy team
Sharon Heron	Strand, Belfast
Roberta Irvine	Greystone Road, Antrim
Christine Kyle	Ulster Hospital chaplaincy team
Phyllis Linton	West Church, Ballymena
Michelle McCauley	Ballygowan
Heather McCracken	Alexandra and locum RVH chaplaincy team
Sonya McCullagh	Shore Street, Donaghadee
Sadie McCullough	Whiteabbey
Lynda McFaul	1st Carrickfergus
Carol McRoberts	Tullycarnet
Elizabeth Matthews	Elmwood, Lisburn
Carol O'Hara	Antrim Area Hospital and Musgrave Park Hospital chaplaincy team
Jackie O'Neill	Joymount, Carrickfergus
Jean Gwyn Patton	RVH chaplaincy team
Julie Peake	Portrush
Margaret Robertson	Gardenmore, Larne
Jenny Robinson	South Belfast Friendship House
Kathleen Spence	Scarva Street, Banbridge
Rosemary Spiers	1st Antrim

Evelyn White	1st Lisburn
Liz Warnock	Interim placement

Probationary Deaconess

Amy Magee	Muckamore
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Student Deaconesses

Eileen Black	2nd year
Joanne McCourt	2nd year
Tracey Nicholl	2nd year
Hazel Reid	2nd year

Irish Mission Workers

David Boyd	Adelaide Road, Dublin
Tom Dowling	Kilkenny
Kevin Hargaden	Maynooth
Harry Moreland	Cork
Billy Patterson	Drogheda
Keith Preston	Migrant communities, South and East Belfast
William Workman	Athy and Carlow
Philip Whelton	Arklow

Probationary Irish Mission Worker

Eamon Doyle	
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BMI-supported outreach workers (2011)

Richie Cronin	Dun Laoghaire
Jonathan Reid	1st Ahoghill
Eddie Spence	Ballygomartin
Appointment pending	Greystones
Appointment pending	Ballyloughan

APPENDIX B**ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF A MINISTER****Introductory Comments**

This order of service has been produced as the first in a series. If its broad outlines are accepted that it can be readily altered to be used in the following:

- Installation of a Minister to a second or subsequent charge
- Induction of an Associate Minister
- Installation or induction of a Minister to special service
- Licensing of probationers for the Ministry
- Ordination of elders
- Commissioning of Deaconesses

Commissioning of Irish Mission Workers
Commissioning of Overseas Mission personnel

Structure of the Service

The structure of this service is as follows:

1-5 Approach to God in praise and prayer.

6-8 Foundations for ministry and ordination in Scripture, read and preached and in the context of the universal faith of the Church expressed in the creed and hymn/s. It would be appropriate to have readings that refer to the ministry of Jesus as the foundation and pattern for all Christian ministry and others to set the ministry of word and sacrament in the context of the wider ministry, fellowship, mission and worship of the Church.

9-18 The local context of the ordination and installation of the Minister is outlined in the narrative of how the individual and congregation have come to this point. This is done in the rather larger context of the life and witness of PCI and culminates in the act of ordination, the congregation making their commitment to play their part and the inclusion of the Minister into the fellowship of Presbytery and the local congregation.

The formal words at **14** link the local story of Licentiate and congregation into the great narrative of Christ and the Church.

19-23 The Minister and congregation are commissioned.

THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF A MINISTERⁱ

The members of the Presbytery Commission enter the Church and take their places before the start of worship.

1. Greeting

The Moderator greets the congregation, finishing with an appropriate portion of Scripture [Is 63:7; Dan 2:20-22; Eph 1:3; Rev 5:11-14] and/or call to worship such as the following:ⁱⁱ

Let us worship God, the Creator of heaven and earth; let us worship the Lord Jesus, King and Head of the Church, who has put his Spirit in our hearts to bind us together in fellowship and who has brought us to this joyful celebration.

2. Praise [Such as Ps 135:1-5, IPH 174, 182, 194]

3. Prayers of adoration and confessionⁱⁱⁱ (such as the following)

Let us pray.

Holy Lord, whose Son Jesus Christ lived our human life in unselfish service, conquered death and ascended to the heavens to rule over all things, we worship you as King over the whole universe. Gracious God, who loved your creation and offered your Son to die for it, to rescue it from destruction, we worship you as Redeemer of your people; Eternal Father, who sent your Holy Spirit to regenerate those whom you have called and to constitute your Son's Church, we worship you as the giver of eternal life. Amen.

We praise you, O God, for the Good News that you have given to your Church, to take to the world, the good news that we sinful men and women can be set free from all that brings about your righteous condemnation, all that would damage and destroy us. We are keenly aware of our failures, our short comings, our rebellion. Even as your people, we fall far short of what we ought to be. We confess openly before you the sin that brings shame to us and pain to you. We repent of it, we turn from it, we long for new obedience and new faithfulness. Amen.

The prayers of adoration and confession may end with a responsive element such as the following:

I love the Lord for he heard my voice,
He heard my cry for mercy,

Because he turned his ear to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.

Be at rest once more, O my soul,
For the Lord has been good to you.
(Ps. 116: 1, 7)

Let the name of the LORD be praised,
Both now and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets
The name of the LORD is to be praised.

The LORD is exalted over all the nations,
His glory above the heavens.
(Ps. 113:2-4)

4. Reading or readings [Such as Josh 1, Matt 4:18-22, Eph 4:1-16, Rev 21]

5. Praise [Such as IPH 476, 611, 615, 638]

6. Sermon or statement on the nature of the Church^{iv}

7. The Apostles' Creed may be said here

Let us stand to confess our common faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

This may be either the traditional version or the contemporary version (IPH 377 or 378) said by all standing.

8. Praise^v [Such as IPH 361, 380, 452, 456]

9. The Narrative^{vi}

The Vacancy Convener gives an appropriately brief account of the steps leading to the ordination and installation.

10. Preamble

The Licentiate takes his/her place before the Presbytery.

The Moderator says:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, who, having ascended to the right hand of the Father, has given gifts for the building up the Church, which is his body, we have met as the Presbytery of PP to ordain NN^{vii} to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and to install^{viii} him/her to the pastoral charge of ...

As we do this we remind ourselves of the foundational standards upon which our Church rests.

The Clerk of Presbytery reads^{ix}

The Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the supreme standard of the Church.

It is the privilege, right and duty of everyone to examine the Scriptures personally, and each individual is bound to submit to their authority. Having formed a definite conviction as to what the will of God is upon any subject, it is the duty of everyone to accept and obey it. In exercising the inalienable right of private judgement, individual Christians are not to set their reason above the Word of God, or to refuse light from any quarter. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they are to use their reason to ascertain the divine will as revealed in Scripture, and are to refuse to subject conscience to any authority but that of the Word of God. In the words of the Westminster Confession "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship."

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a witness for Christ, has adopted subordinate standards in which is set forth what she understands the Word of God to teach on certain important points of doctrine and worship. These subordinate standards are a testimony for truth and against error, and serve as a bond of union for members of the Church.

The Confession of Faith (as approved by the Church of Scotland in her Act of 1647), and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, prepared by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, are the subordinate standards of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Accepting these subordinate standards, the Church holds that, although civil rulers are bound to render obedience to Christ in their own province, yet they ought not to attempt in any way to constrain anyone's religious beliefs, or invade the rights of conscience.

In the Church resides the right to interpret and explain her standards under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

11. The Moderator addresses the Licentiate.^x

NN I am now going to ask you seven questions. The first two are a public profession of your personal faith.

Do you believe in one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour?

I do

Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only infallible rule of faith and life?

I do

And now, two questions concerning your understanding of the Church of Jesus Christ and this Presbyterian Church in Ireland in particular.

Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to be an integral part of the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the whole world and do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church, while upholding Reformed doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in a spirit of love towards all your brothers and sisters in Christ?

I do

Adhering to the fundamental doctrines of the faith, set out in the Standards of this Church, and accepting also the Presbyterian form of Church government to be founded on and in harmony with the Word of God, do you promise to yield submission in the Lord to the courts of this Church and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?

I do

Now, three questions on the discharge of your ministry in this place.

So far as you know your own heart, are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of all people, your central motives as you offer yourself to be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament?

They are

Do you commit yourself, in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ to live a Godly life; and faithfully, diligently, and graciously to discharge the duties of your ministry, seeking in all things the advancement of the kingdom of God?

I do

Do you accept the call to be pastor of this congregation, and promise, through the grace of God, to be a faithful Minister of the Gospel among this people?

I do

12. Subscription to the Subordinate Standards

The Moderator addresses the Licentiate in these words:

You are now required to subscribe, in terms of the General Assembly's Formula, 'I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as described in the Code, Chapter I, paragraphs 12-14, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and as such I subscribe it as the confession of my faith'.

The Formula is signed in the Minute book of Presbytery.

13. Praise [Such as IPH 457, 461, 482, 485, 494]^{xi}**14. The Licentiate kneels.**

Those who are to participate in the laying on of hands take their places.

The Moderator says:

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You call us in your mercy; You sustain us by your power.

Through every generation, your wisdom guides your people.

You sent your only Son, Jesus Christ, to be the apostle and high priest of our faith and the shepherd of our souls. By his life and his teaching he has declared your love for the whole world, by his death he has satisfied your justice; by his resurrection he has demonstrated his victory over sin, and death. Having ascended into heaven, he has poured out his Spirit, making some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip all for the work of ministry and to build up his body, the Church.

The Moderator and other Ministers lay hands on the head of the Licentiate. The Moderator says:

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon this your servant, NN whom we now, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain and appoint to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, committing to him/her authority to minister your Word and Sacraments, and to share in the government of your Church.

Increase in this your servant the gifts of your grace that he/she may be a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and become more and more fitted to the work that you have called him/her to undertake.

Here insert appropriate prayer.

The Moderator then continues:

May NN be for us all a source of strength and inspiration so that, with him, we may share in the ministry of Christ, bringing salvation for those who are lost, reconciliation to those who are divided, peace to those who are in anguish, healing to those who are broken, justice to those who are oppressed, and hope for those who are in despair. Receive these, our prayers for him/her whose calling is to pray for all, and, with all your faithful servants, bring him/her at the last into your eternal joy.

Through Christ who lived and died for us, who rose again, and who reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

The Aaronic Blessing (said or sung)**15. The Moderator says: *Let us all stand***

16. The Moderator, addressing the newly ordained Minister, says:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, I now declare you NN to have been ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, and installed to this charge; as a sign of this I, as Moderator of Presbytery, give you the right hand of fellowship. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Other members of the Commission and representatives of the congregation may now be invited to welcome the newly ordained and installed Minister with a handshake.^{x11}

17. The Moderator says:^{xiii}

Members of the congregation of CC, I am going to ask you two questions. These questions invite you to express your fellowship with your new Minister and your commitment to work with him/her as you serve Christ together.

Do you, the members of this congregation, in receiving NN whom you have called to be your Minister, offer him/her your welcome and promise him/her your loving encouragement and prayerful support?

We do

Will you join regularly with NN as he/she leads worship and preaches the word; will you share together with him/her in mutually enriching fellowship and will you, together with him/her, take up your responsibility for Christian mission in the local community and throughout the world?

We will

18. The Moderator says: *Having committed yourselves, Minister and People, to each other and to living for the glory of God in this place, we join with one voice in prayer: Our Father ...*

19. Charge

The Minister appointed gives a Charge to the new Minister and to the congregation

20. Offering and prayer of dedication**21. Prayer**

Prayer is here offered for the congregation and for the exercise of the ministry of word and sacrament in particular.

22. Praise [Such as IPH 150, 155, 633, 638, 642]**23. The Moderator pronounces the Benediction.**

Footnotes

- i This is an order for the ordination of a Licentiate and installation to a first charge. Some alterations will need to be made for the installation of a previously ordained Minister and for Ministers entering work for which 'installation' is not appropriate.
Because some formal business is transacted before the service begins, Presbytery is constituted with prayer prior to the start of the service.
All that follows, apart from those parts demanded by the Code, is offered as guidance, not prescriptively.
A few parts of this order have their origin in material produced by the Panel on Worship of the Church of Scotland.
- ii While the phrase: The Moderator says, is used throughout, there is significant freedom of expression, as all of the Moderator's words, including the prayers may be altered to suit local tastes, so long as the substance remains the same. Additional words of explanation would be very appropriate in situations where a significant number of people are present for whom the Church and its ceremonies are alien. As with so many formal occasions, getting a balance between formal language, familiar to the reasonably well educated, and informal language, familiar to all present, but transient and sometimes even trivialising is very difficult. The Moderator might explain such terms as Presbytery, Moderator, Clerk, Licentiate and subscribe. Alternatively, short explanations might be printed in a leaflet, to be included with the Order of Service. These explanations might also include a paragraph or two on the role of the Minister in PCI.
- iii There is, of course, no reason why people other than the Moderator might not lead in prayer, here or elsewhere.
- iv It is arguable that the sermon might be omitted, its function being fulfilled by a 'Statement of Order', the reading or readings and the Creed. If so, the statement, readings and Creed should be introduced by suitable words from the Moderator, making clear that they give Scriptural and historical warrant for the service as a whole.
- v If an anthem is desired, it might take the place of this praise or be offered as a processional or recessional.
- vi The Narrative sets the ordination/installation into its context in the life story of the Congregation and the Minister. This may be given by, for example, the Vacancy Convener, Session Clerk or a Board Representative in the case of a Licentiate being called to missionary service. The narrative should be brief and positive in tone, telling how God has brought Congregation and Minister together.
- vii NN is used for the name of the Licentiate. In some places the full name should be used while, in others, the Christian name or Mr/Miss/Mrs or other title should be used as appropriate. PP is used for the name of the Presbytery and CC for the name of the Congregation.
- viii In certain circumstances the newly ordained Minister may be 'inducted'. Here and elsewhere, the appropriate term should be used and other phrases may need to be changed.
- ix The traditional wording has been retained as a change would necessitate a change in the Code. A resolution in this respect is appended.

- x These questions contain the substance of the current questions except that the penultimate question does not specifically name the Subordinate Standards. The Standards have been named above and the Westminster Confession of Faith is named in the requirement to subscribe, at section 11.
- xi This praise breaks the formal part of the ordination recognising that what is done is part of an act of worship. It also recognises that, ultimately, the one who calls, ordains and empowers for service is God himself.
- xii The right hand of fellowship is offered formally by the Moderator. Members of the Presbytery and Congregation welcome the Minister into their fellowship. The latter might include a wider range of members.
- xiii Congregational promises seem appropriate as an expression of fellowship and mutual commitment. As part of the preparation for the service, on the Sunday preceding, the Congregation should be informed of the questions that they will be asked.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendations outlined in the Revised Strategy for Future Mission Development section of the Report be agreed.
3. That the BMI Mission Development Officer maintains annual contact with Presbytery Clerks and Mission Development Co-ordinators to offer support in mission development in whatever manner is deemed appropriate.
4. That the General Assembly support the formation of a series of networks built around urban, rural and missional Church.
5. That the General Assembly commend to Kirk Sessions the Course for the Training of Evangelists and invite them to consider nominating and supporting suitable candidates as participants from their Congregations.
6. That the Panel on the Revision of the Book of Public Worship reviews the wording of Pars 10-14 of The Code and reports to next year's General Assembly.
7. That the General Assembly commend the work of Nightlight under its Director, Mr John Luke and encourage volunteers to offer themselves for service in this and other outreach projects within the Church.
8. That the General Assembly encourage Congregations to set aside one Sunday in the year to celebrate our rich access to Scripture and, in this regard, commend the online resources of the Bible Societies in Ireland to Ministers and Kirk Sessions.
9. 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:

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

President: Mrs PYLLIS SPENCE

General Secretary: Mrs CAROLINE HAWTHORNE

Theme for the year: Stir us to Action

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Board of Mission in Ireland, Board of Mission Overseas and Board of Social Witness.)

1. The theme for this past year has been “Stir us to Action”. This challenged members to ‘stir up’ one another in Christ by using God’s Word, encouragement and suggesting ways of becoming actively involved in helping others. The theme verse was 1 Peter 1:13: “Prepare your minds for action.”

2. The Presbyterian Women’s (PW) office continues to be staffed by Mrs Caroline Hawthorne, General Secretary; Mrs Charlotte Stevenson, Communications & Development Officer; Miss Fiona Bingham, Senior Secretary and Miss Naomi Campbell, Receptionist/Secretary.

3. The Resources Committee continues to be commended by members for the production of the resource pack. Groups are offered this pack each year to help with their programme – it is full of useful ideas relating to the theme for the year. PW records sincere thanks to Mrs Ann Blue for convening this committee and for the valuable contribution she and committee members have made.

4. The PW website contains useful information relating to the organisation. Helpful resources and images are available on the website for members to download. The website address is www.presbyterianireland.org/pw.

5. CENTRAL COMMITTEE 2010/11

Office Bearers:

President:	Mrs Phyllis Spence (Dromore)
Home Vice President:	Mrs Valerie Tweedie (East Belfast)
Overseas Vice President:	Mrs Edna McIlwaine (Armagh)

Other Committee Members:

Mrs Margaret Stevenson (Ards)	Mrs Nan Bradford (Monaghan)
Mrs Moyra Stirling (Armagh)	Mrs Ann Blue (Newry)
Mrs Lynn Murray (Ballymena)	Mrs Jean Donald (Omagh)
Mrs Dorothy Marshall (North Belfast)	Mrs Gwen Carson (Route)
Dr Jean Shannon (South Belfast)	Mrs Edith Holmes (Templepatrick)
Mrs Winnie Moffett (East Belfast)	Mrs Anne Thompson (Tyrone)
Mrs Lynda Stothers (Carrickfergus)	Miss Anna Morrison (former YWG)
Mrs Hazel Clarke (Coleraine and Limavady)	Mrs Deborah Hyland (former YWG)

Mrs Violet Millar (Coleraine and Limavady)	Mrs Vera McLean (former YWG)
Mrs Georgina Hunter (Derry and Donegal)	Mrs Caroline Hawthorne (staff)
Mrs Sandra Stokes (Down)	Mrs Charlotte Stevenson (staff)
Mrs Vera Crawford (Dromore)	Mrs Evelyn Hamilton (Ex Officio)
Mrs Elizabeth Moffett (Iveagh)	

6. New Members of Central Committee 2011/12

Mrs Jean Annett (Iveagh) Mrs Elaine Crockett (Derry & Donegal)
Mrs Pat Martin (Monaghan) Mrs Valerie Reid (Omagh)

7. New Office Bearers effective from Annual Meeting, 26 May 2011

President 2011/12: Mrs Edna McIlwaine (Armagh)

Overseas Vice President 2011/13: Mrs Elizabeth Moffett (Iveagh)

8. The Central Committee met eight times during the year. As well as carrying the responsibility of steering the work of the organisation, the Central Committee continues to provide representatives to several committees and Boards in PCI and various other organisations and bodies.

9. Mrs Winnie Moffett represents PW at Women's Link and serves as their President.

10. Mrs Maureen Weir represents PW at Women's Forum.

11. Mrs Caroline Hawthorne represents PW on Focusfest Committee.

12. Mrs Phyllis Spence has served as President during 2010/11. During this year she has given generously of her time in attendance at meetings of Boards and Committees and has travelled extensively throughout Ireland to fulfil her many speaking engagements. Phyllis travelled to India with Caroline Hawthorne in November to visit the Church of North India in Gujarat. They were invited to speak at the Church of North India's (CNI) 40th Anniversary Women's Fellowship Conference. Central Committee deeply appreciates the contribution Phyllis has made to PW especially during her term in office.

13. PW Central Committee continues to appreciate the support and advice given by the Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev Dr DJ Watts.

14. The Committee also records its thanks to the Rev DJ Bruce, Secretary to the Board of Mission in Ireland; the Rev WS Marrs, Secretary to the Board of Mission Overseas; and Mr L Conway, Secretary to the Board of Social Witness, for their help and expertise.

15. Events 2010/11

- The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 15 April, 2010, in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Edna McIlwaine.
- The Annual Meetings were held on 6 May, 2010, in Church House. The guest speaker was Mrs Helen Kennedy. Helen and her husband, Maurice, are volunteers-in-mission with BMO in Blantyre, Malawi. Helen used the words of 1 Peter 1:13 to challenge everyone to "roll up your sleeves", "prepare your minds for action". She shared stories of mission life in Malawi and spoke of the overwhelming joy at seeing the change in

people's lives. She expressed gratitude to PW for the educational and medical boxes sent to Malawi. Helen challenged members to see the need in the world around and respond to it in the name of Christ.

- Prior to Central Committee in September 2010 the Rev David Bruce conducted a Communion Service.
- PW Forum was held on 11 September, 2010, in Church House, with the theme, "Stir us to Action". The Forum usually meets twice a year, when five representatives from each PW LINK (Presbytery level) are invited to join with Central Committee. Members are brought up to date with what is happening within PW and they have an opportunity to draw on each other's experiences. Caroline Hawthorne spoke on leadership, challenging members in their roles as leaders within PW. The programme also included an overview on the work of PW followed by group discussion.
- PW Forum met again on 3 February, 2011, in the Minor Hall, Church House. Phyllis Spence (President) led opening devotions and gave a short report on her trip to India with Caroline Hawthorne (General Secretary). The Resources Committee gave a flavour of what is in the 2011/2012 Resource Pack, highlighting the theme for next year; "Under His Wings". Caroline announced changes to the PW Mission Fund and the special projects that it will support during 2011/2012. She also advised that from September 2011 membership fees would no longer be collected. A presentation was given in response to queries that had been raised at the September Forum. It suggested how LINKs could become more effective in encouraging women to serve Christ through *Presbyterian Women*.

South Belfast Friendship House

16. The House is funded by PW through the PW Mission Fund.
17. PW Central Committee continues to value the partnership with the Board of Social Witness in relation to the management of South Belfast Friendship House.
18. The Management Committee is thankful to Mrs Jenny Robinson, Mrs Eunice Moore and Miss Ashley McFaul for their faithful service and commitment to the work of South Belfast Friendship House. The Committee would like to record its thanks to Miss Natalie Johnston who has served as part of the BSW Volunteer Scheme this past year, and to all the volunteers who help on a regular basis - their support is invaluable.
19. The new building is proving to be a superb facility and is being greatly used. It has enabled the work of the House to grow, with a breakfast club and youth Alpha course now running, in addition to the usual activities.
20. In August 2010 two summer teams were held at the House. One was led by Stuart Hawthorne from Woodlands Presbyterian Church and the other was led by a team from the PCI Youth and Children's Board.

21. Once again, there was a wonderful response to the Christmas Appeal. PW Groups, Congregations and individuals gave money gifts, toys and household goods, and many people were helped as a result of this generosity. It is also a huge encouragement to the staff team when personal contact is made with the House. The Management Committee would like to record its thanks to all who contributed.

Finance

22. PW Central Committee is very grateful for the ongoing support of its members which enables PW to contribute to the mission of the Church at home and overseas. Income to the Mission Fund for Home and Overseas in 2010 amounted to £547,770.

23. PW will be giving a grant of £255,000 in 2011 to the Board of Mission in Ireland to partly support 27 Deaconesses and one Probationary Deaconess, serving in Congregations, the Community, Hospitals and the Prison Service. In addition, PW are currently supporting four student Deaconesses at Union Theological College.

24. PW will be giving a grant of £190,000 in 2011 to the Board of Mission Overseas.

25. PW Central Committee acknowledges with thanks the following bequest:

Miss Edith Josephine McCausland	£3,000
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Birthday Project

26. The total amount received for the 2009/10 Birthday Project was £68,405, and this went towards the Vine Centre in Belfast and a Widows' Empowerment Programme in Nepal.

27. At the time of writing the Birthday Project (2010/11) for supporting God's work in the Synod of Livingstonia in Malawi had received £43,000.

Wider World

28. PW Central Committee records sincere thanks to the former Editor, Mrs Anthea Harrison and Miss Ruth Mitchell who compiled the children's page. Anthea served as Editor for seven years and she produced the magazine to a consistently high standard, making it an interesting and informative read. Committee would like to welcome Mrs Charlotte Stevenson to her new role as Editor, in addition to her other duties and pray that God will use her as she continues to develop the magazine for Presbyterian Women.

29. Wider World has a readership of around 19,000. The Committee continues to promote Wider World amongst the members of our Church and would encourage more members to subscribe to this excellent magazine.

30. Selected extracts from Wider World continue to be available on audio tape for those who are blind or partially sighted.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev RA LIDDLE

Secretary: Mr LINDSAY CONWAY, OBE

THE BOARD AT A GLANCE:

- 20 locations
- 445 bed spaces
- 428 staff
- 200 volunteers
- £8 + million operational budget

AREAS OF WORK:

- **Residential Care** – Older People & Learning Disability
- **Nursing Care** – Older People
- **Working with people with Addictions**
- **Working with Offenders**
- **Supported Housing** – Older People & Learning Disability
- **Student Accommodation**
- **Counselling Service**
- **Child Protection** – Training, Advice & Support
- **Chaplains** – Hospital, Hospice, University & Forces
- **Ministry to the Deaf**
- **Family Centre** – Young Families, Older People, School Children & Homeless
- **Lobbying & Campaigning**

In Summary:

1. The following reports outline the work and activities of a busy Board, a Board that fulfills the Social Care functions of our denomination. This year the Board is “Celebrating Service”, a theme that focuses on the positive aspects of the Board’s work and does not dwell on the “doom and gloom” in the social care world and the threatened round of budget cuts. The Board is blessed on a daily basis as it serves and meets the needs of so many individuals.

2. **Specialist Ministries:** reports on the on-going work of Chaplains, working in Criminal Justice, Health Care, Education and with the Armed Forces. The appointment of a new Minister in the Kinghan Church will be reported.

3. **Older People Services:** reports on the extensive work carried out in Residential and Nursing Homes and stresses the difficult time this sector is experiencing in the whole climate of cuts.

4. **Family Services:** reports on the proposed work of the new Disability, Health and Wellbeing Committee, PCI Counselling, PCI Holiday and Taking Care. The new committee will begin to address some of the wider issues of disability and mental health. Getting Onboard, a new project, will have been launched in two Presbytery areas.

5. **Adult Services:** reports on the work of Thompson House, Carlisle House, Grays Court and the work of the Addiction Services Committee. The replacement of Thompson House will be a major focus for the next two plus years.

BOARD REPORT

Strategic Objective 1

“The Board shall deliver an effective service to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the wider community.”

“Celebrating Service”

1. In the current economic situation many people can identify with the Apostle Paul when he talked about being ‘hard pressed on every side!’ As they look forward and wonder how to overcome present difficulties, they can understand Paul’s feeling ‘perplexed.’ Of course that’s only one side of the coin and the opposite side from hope. What Paul actually wrote was, “We are hard pressed on every side, *but not crushed*; perplexed, *but not in despair*.” 2 Cor. 4v8

2. The Board of Social Witness faces many challenges. In some areas of the work the Board may be considered hard-pressed and there are perplexing problems, but those who serve with the Board are neither crushed nor in despair. With money tight it is easy to panic or to lose sight of God’s calling. At such times it is necessary to look again at what God is doing and to focus on Jesus who is the beginner and finisher of faith.

3. It is gratifying to hear families talk about elderly relatives finding the Board’s Older People Services units a real home in which they are loved and cared for. Also how former residents talk about Carlisle House being a place in which they are not treated like addicts but as human beings with dignity.

4. It’s not just about money, it’s about people! *People matter to God!* People in need; people who need to see the love of Christ before they can hear about the love of Christ; people who need to be treated with dignity, compassion and care. It is about people giving themselves selflessly to care. In many of the Board’s units staff went over and above the call of duty to care for residents during the severe winter snows and water shortages. One member of staff even brought in a sleeping bag in case she was unable to get back home. The care and love freely given by the staff of Aaron House when a long term resident died during the year was like a family gathering round to share the grief.

5. Being hard-pressed need not lead to being crushed. Facing perplexity need not end in despair, for God is a great God. He calls, He equips and He provides. Celebrating the good news stories, celebrating what God has given and what He is doing is the antidote to despair. Day-by-day, in Congregations and projects, it is both possible and right to celebrate service and, ‘*To Live out the Love of Christ through a Caring Church within our Communities.*’

6. As it plans for the year ahead and comes to the end of its Strategic Plan, 2007-2012, the Board is very much aware of the difficult cuts that will impact on its frontline services over the next few years. Funding issues may

result in a crisis within its overall operation, leading to a reduction of services and staff, something it would want to avoid at all costs. The Board is totally convinced that the substantive issue is underfunding and not overspending. Commissioners and funders of services are endeavouring to meet the demands of so many and where possible reduce the impact of the cuts. The complexity of the budgeting process and the high standards set by the regulatory bodies place major pressures on the providers of services. The Board operates in a number of specialist areas – Family and Child Care, Older People Services, Criminal Justice, Learning Disability, Addictions, Mental Health, Disability, Chaplaincy to name a few.

7. The Code, Par 281(2)(a), states - The Board shall: “concern itself with all questions affecting the social welfare of the members of the Church and the community, and all questions affecting Church and industry, except such as are otherwise provided for by the Assembly and may undertake activities to further the Church’s witness in these fields”. For generations the Board has adhered to the demands that the General Assembly have placed on it and followed the Biblical imperative of “Loving your neighbour”. The development of the Board’s activities clearly shows that it responds to the needs of individuals, Congregations or the wider denomination, reluctant to promote new work in the Board’s own right. The profile of the work reflects another time in the Board’s history, work has been renamed, relocated and at times followed a different path.

8. The voluntary/community/faith sector continues to supplement the statutory sector and government knows that the Board will reluctantly close its doors or refuse admission to anyone. Challenges and opportunities will arise during this period of recession both at Board and local levels. Ministers and Elders will experience a higher demand on their time as they respond to more and more pastoral needs as a result of local services being cut. Considerable stress will be experienced at congregational level when individual care packages are reduced, elective surgery is postponed or cancelled, treatment or medication is denied, the scenarios are endless.

9. The Prime Minister in launching his “Big Society” initiative stated:-
“I’ve been saying for the last four-and-a-half years that I want to empower the voluntary sector, social enterprises, social capital, the Big Society – all the things that can actually help us build a stronger and bigger society in Britain. I can’t think of a better way of empowering you than actually starting by sitting you round the Cabinet table, in power effectively. Also today, we are publishing the first part of our coalition agreement. It’s a very comprehensive coalition agreement between the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives, and I think it’s a big signal that the first part that we publish is actually that part about the Big Society – about decentralising power, about empowering communities, about all the work that you do to help build the big, strong society that we want to see here in the United Kingdom.”

10. Throughout the Board’s history it has connected with communities at times of great social need; a “Big Society” model, both at denominational level and at a local level through the work of Congregations. Time and time again the Church shows the love of Christ in practical ways, by individuals giving freely

of their time and skills. The Christian Community is witnessing real growth in major initiatives within local communities – Redeeming Our Communities, Street Pastors, the formation of a Community Faith Forum. People of God must play their part to influence legislation and policy.

11. Debra Green in her book “Redeeming our Communities – 21st Century Miracles of Social Transformation” writes – “What’s needed is not just a New Reformation that makes the Word of God more accessible, we also need a revival of faith fuelled activism that makes the heart of God more visible”. The “Faith Economy” reflects a massive investment of those who give freely of their time, both in Church based activities and as volunteers in wider community life. Convert those volunteer hours into a wage and the Churches are putting hundreds of thousands into the economy. Social Witness must be visible in Congregations and in the life and work of the Board. If the Church fails to respond to the increasing needs of its communities, it is failing in its Christian duty to “love your neighbour”.

THANKS

12. With real gratitude the Board celebrates the service on the frontline of the work; the more than four hundred staff in the office, projects, local support committees, Board and Assembly Committees and Panels. In particular the Board continues to be grateful for the wisdom and experience of the Secretary and Director of Social Service, Lindsay Conway, who regularly carries more than one or even two jobs.

13. The Board serves a wide range of people and meets a wide range of needs due to the dedicated skills and commitment of more than 400 staff who work in homes, projects and in the BSW Office in Church House. A large thank you is also due to the many who serve so faithfully on the Board’s numerous Committees and Panels, and to the Board Convener, the Rev Bobby Liddle.

14. The Board is grateful to be able to work so closely with a wide range of statutory and public agencies which work with the Board as it seeks to minister to a broad range of needs in society. To Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety; Supporting People (Northern Ireland Housing Executive); Probation Board of Northern Ireland; Northern Ireland Prison Service; Access (NI); Police Service of Northern Ireland; Garda Síochána; partner Housing Associations; Department of Education and many others grateful thanks are extended for their continued funding and support.

15. A special word of thanks goes to those within the Presbyterian Family; to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, Financial Secretary, Head of Personnel, Presbyterian Women, Information Officer and their staff teams and to the United Appeal Board for their funding and support. It has also been good to be part of a much closer co-operation and consultation between Boards and the Board of Social Witness expresses its thanks to all the Board Conveners and Secretaries. Invitations to visit Presbyteries and Congregations to inform of the Board’s work are always appreciated and thanks are due to all such for their support.

SPECIALIST MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Strategic Objective 2

“Specialist Ministries shall promote and support the work of Chaplains and the Churches ministry to the Deaf Community.”

1. The ministry of the Health Care and Prison Chaplains plays a significant role in the life and work of the Church. The Chaplains Committee is having to deal with a wide range of issues that are symptomatic of this period of recession, many of the proposed cuts will impact directly on the lives of patients and prisoners. Many patients, prisoners’ families and staff welcome ministry from our Chaplains at an uncertain and fragile time in their lives.

2. The Committee commends the Forces Chaplains to the prayers of the Church. They share the risks of service personnel in various conflict zones having to minister to the traumatised, as well as dealing with their own personal traumas related to these conflicts. It remembers too their families and surrounds them in its prayers.

3. The Chaplains within the world of Education provide a valuable resource to students who are having to contend with the pressure of fees and proposed cuts, on top of the everyday pressures and strains of student life.

4. During the year the Committee welcomed two new Conveners – the Rev Dr Victor Dobbin (Forces Committee) and the Rev Marlene Taylor (Chaplains Committee). The Rev Karen Mbayo was appointed Chaplain at Queen’s University and the Rev Glen Jordan was appointed Assistant to the Convener of the Kinghan Church.

Health Care and Prison Chaplains

5. The Committee is aware that there are major changes in the whole area of recruitment and procedures within the Health Trusts. Under the old system the Church nominated Chaplains to the Trusts; now the Trusts advertise and recruit, though in consultation with the Churches.

6. The Committee is concerned that ministers are finding difficulty in gaining access to wards in some hospitals. There is presently no standard access guidance across the Hospital Trusts; if necessary the Committee will agree a joint protocol with the Department of Health. ID badges for hospital Chaplains may be a solution.

7. A new Code of Conduct has been launched by the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy Association. The Code was launched by the Health Minister, Mr Michael McGimpsey MLA. In launching the Code the Minister gave his support to the Chaplains and stated how valuable the service was.

8. The Prison Service Review has resulted in major tensions throughout the service. The Prison Chaplains have continued to provide a vital service during this difficult time. There have been significant developments in this ministry, a ministry that impacts upon the lives of both prisoners and their families.

9. A further Review of Prison Chaplains will be carried out later this year; this will give an opportunity to influence the service that is being provided

and consider future developments. This must include the whole area of Community Chaplaincy.

FORCES PANEL

The Rev Dr Victor Dobbin reports:

1. On the 19 October, 2010 the British Government published the 'Strategic and Security Review' giving details on how the Armed Forces will be reshaped to tackle emerging and future threats. The review will lead to reductions in manpower over the next five years across all three Services including civilians who work in Defence.

2. Notwithstanding these inevitable reductions in manpower the Armed Forces will continue to require Chaplains to minister to the men and women as they carry out their duties in the most difficult and dangerous circumstances. Vacancies arise from time to time within all three services and anyone who would like to find out more about Chaplaincy work should contact the Convener or any member of Committee.

3. The Committee is conscious that a considerable number of men and women who belong to, or whose families are members of, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland serve in HM Forces and appreciate the work of the respective Chaplaincy Services who minister to them during their time on active service.

4. One of our Chaplains, the Rev Stephan van Os, is presently serving in Afghanistan with the 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment. This has been a most difficult operation for the Battalion and no less demanding for the Chaplain. In his newsletter he writes, "*In spite of the fact that we are located in the middle of a war zone where all kinds of terrible and tragic events take place, when we go home it will be the memories of comradeship, shared hardship and the occasions when something funny happened that left us nearly crying with laughter that we will carry through the rest of our lives.*" He continues, "*Pray for my continuing ministry that I may find the right words to share in sermons, daily personal encounters and in my daily thought for the day at the Battlegroup Conference. Also that my words will be able to engage un-churched soldiers with the good news in categories they can grasp.*"

5. In the course of their operational tour the Battalion has had three soldiers killed and a number injured.

6. The Rev Heather Rendell is now serving in Afghanistan with her Regiment. The Church's prayers are with the Chaplains and the young men and women to whom they minister.

7. In addition to these two Chaplains who will have served in Afghanistan at some time during these past twelve months, seven other Chaplains from PCI hold Commissions in the Royal Army Chaplains Department. They include the Rev Norman McDowell, the Rev Dr Paul Swinn and the Rev Mark Henderson who serve with Regular Units. The Rev Professor Patton Taylor, the Rev Dr David Latimer and the Rev Colin Jones serve as Territorial Army Chaplains and the Rev Kenneth Crowe serves as an Army Cadet Force Chaplain. The Rev Derek Weir remains our only Officiating Chaplain at Aldergrove.

8. Two PCI Ministers serve as Chaplains in the Royal Air Force – the Rev David Edgar and the Rev Jonny Wylie. The Rev David Edgar is currently the Senior Chaplain at Royal Air Force Brize Norton, which is the largest RAF station in the United Kingdom.

9. The Committee appreciates the work of all the Chaplains and thanks them for their valuable and vital ministry.

The Committee congratulates the Rev Derek Weir on being awarded the MBE for his work as Officiating Chaplain at RAF Aldergrove.

10. The Committee congratulates the Rev Professor Patton Taylor MBE for completing 33 years unbroken and outstanding service as a Territorial Army Chaplain.

11. Each year the Church is asked to support the work of the Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force ‘Wings Appeal,’ and the Royal Irish/UDR Benevolent Fund and the Panel encourages Congregations to remember all charities who provide vital support to those service personnel who are in need of help.

STUDENT SERVICES PANEL (incorporating The Presbyterian War Memorial Hostel)

The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:

1. The Student Services Panel seeks to promote the cause of Christ in institutions of third level education throughout Ireland through the provision of University Chaplains and chaplaincy facilities. The reports by the individual University Chaplains are noted by the Panel and will be made available on the PCI website: www.presbyterianireland.org

2. At Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) the **Rev William McCully** resigned from the post of part-time Chaplain and is thanked for his ministry to staff and students. The **Rev Dr Brian Brown** was appointed as his replacement.

3. The Panel also welcomed as new Chaplain in Residence to the post at Queen’s University Belfast, the **Rev Karen Mbayo**, who has been settling in as part of the existing Chaplaincy Services Team at the Presbyterian Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue and in the Presbyterian Halls of Residence at Derryvolgie Avenue. This “one Chaplaincy in two locations” is unique in the Board’s Chaplaincy services, incorporating the **Christian Community** aspect at Derryvolgie, providing a strong, vibrant centre for Christian life and service based around the 80+ rooms which are available for students’ residence through term times; and outreach to the University community through **Rumours Café**, a fundamental part of the work of the Chaplaincy Centre, providing a space for meeting and greeting students and staff throughout the day. During the year an in depth review of the provision of Chaplaincy services has been undertaken.

4. At the University of Ulster which is based at four distinct campuses, Chaplaincy services continue to be provided by the **Rev Cheryl Meban** (Jordanstown and Belfast), the **Rev John Coulter** (Coleraine) and the **Rev Dr Robert Buick** (Magee).

5. PCI currently has no full-time Presbyterian Chaplain serving at Universities or Colleges in the Dublin area. A re-examination of the current joint Chaplaincy services arrangement with the Methodist Church in Ireland for Trinity College Dublin and at University College Dublin (both currently being provided by Methodist Church personnel) is being undertaken.

6. The many other Ministers of our Church who serve as “unofficial” Chaplains in Universities and Colleges throughout this island also deserve thanks and prayers, as they seek to minister in the name of Christ to both staff and students.

KINGHAN CHURCH

The Rev John Braithwaite reports:

1. At Assembly time last year there was a great deal of uncertainty in the Kinghan Church due to the length of the vacancy, but a much happier situation prevails this year largely due to the appointment in December of the Rev Glen Jordan to lead the work and minister to the Congregation. A special service was held in the Kinghan Church on 12 December, 2010 to mark the beginning of his ministry, at which the Minister Emeritus, the Rev Dr George Grindle gave a very fitting challenge to the Minister and Congregation. Because Mr Jordan is transferring from the Congregational Church, he has been appointed as Assistant to the Convener in the meantime, until he fulfils all the requirements of the Presbyterian Church. His first priority is to become proficient in sign language as quickly as possible, and he is working hard at this. Over these first months of ministry he continues to be greatly assisted by the Rev Dr Will Murphy who conducts two services per month which are much appreciated by the Congregation.

2. There has been loss as well as gain this year. At the end of February Mrs Anne Rodgers, the Lay Assistant, retired having kindly agreed to stay on an extra two months to provide a handover period to Mr Jordan. During this time Mrs Rodgers was able to introduce the new Minister to many aspects of running the Church, and to provide interpretation for him as they visited members of the Church. The Board is indebted to Mrs Rodgers for taking on many responsibilities beyond what she was originally employed to do. During the vacancy she became pastor, administrator, event organiser, as well as preaching and conducting worship twice per month. All this she did with a willing heart because she loves the Lord, and wanted to serve Him in the deaf community. A farewell service and lunch was held for her on 27 February in the Kinghan Church. The good wishes and prayers of the Church go with Anne into her well-earned retirement.

3. The Rev Glen Jordan, as well as continuing the ongoing activities of the Church with the support of the very active Church Committee, has introduced some new features to its worship. He has re-established contact with the school at Jordantown, and with some other groups in the deaf community. He has begun to do a limited amount of deputation to groups in the wider Church. He is ably supported by his wife Carol, and his two sons who attend the Church.

4. The Kinghan Congregation looks forward to the future with much greater confidence than it did this time last year. Thanks are due to Lindsay Conway and the Rev Bobby Liddle for their active support of the work during the year.

DONALD PATTON, Convener

OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Strategic Objective 3

“Older People Services will deliver a high standard of social and nursing care to all our residents and to campaign on behalf of older people.”

Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:32, NIV)

1. Reverence for God is to be seen in how people treat fellow human beings, made in His image and not least weaker or more vulnerable members of society. For over sixty years PCI has taken a particular practical interest in the care of the elderly through what began with the opening of Adelaide House, continued as the Presbyterian Residential Trust, and is now the Older People’s Services of the Board of Social Witness.

2. The Board’s Residential and Nursing Homes comprise Adelaide House and Corkey House in Belfast, Ard Cluan in Londonderry, Harold McCauley House in Omagh, River House in Newcastle, Sunnyside House in Bangor, and York House in Portrush. These provide 230 registered beds. In addition there is sheltered housing at St Andrew Bungalows, Newtownabbey, and at Tritonville Close, Dublin.

3. It is clear that high levels of occupancy are necessary to cover the costs of running the Board’s homes and it is good to report that such levels have generally been maintained. In these times of recession and straitened government budgets delays in access to residential care can lead to higher levels of dependence and so to issues of assessment for admission and greater dependency levels. Levels of bed occupancy for respite care have also diminished. However, staffing levels have remained high and vacant posts have generally been easy to fill.

4. The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) is the independent health and social care body that monitors residential and nursing homes in Northern Ireland. It is an integral part of the health and social care structures, and it encourages continuous improvement in the quality of these services through a programme of inspections and reviews. It is good to report that PCI homes have received consistently positive reports after RQIA’s announced and unannounced inspections. These reports can be viewed on the RQIA’s web site, www.rqia.co.uk

5. Regular unannounced visits are also carried out by members of the Board’s own central management team, in conjunction with members of the Local Support Committees. It is gratifying to see further evidence of high standards and also to read of the appreciation for staff that is often expressed by residents.

6. It is also encouraging to hear other unsolicited testimony from residents and visiting friends and family to the distinctive “good atmosphere” and sense of welcome and care in the homes. Given that the average length of stay of the residents is several years our facilities are indeed “home” for them. The Committee is thankful to God for the Christian ethos that is so often evident. The management, staff and volunteers are much to be commended in this regard. At the meetings of the OPS Committee, members are also kept up to date with oral reports from representatives of the homes.

7. Recognition has come from other sources also. In 2010 Harold McCauley House won the Northern Ireland Amenity Council’s Best Kept Health and Social Care Facility in the Western Health and Social Care Trust. River House came runner up in the South Eastern division for the same award and Harold McCauley subsequently won the Best of the Best award. Both Adelaide House and Ard Cluan House received commendations.

8. In January 2011 a special service at Harold McCauley House marked the retirement of the Rev John Murdoch who had been chairman of the Local Support Committee for 20 years and who was a most assiduous and devoted visitor and Chaplain to the home. It was the opinion of those present that this had been a fitting and heartfelt tribute to his valuable service.

9. Older People’s Services continues to discuss the relocation or refurbishment of some of our existing facilities, most notably Ard Cluan and York House, where older buildings though familiar and homely do not always allow the fullest provision of all the desired facilities. It is also pursuing the development of intergenerational work.

10. The Committee wishes to record its gratitude to Mrs Linda Wray, the Residential Services Manager, to her Assistant, Mrs May Gordon, and to all the staff in Church House who continue to carry out their demanding and often exacting work with cheerfulness and efficiency.

JOHN SEAWRIGHT, Convener

FAMILY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Strategic Objective 4

“Family Services will promote family life and the general well-being of our members, continue to develop services for the disabled within the Church, support the work of the Taking Care Office, PCI Counselling, PCI Family Holiday and South Belfast Friendship House”

1. The Family Services Committee continues to seek to meet this objective through the dedication, commitment and hard work of many staff, both voluntary and professional, witnessing their faith in social action. As economic cuts and financial realities continue to put strain on already limited resources, tribute must be paid to those who give their time and talents so readily to assist some of the most vulnerable in our society –children and young people, those with a disability, the marginalised, the despairing and lost – family services seek to offer Christian compassion and practical assistance.

2. A new initiative of a pilot scheme, in partnership with the South Eastern Trust, has been delivered to two Presbyteries – Ards and Dromore. The ‘Getting on Board’ project involves promotion of the benefits of volunteering and offers encouragement and resources on how to get involved. It is hoped that this scheme will be expanded to cover the whole of PCI. The ‘big society’, of which much is heard, is a concept familiar to the Presbyterian Church. The work could not continue without the support and help of volunteers and as provision of services continues, often with reduced financial support and increasing demands on reserves, this scheme is to be commended.

3. Thanks are paid to those members of Local Support Groups, the ‘Friends of’ groups, Church House office staff and the many volunteers who ensure that support is offered, encouragement given and love and care experienced in a practical manner, showing God’s love for his creation.

Disability, Health and Wellbeing Committee

4. The following Terms of Reference have been agreed for this new Committee, a Committee that will embrace and build on the outstanding work carried out by the Learning Disability Committee. New sub-committees will address many of the issues related to physical and sensory disabilities, mental health including many of the issues related to suicide. This Committee will need considerable support, both in its membership and the topics that it addresses.

Aim:

- (i) To address, discuss and report on all issues relating to Disability, Health and Wellbeing, including all Mental Health Matters and Carers Issues.
- (ii) To continue the work of the Learning Disability Committee.

Membership:

- (iii) The Committee will draw membership from Ministers, Elders, and those who have an expertise or interest in the work of this Committee.
- (iv) Membership should be for no more than five years, with an option to be reappointed for a further five years.
- (v) Approval for changes in membership should be sought from the Family Services Committee.

Responsibilities:

- (vi) To advise, support and report on the work in this sector.
- (vii) To establish such Panels as may be required.
- (viii) To respond to all Consultations related to this topic.
- (ix) To comment on developments and cuts within this sector.
- (x) To heighten the awareness of the Presbyterian Community on issues related to Disability, Health and Wellbeing.
- (xi) To co-ordinate Specialist Training on behalf of the denomination.
- (xii) To host Conferences and Seminars as required.
- (xiii) To afford Carers an opportunity to discuss issues.
- (xiv) To support Carers by providing programmes of respite care.

- (xv) To recognise the role of Carers.
- (xvi) To give guidance on the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).
- (xvii) To keep Disability, Mental Health, Health Care and General Wellbeing and the needs of Carers on the Board's Agenda and that of the General Assembly.

LEARNING DISABILITY

The Rev Jim Waring reports:

1. The Committee appreciates the commitment of staff in Aaron House and Willow Brook to ensure Regulatory Body standards are met along with providing a high level of care to residents/tenants.
2. The knowledge and skills of the Managers, Anne Campbell (Willow Brook) and Denise Keegan (Aaron House), are exemplary and the projects as well as the wider organisation benefit greatly from them.
3. It was encouraging that a number of PCI staff delivered seminars at the Inter-Faith group on Learning Disability conference in April and shows their level of expertise and experience.
4. Residents benefited from holidays in Bangor, Co Down and Blackpool, England (Willow Brook); and the Share Centre, Lisnaskea and Giant's Causeway, Antrim Coast (Aaron House).
5. The work of Local Support Committees and "Friends of" Groups continues to enhance the service that is provided particularly in the provision of social and spiritual dimensions. The Committee wishes to thank everyone who participates in these roles.
6. The Committee is aware of the lack of resources/facilities for post-19 year olds with a learning disability.
7. The Committee on Learning Disability is keen to pursue looking at the provision of an employment scheme for people with a learning disability, particularly in the Northern Trust area and are in discussions with a local Congregation.
8. The Committee is keen to educate the wider Church on the need to integrate people with disabilities into all aspects of Congregational life and is open to meet with representatives from Congregations to advise on integration and special needs.
9. The Committee continues to be concerned at the lack of funding available for the development of additional supported Housing Schemes.

PCI COUNSELLING

Mrs Stephanie Windrum reports:

1. PCI Counselling has remained an important provider of hope and support for numerous couples and individuals during 2010. Many of the long-serving, dedicated Counsellors have been working to full capacity, providing space and counsel to people in their time of need. As volunteers, Counsellors graciously give of themselves week in, week out. To get a glimpse of their work

by reading evaluations from clients is often humbling. Recently one client commented, *"It has been one of the most helpful, enlightening and empowering experiences of my life. In every way I was facilitated, helped and listened to. Thank you so much."*

2. Referrals continue to come from a variety of sources. Most come from Church based contacts such as Ministers, Deaconesses, or Family Workers. Many clients hear about the service through word of mouth, namely other or past users, which is always an encouragement for the team. This year also started the process of updating publicity material and internet accessibility. This will hopefully promote an increase in self referrals in the coming years.

3. 2010 has also witnessed some exciting changes for PCI Counselling; 5 new recruits have been welcomed, bringing the team to 18 Counsellors in total. The wider geographical spread means that more people can access the service closer to home.

4. Ongoing Training and Supervision has remained an important aspect of maintaining high professional standards throughout the year. Sincere thanks must be extended to both Supervisors, for their unfailing support and encouragement to each Counsellor and the Co-ordinator on a regular basis.

5. Serving members of PCI Counselling Advisory Group have all survived the first year of office intact! Each member has contributed significantly to the professional oversight of the service by providing regular advice, support and encouragement. Their enthusiasm for the development of the service is contagious and has helped to promote a renewed vision for this important part of the work of PCI.

6. The Re-marriage Panel has continued to provide Ministers with valuable guidance on issues of divorce, re-marriage and blended families. Serving panellists willingly contribute their expertise as an act of service each month. A final big word of thanks is extended to each of them.

7. In conclusion, already it is looking like 2011 may be a difficult year for families, couples and individuals. Pressures of all kinds, including rising unemployment, increased cost of living, and numerous cuts to all political budgets can place people under much stress. Please pray during these difficult times that PCI Counselling can provide wisdom, guidance and the love of Christ to those who suffer.

PCI FAMILY HOLIDAY

The Rev Stuart Finlay reports:

1. The PCI Family Holiday takes place each year from Easter Monday through to Friday at the Share Centre, Lisnaskea.

2. Last year 185 people were accommodated in the Guest House, chalets and caravans. Among the families are those sponsored by the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society. Like everyone they enjoy the relaxed family atmosphere.

3. The Share Centre offers a wide variety of activities and their staff deal very professionally with all participants, both those who are able-bodied and those with special needs. Outdoor activities include canoeing, sailing,

windsurfing, banana skiing, climbing, archery, gorge walking and Laser Skirmishing. There are also indoor activities for the more artistic and creative – T-shirt printing, handcrafts and drama. The Centre’s indoor leisure pool and fitness suite are always a great attraction.

4. Families often enjoy the weekly shopping trip to Enniskillen and, weather permitting, a visit to the Marble Arch Caves. The PCI Youth Team also organises games and activities for the children most mornings and afternoons. What a contribution this team of enthusiastic and dedicated young Christians makes to a busy week!

5. Each morning begins with a short time of worship for all ages before the day’s activities begin. In the evening there is a time of worship for everyone before the young people go off for their own time of Bible teaching with the Youth Team, leaving the adults to have their time together. Every year there is a visiting speaker and this year it was a delight to have the Rev Peter Dickinson, Minister of Muckamore Congregation.

6. In the later part of the evening there is a “Fun time” for all ages, ranging from a Beetle Drive and Table Quiz to a Concert and Farewell Party. It’s all good, wholesome fun in which mums and dads with their children can mix together.

7. The time together is filled with fun ... and soon comes to an end! New friendships are made, old ones renewed, and everyone has the opportunity to reflect on the Bible’s message for their lives. The organisers are so grateful for many answered prayers and for a real sense of the Lord’s protection and presence through the week.

TAKING CARE COMMITTEE

Mr Ronnie Orr reports:

Leading little ones and young people to God – in safety

1. The core of work that goes on year on year is aimed at nurturing children into faith in Christ and providing opportunities to develop skills and have fun together. This is achieved by the tremendous commitment and enthusiasm of leaders who take on the task in the context of also keeping the children safe. This includes not only their physical safety but safeguarding them from anyone who might harm them or exploit them.

Work of the Co-ordinator and the Taking Care Office

2. The Taking Care Office continues to inform Ministers, Designated Persons and others about the work primarily through our newsletter, the “Taking Care Update”, as well as the Taking Care website which is regularly updated. Deborah Webster, assisted by Amanda Cotter, has continued to provide a sterling service of advice and information. Also during the year, Taking Care benefited from Geoff Marshall, one of the Panel of Trainers, standing in for Deborah while she was on maternity leave. Geoff kept the work moving forward and took his training skills far and wide across the country.

3. Thanks are due to all the Volunteer Trainers, Committee members, Designated Persons, to Deborah Webster, Co-ordinator, Amanda Cotter,

Administrator and also to the Rev Bobby Liddle and Lindsay Conway who faithfully give of themselves to the work of Taking Care throughout our denomination and for the Glory of God. The Committee is grateful to the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society for subsidising some of our literature. Many Congregations deserve recognition for devoting all or part of a Sunday Service annually to "Taking Care" and refreshing their commitment to safeguarding children.

4. **Reporting Concerns** – This year there has been a significant rise in the number of incidents. Whenever a child protection allegation or complaint is made it must be promptly communicated to Church House, where Lindsay Conway is the Designated Person. Therefore, at the same time as a Congregation is dealing with an incident, disclosure or allegation and linking with the child protection agencies locally, there is an expectation of contact with Church House so that further advice is available and any wider and public implications can be managed.

5. **Training** – Taking Care Training sessions took place during 2010 at congregational level from Toberdoney to Maynooth and everywhere in between. These sessions were facilitated mostly by our 25 volunteer trainers and the Church is indebted to them for their work and commitment. Several Designated Persons training events were also organized and attended by many.

6. **Conference 2011** – The working theme for the 2011 Conference on 8 October will be "Our Digital World", in the recognition that children and young people in particular find technology and not least "Social Networking" enabling and exciting. However, it can also have some negative influences and dangers. Leaders need to be aware of the distinction between safe practice and what constitutes risk. The Rev Steve Stockman will be the keynote speaker this year as well as various guests. There will be opportunity for delegates to attend two practical workshops on a variety of subjects. These will include Health and Safety, self harm and suicide and the avoidance of unsafe and addictive behaviour. There will also be updates on vetting and barring both North and South of the Border. This event is a great opportunity to learn from the experience of others and to be encouraged in looking out for the best interests of children. Please make sure that members of Kirk Session, leaders of organisations and Designated Persons receive the notification and the details of how to book their place at the Conference.

7. **Taking Care Committee – Business Plan** – The main focus of the work this year has been the review of the Taking Care Manual (launched in 2005) and the Taking Care Audit. The results will be useful for the wider work of PCI in giving a quantitative grasp of the extent of service provided to children and the numbers of people who are volunteering. There is always room for more people to discern their gifts and offer themselves for selection as leaders. However, the Church can be thankful and celebrate that it has always been an active part of what has been recently coined the "Big Society". The Revised Manual will be launched at the Taking Care Conference 2011 and the Audit will be reported on at the Assembly. The Republic of Ireland Advisory Group continues to meet to consider aspects of the work specific to law, culture and policy in the Republic of Ireland.

8. **Vetting and Barring Requirements** – Congregations are advised that there have been no changes made to the current system of Vetting and Barring and so checking continues as normal, although a new form was introduced in 2010. Police checks have continued to be processed by the Taking Care Administrator, Amanda Cotter. The Board acts as an umbrella body for outside organisations. On average, 50 forms are sent to Access NI to be checked every week as well as 2 Garda Vetting forms on average each week, which are sent to the National Youth Council, Ireland.

9. **Mission Plans** – The ongoing work of Taking Care by Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions, Ministers, Designated Persons, Trainers, Children’s and Youth Workers and Leaders is an integral factor to our mission as a Church. It is evidenced by a steady, patient caring approach to children and those who look after them, while at the same time being alert to risks and also prudent and prompt action when a concern is identified. While many families are mainstream members of Congregations, Taking Care also serves many children whose families have little other contact with the Church Family. Reaching out to them and promoting the Christian faith is an opportunity to assure them of good standards and exemplary behaviour in all the Church offers. It is important that everyone in leadership is encouraged to become familiar with the revised guidance manual, continues, when necessary, to access the good advice from the Taking Care office and takes up both initial and refresher training.

ANNE TOLLAND, Convener

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Strategic Objective 5

“Adult Services shall manage the work of Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray’s Court and promote an addiction free society through our Addiction Services Committee.”

1. The past year has been a particularly difficult year for the projects serviced by the Adult Services Committee caused by no financial uplifts and the threat of reduction in beds being funded. Throughout this period, senior staff both in our Board Office and in the projects have worked diligently with Health and Social Care Trusts, PSNI/PBNI to try to resolve issues, whilst at the same time ensuring the high quality service provided has continued without impacting on residents.

2. Many will not have experienced the impact of having someone either known to them, or a family member, who has needed to avail of the services provided in Thompson House, Carlisle House or Gray’s Court. However, for those who have come into contact with these services, their stories speak for themselves.

Thompson House

3. All residents are referred via the PBNI and many will come with specific conditions to reside, i.e. no alcohol or drugs to be taken.

4. Over the past year, Thompson House has accommodated 52 residents. Over recent years, the Committee has noticed a significant increase in the number of residents who have alcohol/drug addictions (85%), and/or have mental health issues. To meet their needs, staff have received training in knowing how to deal with these issues and subsequent behaviours.

5. Many of the men have not come from families who take much interest in them, but there are those who come from a Christian home and it is gratifying for staff to hear from residents' families of how they appreciate the Christian ethos of Thompson House and the Bible Study group held by one of our Project Workers, Keith McIlroy, and the questions posed by residents about the Christian way of living.

6. Staff work with other Criminal Justice Agencies to meet the needs of residents through rehabilitation programmes. The Committee is excited at the redevelopment programme currently being undertaken at Thompson House. This has involved close working with Helm Housing Association and NIHE Supporting People Initiative, along with discussions with local residents groups and the media.

Carlisle House

7. The Committee continues to look at ways of reducing the waiting times for admission, including commencing a pre-admission treatment group. Carlisle House prides itself on being creative and innovative in the programmes provided and in encouraging our Service Users to be proactive.

8. Recently an Art Exhibition was held in the Hopelink Centre and a DVD launched at Queen's Film Theatre on 7 October, 2010, which were a great success.

9. The dry stone walling project is now well integrated into the programme at Carlisle House. Service Users who have left Carlisle House are also requesting to be able to continue to go dry stone walling. Comments have included: *"It has given me purpose; I feel I have achieved something; it is the one day that I get peace from anxiety and worry; it gives me pride."*

Gray's Court

10. Gray's Court has gone through a difficult period of clients using alcohol or drugs. This has been very difficult for our Project Worker, Frances Craig and the other residents. This has now been resolved and a more stable, motivated group has been established.

COLIN MEGAW, Convener

SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Rev Bobby Liddle reports:

1. The Committee has continued only slowly with the revision of the booklet on 'Getting Married', pending the outcome of other discussion in the General Assembly relating to marriage.

2. A series of leaflets on praying scripture are under production. These are for the pastoral use of Ministers, Elders, Deaconesses, Chaplains etc. These

cover a number of issues including Depression, Fear, Purity, Worry, Guilt and Bereavement. Others may be produced in the future to add to this list.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly continue to call on government to increase the budget of the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety and ask the Minister to review decisions on the distribution of funding.
3. That the General Assembly thank those Congregations who participated in the recent Taking Care Audit, assisting greatly in the future planning of Taking Care Training and Resources.
4. That the General Assembly agree that a Taking Care Audit be carried out in Congregations every three years.
5. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed with Par 281 of the Code as follows:

FOR INFORMATION

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

The Rev WPH Erskine reports:

1. The Directors report that during the last financial year, which ended 31 December, 2010, 105 beneficiaries (41 in the Old Age Fund, 46 in the Women's Fund and 18 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.
2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

Beneficiaries Receiving Quarterly Grant	Old Age Fund	Presbyterian Women's	Indigent Ladies Fund	TOTAL Fund
At 1 January 2010	31	38	16	85
New Grants Provided	8	4	2	14
Deaths	(1)	(4)	(2)	(7)
Grants no longer required	-	(6)	(1)	(7)
As at 31 December 2010	38	32	15	85
Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	2	4	-	6
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	1	10	3	14
No of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	41	46	18	105

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £125,508 (£55,193 from the Old Age Fund, £50,540 from the Women's Fund and £19,775 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. An annual grant of £1,100, paid quarterly, was sent to beneficiaries during the year (2009: £1,000).

5. A 'Special Gift' of £275 (2009: £250) 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 the 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.

BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Convener: Rev JONATHAN MOXEN

Director: Miss ROZ STIRLING

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry exists to support local Congregations in every aspect of their mission and ministry to and with children and young people.

2. The vision of the Board is that every Congregation will have the capacity to develop and grow this vital ministry among children and young people in Christ-centered, biblically-based communities of believers where parental responsibility for the spiritual formation of their children is nurtured and where whole life discipleship, which equips children and young people to take their place in the world, is fostered within a faith community where integration of the under 25's into the life of the Congregation is lived out.

3. The Board delivers on its remit and vision through the work of five busy Committees: Ministry Opportunities, Ministry Events, Research and Education, Training, and Ministry Resources.

4. The Board's Committees work in close partnership with one another as they bring an integrated approach to all aspects of the work of the Board. To this end, the Committee Conveners, along with the Board Convener, Director and Director of Programmes have been progressing a 'frameworks' document which details the underpinning values, purpose and practice of the Board. It is anticipated that this framework may be developed for use in congregational ministry. The current consultation with Church leaders, youth and children's leaders and ministry professionals, when completed will form the basis for this development.

5. The work of these five Committees is delivered by an army of volunteer committee and working group members and the professional staff of the Board. Alongside the Director who oversees every aspect of the work of the Board, the programme staff team include the Director of Programmes, Barbara McDade, who carries responsibility for the wide array of activities and programmes of the Board, the Children's Development Officer, Ruth Mitchell, who oversees work relating to 0-11 age group, Youth Development Officer, Graeme Thompson, who looks after ministry support for those working with the 11-18 age group and Young Adults' Development Officer, Carol Johnston, who oversees the ministry development for the 18-25 year old age group. This diverse team of staff and volunteers brings to Congregations support in the development of covenant based family ministry through their partnership with Kirk Sessions, parents, and volunteer youth and children's leaders.

6. The Board continues to know God's blessing in this demanding work. The task assigned to it is a challenge as it undertakes the support of Congregations in their immense responsibility to evangelise, disciple, serve and equip the largest group of people within the Presbyterian Church. The Board

however is grateful to God that although the task is onerous, those who serve within the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry are a God-given fit 'for such a time as this.'

7. The workload for each of the five Committees is considerable. Thanks are due, in no small measure, to the Conveners who give of their time willingly to support the ministry of the Board. Their commitment has been rewarded by the many evidences of the work of the spirit of God in their ministry endeavours.

8. The Board records its thanks to the Rev Graeme Kennedy for his dedication and hard work as the Convener of Ministry Resources and wishes him well in his ministry in Ballygrainey Congregation.

9. During the past year there were many high points. The Board rejoices in the goodness of God in all of the work in 2010 and draws attention to a few of those high points.

10. Under the Ministry Opportunities Committee, the Summer Outreach teams seek to draw alongside Congregations enabling them to do outreach work among children and young people within their community. This is an important part of the Board's work which provides opportunities for young people and young adults to live out the gospel and to grow in their confidence to share Christ with their peers. Some three hundred volunteers are needed each summer to serve our denomination on these teams. In the lives of many of the team members and those they minister to, there is a testimony to the work of God's grace.

11. The Ministry Events Committee is a very busy Committee with many large events being planned and delivered by their working groups, supported by the departmental staff. The MAD weekend continues to be a very important event which each year is booked out within weeks of being advertised. MAD 12 saw a reduction in capacity from that normally available due to the development work at the venue, University of Ulster, Coleraine. The greatest difficulty that resulted from this was the need to turn down even more applications than normal. It was an immense privilege nonetheless to see God move in the lives of many young people in October. MAD 13 will be held from 28-30 October, 2011.

12. A new event for young adults (18-30 year olds) is in an advanced planning stage and publicity material is available. 'The Word', a Bible focused conference, is planned for August 2011. It will continue the tradition of its predecessor, 'Route 66', by providing the opportunity for young adults to explore the relevance of scripture in every area of their lives from the knowledge in their head, to the love in their heart, to the action of their hands.

13. The volunteers on the Volunteer and Intern Programme (VIP) have completed a first very successful year. This programme, which is a development from the former Year Team scheme, encourages young adults to take the opportunity to serve the Lord through this gap year programme. During the past year young adults were placed in Congregations in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, while two interns have made a significant contribution in the YAC Office. The gifts and dedication of these young people are greatly appreciated by the Board. One Minister who has enjoyed having a VIP comments: *"It has been incredibly encouraging to see a young adult being able*

to easily relate to the young people within the youth groups of our Church. We have benefitted greatly through the VIP programme.”

14. The Board records its gratitude to the vast number of volunteer youth and children’s leaders working in Congregations and to the growing number of youth and family workers. The many hours of work carried out by these people who give sacrificially of their time and talent in the service of God is deeply appreciated. Many Congregations could not provide for their youth and children’s activities without the many volunteers who bring leadership and facilitate programmes that are meaningful to our young people and children.

15. The work of SPUD Youth Assembly continues to be a very significant and important ministry within our denomination. SPUD (Speaking, Participating, Understanding, Deciding) has enabled young adults to take up their place within the decision making structures of our Church. SPUD has settled into a rhythm of pre General Assembly events through which they formulate resolutions for the General Assembly. In 2010, SPUD sent their report ‘Young People and the Church’ to Presbyteries for consideration. They will bring the findings to the 2011 General Assembly. The Board congratulates these young adults and gives particular thanks to the SPUD working Group for their hard work during the past year. The Board encourages Congregations to send delegates to the Youth Assembly and to commit to the involvement of young people within the decision making processes of their Church.

16. The Board is deeply grateful to those employed to serve the Church though the Board of Youth and Children’s Ministry. Miss Roz Stirling, (Director), Miss Barbara McDade (Director of Programmes), and the team of administrative staff, Mrs Lois Gibson (Senior Administrative Officer), Mrs Claire Child, Mrs Janet Maxwell, Mrs Donna Thompson, Mrs Kathy Brown, Miss Pamela Patton and Miss Liz Harrison. The Board is indebted to them as it is to Mr David Pattison for his support and assistance with Board finances.

17. The work of the Development Officers, Ruth Mitchell, Graeme Thompson and Carol Johnston, drawing alongside Churches in congregational consultation and strategy development, training and resourcing congregations and leaders and mentoring and encouraging full time staff already in place in Congregations, is deeply appreciated. Their work in seeking to see sustainable, Christ-centered ministry in Congregations across our land is crucial to the future of our denomination. The Board extends their thanks to them for their dedicated work during the past year.

18. The Board encourages Congregations to draw on the professional support available to them through our Director, Director of Programmes, and team of Development Officers. The expertise and guidance available to Congregations through this team is considerable. Whether the need of a Congregation is growth in children’s ministry or a frustration that youth ministry is hampered through a lack of leaders, the YAC staff team will bring insight and wisdom to these challenges. They can be contacted through the YAC Office.

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES

The Rev David Stanfield, Centre Director of the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland, reports:

I am pleased to report another successful year in my role as Director of the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland. The partnership between Youth Link and Belfast Bible College continues to prove fruitful and the nature of the qualification fits well with the ethos and value base of both organisations. During the past year the courses received professional endorsement which means that the students graduate with JNC professional status as well as an honours degree in Youth and Community Work and either Applied or Practical Theology which enables them to be employed in any youth or community work context, not just within a Christian Church or organisation. While there are a number of such courses in other parts of the UK, this is the first Christian faith based course in Ireland to receive such recognition. This is important because it recognises that the student has been able to evidence that they have the understanding and skills to engage with young people in ways that help their development as individuals and within communities, regardless of the nature of those communities. The fact that at every level we seek to encourage and enable students to inter-relate theology and youth work theory and apply both to their practice contexts means that our graduates should be better prepared to minister to young people in communities of faith (Churches and Christian organisations). While most of our students have a sense of vocation to work within a Christian context some believe they are being called to work in secular contexts and want to be better equipped to know how to express their Christianity appropriately in work situations where there is not the freedom to explicitly share their faith.

The course is practice based with students working in a Christian/Church based context for 14 hours per week as part of the course assessment. They each have a personal practice tutor to support their development and meet regularly in facilitated small groups for professional formation. We are very grateful to the increasing number of Churches that recognise the value of the course and the benefit that a student can add to their ministry amongst young people. Currently there are placements in 38 different Congregations (18 Presbyterian, 11 Church of Ireland, 5 Methodist, 2 Baptist, 2 other) and 11 other Christian contexts.

The training of students for ministry is a very labour intensive process and a team of over 100 people have been actively involved in teaching, supervising and supporting the students this year. Module tutors include people with recognised expertise in certain areas such as: Roz Stirling (PCI YAC) on spirituality; Dr David Rock (Methodist DYCW) on missiology in a youth work context; Dr Angie Minion (The Big House) on pastoral care; Peter Lynas (EA) on ethics; Derek Poole (The Linc) on working within the community; and Edith Bell (Community Works) on the development of young people.

This summer will see the majority of our first cohort of students graduate and while some have already found employment or are planning to undertake further study most at the time of writing are in the process of seeking employment.

Once again I wish to record my gratitude to the large number of Presbyterians from across our Congregations who have supported the development of this work in the last 12 months through prayer and encouragement, as well as those who have worked as module tutors, professional practice tutors or line managers in Congregations who have taken students on placement.

The Rev John Peacock, Community Relations Manager at Youth Link: N.I., reports:

1. Youth Link's core aims are:
 - **Meeting Churches Needs** – Youth Link, through dialogue, will be constantly aware of the changing needs of the Churches with regard to youth work and ministry and will respond effectively;
 - **Training** – Training in youth work and ministry, peace building and reconciliation, informed by the latest theory and practice, will be available to all those involved in work with young people;
 - **Active Citizenship, Peace Building & Reconciliation Strategies for Young People** – Youth Link will work with others to provide opportunities for young people of different traditions and cultural backgrounds to develop mutual understanding, tolerance, acceptance and respect and to be agents of transformation in a divided society;
 - **Prophetic voice** – Youth Link, through dialogue, will be constantly aware of critical and emerging issues in youth work and ministry, peace building and reconciliation, providing a prophetic voice to the Churches and the wider community;
 - **Networking** – Youth Link will network strategically with agencies, Churches and youth workers at local, national and international level to enhance best practice in youth work and ministry, peace building and reconciliation.
2. As chairperson of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry Reconciliation Working Group, I continue to have the opportunity to keep the importance of peace and reconciliation at the forefront of the Board's work and to also look at how the area of peace building needs to develop in the broader Church in a post-conflict situation.
3. The year has been an exciting one as Youth Link moved to its new training and resource facilities on the Springfield Road, which will enable us to further develop the Centre for Youth Ministry degree programme, our OCN accredited Youth work and Community Relations training and our active citizenship work with young people. It will also place the Centre in a situation of socio-economic need as a witness of the work of the Churches. Youth Link thanks the General Assembly that 25% of the 2009/2010 Youth and Children's Project income was allocated to this new Training Centre.
4. Youth Link's work has developed through the work of three staff members, funded through the Peace III monies, to build community capacity in Belfast and the border regions through youth work and community relations training in these areas. The project has focussed on areas where the infrastructure and confidence of the Protestant community has traditionally been weak i.e. Armagh, Monaghan, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Donegal.
5. I would like to thank the Presbyterian representatives on the management council of Youth Link for their ongoing support and encouragement, in particular Barbara McDade who has just stepped down from the position of Chairperson.

TRAINING COMMITTEE

1. The Training Committee continues to assess its current work in order to bring it into line with the aims of the Board which are to enable Congregations in the development of covenantal ministry with children, young people, adults and families. The work of the Committee has concentrated its efforts in the training of leaders for youth and children's ministry. Future developments will see the work of the Committee expand to include training for ministry with parents, families and young adults.

2. The Committee thanks God for His guidance and blessing on the Committee and the working groups during the past year.

Certificates in Youth and Children's Ministry

3. The Youth Ministry Certificate Course has again been facilitated this year in Belfast. The course has run on Monday nights with 28 in attendance. A residential weekend has again been central to the implementation of the course.

4. The Children's Ministry Course ran at Union Theological College and Annalong with 36 participants attending.

Road Trip

5. Road Trip is a one evening, six seminar event, which makes high quality training available to Presbyterian Congregations at a local level free of charge. In 2010-11 Road Trip has been in 10 different locations around Ireland. With a more comprehensive publicity leaflet and a concerted effort to raise the profile of this excellent resource, approximately 650 participants have been trained in a variety of topics including subjects as diverse as: *Ministry with Under 5s, Equipping Young People for Everyday Service and Witness and C21 Young Presbyterians*.

6. Throughout 2010/11 YAC staff have supported the training of new trainers as they have delivered Road Trip seminars, hence allowing the Board to offer an even greater number of seminars than in previous years. The staff team bring considerable expertise to this task allowing the Board to grow the number of volunteers who are equipped to deliver particular lectures in the future.

7. In the proposed Road Trip cycle for 2011-12 there has been an attempt to return to each geographical area at approximately the same time of the year in order to allow Ministers and youth leaders to become accustomed to this high quality localised training and to encourage them to build it into their Congregation's annual calendar.

Communicators' School

8. In October 2010 the Board hosted a Communicators' School with Duffy Robbins as keynote speaker. Duffy worked with 27 course participants training them for better communication with young people. With the repeated success of this event it is hoped to run it on a bi-annual basis, with the next course provisionally scheduled for October 2012.

‘Building Blocks’ Conferences

9. The two Conferences were held on Saturday 13 November 2010 in Dublin (200 in attendance) and Saturday 20 November 2010 in Belfast, at Orangefield Presbyterian Church (190 in attendance). Ivy Beckwith, author of ‘Formation of Children’s Ministry’ was the keynote speaker.

Ad Hoc Training

10. The Board continues to be entirely committed to the Children’s Ministry Certificate Course, the Youth Ministry Certificate course and Road Trip as the flagship training experiences on offer. The Board recognises however that training requirements occasionally arise in Congregations which are not immediately addressed by the material on offer in the current courses or Road Trip. As a result the Board has set about developing a database of approved trainers who could deliver training on a wide variety of topics on an ad hoc basis as the need arises. It is our aim that any Congregation requesting training in a particular area of youth and children’s ministry should be able to contact the YAC department and be pointed to a trainer who could meet their need.

Summer Mission Training Day

11. For many years a training day has been organised by the Summer Outreach Working Group for all those going on Summer Outreach teams. In 2011 this event has become part of the work of the Training Committee (in consultation with the Summer Outreach Working Group). The first Summer Mission Training Day will be held on 18 June 2011 and will be open to anyone throughout our denomination preparing for a summer mission team or holiday bible club.

Youth Link

12. The Board extends their thanks to Youth Link personnel who continue to support and complement the work of the Board through their input into the working groups and Committee.

CHRISTOPH EBBINGHAUS, Convener

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

1. The Ministry Opportunities Committee seeks to provide opportunities for service for Presbyterian young people and leaders through summer missions work and year long volunteer programmes. During 2010/11 the Committee have explored partnerships with other mission boards within PCI in order to maximise the opportunities available to young people, young adults and leaders.

Camps

2. The Committee has undertaken a review of the camps ministry. Recent years has seen the loss of PCI owned facilities to host camps and falling

numbers of attendees. The Committee therefore decided that in the summer of 2011 the Tech camp would be the only camp hosted by the Board while the review of the future direction of camps is undertaken.

Summer Outreach Opportunities

3. The opportunities provided for service in the summer at home now include a wide range of contexts between inner city and rural. This has required an increased number of teams and therefore a larger number of volunteers to service these teams. Summer Outreach is a very good training ground for young people as they seek to grow and mature in their faith.

4. In 2011 the Board will host a Summer Mission Training Day. This is a new venture which offers all young people and leaders within PCI an opportunity to be trained for any summer mission work they plan to undertake. The Board's Summer Outreach personnel will attend the Summer Mission Training Day.

5. At a meeting of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry in March 2011 it was agreed that a review of home mission opportunities be undertaken. This will include a review of summer outreach work.

Overseas Opportunities

6. In partnership with the Board of Mission Overseas YAC will support two teams in the summer of 2011. A team of eleven will partner with PCEA in London and nine team members with Csaba and Ilona Veres in Romania. In the summer of 2010 the Board supported three teams – the London PCEA partnership, the Romania partnership and a team of teachers who supported the work of Diane Cusick in Malawi. These were very successful teams which both served the overseas context and were an exciting discipleship opportunity for those who participated.

Volunteer and Intern Programme (VIP)

7. The VIP Scheme will complete its first year in the summer of 2011. This scheme, which is a development from the previous Year Team opportunity, has expanded its possibilities for young adults seeking a gap-year experience. As these young adults look to their own future service, the working group are considering next year's volunteers and how a broader range of opportunities, possibly including an overseas placement, may be provided to enhance the scheme. The working group, with the assistance of Carol Johnston, are seeking to draw up plans for the future.

7. Thanks are extended to the many people who organise and run the various aspects of the Committee's work and often give countless unseen hours to facilitate the opportunities for service.

JOHN FLAHERTY, Convener

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The Research and Education Committee during 2010 picked up the work associated with a resolution that came through the SPUD Youth Assembly: 'to raise awareness within the denomination and among young people themselves regarding the pressures and issues affecting young people during the adolescent years.' With the help of one of the YAC Interns, Lindsay Witherow, the Committee has carried out a sample survey among young people and young adults in the 11-25 age groups. The focus of this has been in eight locations within Northern Ireland, primarily with Church youth groups alongside one school group. The next stage is to expand the survey to include more and varied groups including a spectrum of groups within the Republic of Ireland. The findings will be presented in a variety of forms and become a source of insight for our work with children and young people, hence improving their well being and enabling them to be credible Christian witness in the world.

2. The role of the Committee is also to educate and consideration has been given to the implications of the initial survey for parents, youth leaders, elders and Ministers in local Congregations. The Committee plans to put forward concrete ideas for resources and events that will raise awareness of the pressures and issues affecting our young people.

3. The Research and Education Committee wishes to record its thanks to Lindsay Witherow for her excellent contribution as a YAC Intern and wishes her well in her new appointment with Scripture Union.

LYNDA GOULD, Convener

MINISTRY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Resources Committee continues to seek to identify and develop helpful resources for those involved in youth and children's ministry across the Church. Youth and children's leaders and others are encouraged to share with one another resources which have proved to be helpful. The ultimate resource for ministry remains the work of God, by his Holy Spirit, to whom deep gratitude is due for His guidance of this Committee and Board over the years.

The Website

2. The new website has seen significant changes and developments over the last twelve months. Laura Crossett, the VIP Intern, and Pamela Patton from YAC Office have been working on the accessibility of the information already on the site. This has been a very helpful piece of work and it has been extremely valuable to have an intern focusing on the development of the website.

The Youth and Children's Project

3. **2011/2012 Stand by Me:** The charity, Kids' Alive International was introduced to the Board at the MAD weekend through the work of the project 'Stand by Me' which supports street kids in Ethiopia. There are a number of links with Kids' Alive within the work of YAC and so it was agreed that Kids'

Alive would form the overseas focus of the 2011/2012 YAC project. The countries to be focused on will be Ethiopia, Peru and Haiti. The 'home' focus will be on a breakfast club which operates from Friendship House on Sandy Row in Belfast.

4. 2010/11 SAT-7 KIDS: Money is continuing to come in for the current YAC Project. Two people from SAT-7 will be visiting Dublin in early May and Ruth Mitchell and Ruth Elkin hope to meet up with them. Prayer is requested for the work of SAT-7, especially as they minister in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Libya where broadcasting has become more difficult in the turbulence of recent weeks.

5. 2009/10 Missing Peace, Nepal: Thanks are expressed to the Church for their support of this project which raised a total of £90,000. £25,000 has been given to the Youth Link project which was used for their new premises. The rest of the money raised will go to support peacemaking projects in Nepal.

6. 2008/09 Treasure Box, Livingstonia: Money raised by this project continues to be fed into the Livingstonia Synod. Personnel changes in the Synod have had an impact on the speed at which resources can be distributed and the Board are working with BMO as to the next phase of the project.

Youth and Children's Workers

7. Youth and children's workers continue to provide high quality youth and children's ministry across our Church and the Committee is grateful to them for the work they do among our children and young people. Congregations, Presbyteries and the General Assembly are encouraged to continue to support them and other Additional Pastoral Personnel in meaningful and relevant ways. Graeme Thompson, Youth Development Officer, continues to hold a monthly meeting for full time youth and children's workers and a retreat has been planned for 15-17 June.

8. The Union Commission are about to produce a new handbook giving guidelines on the Appointment of Additional Pastoral Personnel. It is anticipated that this latest document will be an aid to continued improvement in employment practice across the Church.

Youth Centres

9. **Lucan:** This centre has been leased to the Dublin and Munster Presbytery since October 2010.

10. Rostrevor: This centre was handed back to the local Church at the end of 2010. A thanksgiving service was held on Saturday, 15 January, 2011 at which the Moderator and local dignitaries were in attendance. There was a great sense of celebration and thanksgiving for the years of ministry at the centre during the time that YAC had responsibility and great optimism for the future under the vision and direction of the Rostrevor Congregation.

11. Guysmere: This centre remains closed. Catriona Ross, the warden, who was on maternity leave has accepted redundancy as of the end of December 2010. Her husband, Jonny, who had been appointed to the temporary grounds and buildings management role, will continue in this post for 3 months. The Committee is deeply grateful to Catriona and Jonny for the excellent job they

have done in caring for the site. Plans are moving forward to lease the centre while work is done to find funds to refurbish it.

Reconciliation

12. The Reconciliation Working Group are continuing to seek ways to develop and grow the work of PYP. Training has been made available and the working group will continue to provide this for those who want it. Peacemaking continues to be a major area of concern for young people and is a gospel imperative in which the Church must be seen to be active.

Discipleship Resources:

13. **Presbyterianism Course:** This course has been completed and its publication online and in hard copy will be available in the coming months.

14. **Youth Issues (Discipleship):** A working group has been set up to develop a specific resource in this area. It will take the form of a course structured around four core areas of relationship – relationships with God, Self, the World and Other People. From these core areas of relationship it is hoped that this course will help young people to deal with some of the specific issues they face from a biblical worldview. The work is in its early stages but is progressing well.

15. **Generate magazine:** The Board's newest resource is the newsletter, 'Generate', which will be circulated three times a year from the YAC Office to Ministers, youth leaders, Sunday School Superintendents, youth workers and General Assembly Board Secretaries. The aim is to provide a good source of information about the work of the Board. Additional copies will be available in the office for Ministers to request for circulation within their Congregation.

16. **Special Needs:** In addition to existing work, the committee plans to make contact with a number of teachers and youth leaders who are currently involved in special needs clubs to initiate a conversation around the issues that YAC need to consider regarding ministry with Special Needs children and young people. This is an important and challenging part of ministry with children and young people which will enable the Board to stand alongside leaders, parents, children and young people who are struggling with at least some of the many issues around special needs

17. **Faith Based Sub Group on Sexual Health** is an inter-denominational sub-group formed at the request of government to provide materials on this issue from a faith perspective. Over a number of years the YAC board has been represented on this group by Michelle McCauley, who has been part of the production 'The Unique' material on sexual health. This valuable resource has now been used to create a website for youth workers, teachers and parents (www.unique-ni.org). Andy Howard has agreed to take over from Michelle McCauley as part of this group.

GRAEME KENNEDY, Convener

MINISTRY EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Ministry Events Committee continues to organise and promote a series of events which are relevant to the needs of children, young people and young adults across the denomination. Dedicated working groups have been putting preparations in place for various events this year. As well as the well established events running throughout 2011, the Committee is very excited about the launch of the new Bible-teaching conference for young adults, 'The Word', which is planned for late August. The Committee is grateful to God for all that He has done through events in the past and waits eagerly in prayerful anticipation to see how He will bless the work in the coming year.

Kids' Praise Party

2. It is hard to believe that this event is already into its fifth year and this year's Kids' Praise Party is planned for the afternoon of Saturday 21 May in Carnmoney Presbyterian Church. The themes for this event have carefully built year on year and in 2011 it has taken the theme "Loved by God". The lively programme of praise and interactive discovery will seek to remind children how precious each of them is in the sight of God, just as they are – this is an important message in a culture which would seek to make them believe from an early age that they need to conform to a certain body shape, style of dress or pattern of behaviour to gain approval or acceptance. The programme will culminate with a short talk by David Gray, a Ruling Elder in Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church, who is a gifted communicator to that age group.

Youth Night

3. Youth Night is planned for Church House on the evening of Saturday 11 June, 2011, at the climax of General Assembly week. It is again hoped that there will be a tremendous turnout of young people from all parts of our island, gathering for worship led by Mr Jag, as well as to hear what God would say through the speaker, Paul Bowman, Youth Director in 1st Saintfield Presbyterian Church. The theme for the evening will be "Glimpses of Grace" and the interactive programme is being put together by the working group under the leadership of its new chairman, Rick Hill. Thanks are extended to Rick's predecessor, Michael Wylie, for his wise and energetic direction of the Youth Night working group in recent years.

MAD Weekend

4. The MAD working group is also under new leadership. The Committee wish David Penney well as he takes over the reins from our Board Convener, the Rev Jonathan Moxen. Jonathan has been the driving force behind MAD throughout its history and the Church owes him a debt of thanks for all he has contributed in that role. Many young people have come to faith or re-committed their lives to the Lord down through the years at MAD. The Committee's prayer is that God will move in power once again at "MAD 13" on 28-30 October, 2011. Alastair Bennett and his band will again lead the worship, in a supporting role to the Rev Andy Carroll who will be this year's main

speaker. It is expected that there will be the usual demand for tickets as many young people from all over Ireland descend on the University of Ulster campus in Coleraine to enjoy the varied programme of worship, teaching and activity.

The Word

5. This new event is a Bible conference for young adults aged 18-30 years and it follows on from the very successful Route 66 event which ran for ten years. The vision for 'The Word' is to 'equip a generation to be transformed, not conformed' – giving our young adults the tools to handle correctly the text of the Bible and apply its teaching to many of the serious issues with which they are grappling. The conference will also enable them to defend the truth of God's Word in the 'marketplace' of today's culture. A working group, chaired by Lachlan Webster, has been working hard to put the building blocks of this exciting event in place. 'The Word' will take place at Castlewellan Castle from 26-28 August 2011 and the keynote speaker will be Rev Andy Hickford, a long-time friend of the Board and now senior Minister at Maybridge Community Church in Worthing. It is anticipated that a strong line-up of local speakers will also be recruited to lead the seminar programme. It is planned that the weekend will culminate with a celebration service in Newcastle Presbyterian Church which will include thanksgiving for the work of camps and summer outreach teams and an act of commissioning for those embarking on the Board's VIP programme.

6. The cost of attending 'The Word' will be £85 per person. The Board encourages Congregations to consider financially supporting their young people to attend the conference.

Future Plans

7. While remaining committed to delivering the present schedule of events, the Committee is constantly exploring new opportunities which will best serve the Board and the Church in fulfilling its remit to reach and nurture children and young people. At present some preliminary work is being done to investigate the possible provision of an event for pre-school children.

Thanks

8. As well as our indebtedness to God for His gracious leading and provision, thanks are also due to our committed working group members, as well as the hard-working and efficient YAC staff team.

ANDREW THOMPSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That a grant of £9,736 be paid from the Incidental Fund to Youth Link: NI.
3. That the General Assembly approve the Youth and Children's Project to support the work of Kids' Alive International and Friendship House in Sandy Row.

4. That the resignation of the Rev Graeme Kennedy as Convener of the Ministry Resources Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev David Brownlow be appointed 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 CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Rev JNI McNEELY
Secretary: Rev TD GRIBBEN

Executive Summary of the Board's Report

1. The Board of Christian Training has had another busy year during which there have been many positive developments.

2. The **Committee on Training and Resources**, operating through three hard working Panels, has made progress on three significant fronts. The training of Accredited Preachers is well underway and there has been a great deal of interest throughout the Church in this new sphere of ministry. The two Panels covering the areas of Pastoral Care and Leadership have been engaged in much work since the last General Assembly and have produced two reports which reflect the conscientious commitment and thinking that have gone into seeking to further develop and enhance these strategic areas of the Church's ministry.

3. The **Committee on Ministerial Studies and Development** has commenced Pre-Retirement Residential retreats which were reported to last year's Assembly and these have been very positively received by the Ministers and spouses who have attended. The Post-Ordination Training programme has also been progressed and the Sabbatical Leave scheme is increasingly being taken up by Ministers.

4. The **Union Theological College Management Committee** is served by two sub-committees. The Finance, Property and Administration Sub-Committee has been primarily engaged in overseeing the reinstating of the Training and Resources Centre damaged by fire in 2010. The anticipated date for the opening of the new Centre is September 2011. The other building matter which has concerned the sub-committee has been the condition of the stonework of the College and information related to this issue is in the report. The Curriculum Sub-Committee continues to consider the most effective curriculum for the training of men and women for the ministry of word and sacrament and has included in this report a proposal for a revised requirement in regard to the duration of the theological course to be completed by all students.

Board Convener's Introduction

5. The Board remains encouraged that over the past few years there has been between 20 and 25 applicants received annually to be interviewed as candidates for the ministry. Those who interview the applicants are constantly impressed by the quality of candidates who apply and are equally impressed by the wide range of Church and ministry experience of the applicants. The Board recognises that Ministers and Kirk Sessions, with prayer and discernment, actively encourage people from within their Congregations to consider the ordained ministry. The Board however is aware that within the Church there is a perception that younger candidates are disadvantaged if their general

experience is limited. The Board would want it to be clearly understood that it does not have a policy in regard to the lower age of a candidate, and would very much welcome applications from younger people with potential for ministry.

6. The Board recognises the contribution that Supervising Ministers make to the 'on the job' training of Assistant Ministers and are grateful to those Ministers for the time that they invest in mentoring and equipping assistants in preparation for ordination. The number of students to be assigned annually is almost exceeding the number of Congregations that apply for assistants and the Board urges Ministers and Kirk Sessions to seriously consider contributing to the training of students by offering the opportunity for an assistant to be assigned to their Congregation.

7. In 2010 a scheme for an Auxiliary Ministry was adopted by the General Board and the oversight of the main training course was given to the Board of Christian Training. As a result of an objective consideration of the training required, and the overlap with the course for Accredited Preachers, along with the pastoral care element being similar to the training to be provided for pastoral care within Congregations, it was agreed by the Board that the Committee for Training and Resources should assume responsibility for the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme. It was therefore decided that the Christian Training Development Officer would be the appropriate member of staff to be responsible for the supervision of the training course.

8. Mr Tom Finnegan was welcomed into his new position as Christian Training Development Officer in June 2010 and he has established himself in this role demonstrating much competence and adept administrative ability.

9. The Rev Prof J Patton Taylor commenced a three year term secondment as Principal of Union Theological College with executive responsibilities in July 2010. The Board remains hopeful that it will be able, at the end of this term of secondment, to adopt the recommendations, included in the report of the Union Theological College Review Panel and agreed by the 2009 General Assembly, that a new permanent post of Principal with executive responsibility be created.

10. **The Rev Dr Brian Savage** has served as Convener of the Committee for Training and Resources for two years; first as an interim convener for a year and then as a busy convener in the past year as he gave guidance to the Committee's Panels. During his short tenure the Committee has introduced the Accredited Preachers course, a scheme involving three models for the provision of pastoral care in Congregations and a programme for the way ahead for leadership within Congregations. The Board conveys its thanks to Dr Savage for his outstanding input to its work and for the wisdom and discernment he frequently demonstrated when involved in its deliberations.

11. **The Rev David Brice** having served the Board for seven years, and during the past year as Convener of the Union Theological College Finance, Property and Administration Sub-Committee steps down at this Assembly. David contributed his expertise and vast experience of the College's management to the position he held and his oversight of the building programmes and financial issues has been carried out with great efficiency. The Board is indebted to David for the valuable contribution he made and for his

alertness regarding issues of management. The Rev Stephen Moore is welcomed to this new role.

12. **The Rev Stewart Mackay** completes 8 years as Convener of the Students' Bursary Fund. Stewart approached this responsibility with a constant pastoral concern for the students who benefited from the Bursary Fund and with a regular propensity for detail. He was always prepared to go out of his way to make sure that every student and, if applicable, their families got all that they were entitled to and he was constantly available to deal with any problems or difficulties the students may have encountered. Stewart was always committed to promoting the Fund so that the maximum contributions were realised through offerings at the relevant designated services. The Board is grateful to Stewart for his dedication to his role and its responsibilities. The Board welcomes the Rev David Irvine as the new Convener of the Students' Bursary Fund.

13. The Board recognises the volume of work the Executive Secretary of the Board, the Rev Trevor Gribben, commits himself to and the proficient manner that his duties are carried out. Much of the Board's progress is due to the industrious manner in which he expedites the strategies adopted by the Board.

Students' Bursary Fund

The Convener, the Rev Stewart Mackay, reports:

1. The Students' Bursary Fund exists to make financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families, during their time of study.

2. In the year September 2010-June 2011 there are 55 students for the ministry in receipt of grants. The cost to the Fund of grants, fees, and other expenses for this period is over £723,000. This is met through offerings at services of licensing, ordination and installation of Ministers and elders, personal and congregational donations, and by congregational assessment. Applications remain at a high level and in 2011-12 it is estimated that 51 students will be in receipt of grants.

3. Thanks are due to those members of the Church who generously support the Bursary Fund. Those involved in planning services of licensing, ordination and installation, are asked to ensure that full use is made of the literature available at Reception in Church House; the bookmark and especially the Gift Aid envelope. It is suggested that these should be given out at the previous service to enable members to come with the information already written on the envelope. The more support the Bursary Fund receives through these services, the less will be required from Congregations by way of assessment.

Assignment Committee

The Convener, the Rev Dr Donald Watts, reports:

1. This year the Committee has been able to assign a total 23 students and others and is grateful to those Congregations and Ministers who accept the mentoring of student assistants as an important contribution to the life of the Church.

2. The Committee recognises that, with the increased use of schemes such as the Additional Pastoral Personnel Scheme, several Congregations who used to take an Assistant Minister are now no longer doing so. It is important that the Church continues to provide the opportunities necessary for a new generation of Ministers to avail of vital 'on the job' training, prior to receiving a call to Congregations of their own. The Committee would encourage both Ministers and Kirk Sessions to consider how they can assist in this important work.

COMMITTEE ON TRAINING AND RESOURCES

1. During the year the Committee has met twice but the three Panels which it supervises have met frequently as the work on setting up the pilot training course for Accredited Preachers and the development of Leadership and Pastoral Care has progressed.

2. Applications for the Accredited Preacher course have exceeded all the Committee's expectations and it is now under some pressure to recruit and train sufficient teachers and mentors to allow training to be delivered to all who are qualified to take it. The Committee is glad to be tackling the problems of growth.

3. The Panels on Pastoral Care and Leadership have learned a great deal from the consultations which have been held with groups of Congregations reflecting the diversity of the Church in different parts of Ireland. The Committee records its appreciation of the willingness of congregational representatives to share their experiences and their challenges with the Panels. It also recognizes the commitment of members of these Panels who gave their time, and often travelled considerable distances, during a winter when travel was not always easy, to be present at these focus groups.

4. The work of all three Panels has involved the gathering and collation of a great deal of information and this would not have been possible without the Board's Development Officer, Mr Tom Finnegan, whose skill in training is matched by his administrative ability.

Panel on Pastoral Care

1. In Acts 20:28 the Apostle Paul urged the Ephesian Elders to, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the Church of God, which he bought with his own blood." With passages such as this in mind, the traditional, structured model of pastoral care in a Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been the Elder-overseen district system. In recent years, however, geographical mobility, changing dynamics of family life and even the geographical location of some Congregations, in addition to other social factors, have revealed the inadequacy in many Congregations of the district system as the main structured model of pastoral care. While affirming that the traditional model of Elder-overseen districts may still be appropriate for some Congregations, the Panel wishes to

present two other possible models of pastoral care, along with suggestions for an enhanced traditional model (see **Appendix 2, pp 208-211**).

2. These three models are presented as options which can be chosen by a Kirk Session to provide pastoral care in a way that best suits their congregational context. Each model could also be further tailored for individual Congregation's needs. It should be noted that in all cases the Kirk Session have overall responsibility to make sure that effective pastoral care is provided. None of these models is intended to diminish the role of Ruling Elders or Teaching Elders but rather to help them make sure pastoral care is as effective as it can be. However, it should also be noted that the responsibility for providing pastoral care does not lie with the Kirk Session alone; it is the responsibility of every Christian. The ideal to be aimed for is that every Christian cares for each other while recognising that some have a particular gift in this area and some are also called to full or part time pastoral roles. It should be regularly communicated to the Congregation that part of the warp and woof of congregational life is believers continually loving each other (cf. John 13:35) and carrying each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2). In other words, Christians are to provide on-going pastoral care for each other. This should be a backbone model of pastoral care in any Congregation.

3. A re-education of the Congregation may be necessary to ensure that it understands that a pastoral visit from a Ruling Elder or member of a pastoral care team is not inferior to a pastoral visit from the Teaching Elder. However, the purpose of the visit may determine whether it is appropriate for the Teaching Elder, Ruling Elder or pastoral care team member to carry it out. This re-education of the Congregation could also cover what constitutes, or warrants, a pastoral visit in order to prevent an over-dependence (or under-dependence) on the Teaching Elder, Ruling Elders or pastoral care team members. This would include highlighting the spiritual aspect of a pastoral visit which is to help people draw closer to Christ whatever their situation. In any model of pastoral care, there is a need for on-going education of the Congregation that the Minister alone cannot effectively deal with all the general pastoral work needed in a Congregation.

4. The need for equipping of Ruling Elders and pastoral care team members to provide effective pastoral care is paramount. This is especially the case in our rapidly changing society where pastoral issues are often increasing and new issues present themselves. The Panel will seek to develop resources to equip Congregations to implement new models of pastoral care and enhance existing models as appropriate.

Panel on Accredited Preachers

1. Since the General Assembly in June 2010 the Board of Christian Training's Panel on Accredited Preachers met on six occasions, developing the scheme agreed by the 2009 General Assembly (2009 Reports pp 91-92).

2. A pilot programme based in the Presbyteries of Armagh, Monaghan and Newry was launched in autumn 2010. Twelve people were received onto the scheme with one deferring until the next course. The training phase started in January 2011 with a residential training weekend in Rostrevor followed by evening classes in Armagh. A course available to all members of the

Presbyterian Church in Ireland was advertised in late 2010. This course will be Belfast based and start in September 2011. As of the deadline for applications on 11 February a significant number had applied leading to the need to organise further courses.

3. The Training and Resources Committee and the Board of Christian Training have approved, as appropriate, the work of the Panel.

4. It is planned to organise further courses most likely in the north-west and in or near Dublin.

5. Accredited Preachers could be very useful in helping out with vacancies and this is especially so in Presbyteries such as Monaghan where the pilot programme is running. However, the Code Par 190 (2a) does not include Accredited Preachers as a category of preachers available to assist in this way. The Panel proposes that the Code be amended to include the possibility of Accredited Preachers being able to provide pulpit supply for vacant Congregations.

Panel on Leadership

Introduction

1. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is blessed with many dedicated Elders and others involved in congregational leadership however the reality is that often it is left to only these few to do most of the work. These people are very busy and even more so now with implementing mission plans. Without wishing to increase the work of anyone in congregational leadership there is an urgent need to re-examine how we lead.

2. We live in a changing world and an unfortunate aspect of that is an unrelenting decline in Church attendance especially amongst the younger generation. Society is becoming increasingly secular and distant from God. The models and patterns of leadership in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland often date from the by-gone era of 'Christendom' when the Church did not face these challenges. Perhaps that is part of the reason why leaders are overstretched.

3. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in decline and is facing a situation which is moving relentlessly towards crisis point. Some Congregations have already felt its force and those who haven't done so yet will before long. In the face of any crisis, effective leadership is absolutely imperative. Both the Bible and history teach this.

4. Today, the Churches experiencing significant growth are the 'new Churches' such as Vineyard, Christian Fellowship Church and Hillsong. That is not to say, however, that the Presbyterian Church does not have significant strengths that these Churches may lack. One of these strengths is that the way we operate is well established in tradition and Church culture. However, this can also mean that trying a different approach can be more difficult. Nevertheless, a more effective and relevant way of leading is needed – one which will enable Congregations to use all the gifts God has given his people for the building up of the Church and the sharing of the gospel to today's generation.

How can we be sure we are introducing new leadership practices that are biblical?

5. There is a danger that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) could adopt practices that are unbiblical if discernment is not used. However, there is an even greater danger that nothing is done and, like the man with the one talent (Matthew 25:25), a passive approach is taken which yields no result and God's displeasure.

6. The Bible provides some practical guidance on leadership and to tar with one brush every different approach to leadership as unbiblical is not helpful. It may even show a lack of confidence in being able to biblically discern what is useful. For example, the wise leadership practice of not leaving everything to the Minister but rather leading by delegating is clearly found in Exodus 18. It should also be noted that the source of this wisdom was from outside the community of faith! PCI already adopt modern accounting practices without the slightest reservation because it makes sense to do so and it is in line with the biblical principle of good stewardship. Therefore biblical principles can also be used to evaluate leadership approaches.

7. As congregational leadership is examined biblically it may be found that current practice falls short of what is clearly required. For example, Ruling Elders are to lead because they are shepherds of the flock. It is worth remembering that the shepherd of biblical times went in front of the flock to guide the way rather than only passively watching over them.

8. Some Ruling Elders may have been elected for reasons other than recognition of their gift of leadership (along with God's calling and godly character) simply because the emphasis on leadership was not there. Many may actually be more gifted in pastoral visiting than leadership – and often the reason for their election was a need to cover districts. That is not to diminish the valuable work they do in pastoral visiting but if PCI is to have effective leadership then models and patterns that allow gifting to be matched to roles must be to the fore. This would certainly result in less pressure on many people who have a passion for their gifting in one area but find they have to spend a disproportionate amount of time and effort doing something else.

9. The biblical model is for people to use their gifts in appropriate ways (1 Corinthians 12). Much of the current approach can often stifle this, especially in larger Congregations which have a large number of Ruling Elders simply because of the number of districts to be covered. This makes no biblical sense. (In this regard, the work of the Pastoral Care Panel, **Reports pp 193-194 and Appendix 2 pp 208-211**, is commended for study.)

Focus Groups' reports

10. From November 2010 to January 2011, the Panel held five 'focus groups'. Representatives from a range of different types of Congregations were invited – from larger Congregations and smaller ones, from rural, suburban and inner city Congregations and from different parts of the country. Five or six Congregations were invited to each Focus Group meeting with representatives, male and female, older and younger, including the Ministers, Ruling Elders and others involved in congregational leadership. The Focus Groups looked at the

issues of leadership as they are now and responded to ideas for leadership development presented by the Panel, giving valuable feedback which has helped shape the Panel's proposals.

- (a) A need for training
 - (i) One major finding of the Focus Groups was that there is a general lack of training within Congregations along with a lack of awareness both of the need for training and of what training is available. There is sometimes an aversion to the idea of training and there can be an attitude that people busy in Church activities and their daily lives don't have time for it. However, if it is recognised that a central part of Christian discipleship is lifelong learning, then training should be seen in a different light.
 - (ii) On a positive note, the training available from the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry as well as Taking Care training was extensively used and commended. Other youth organisations such as the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade also provided training that was well established. This raises the question of whether in PCI it is thought that training is needed for youth work but not for ministry with adults? There seems to be no logical reason for this except that youth organisations have woken up to the need for training, whereas other ministries have not.
- (b) Unwieldy numbers in Kirk Sessions
 - (i) It was commented by larger Congregations that having a large number of Ruling Elders (driven by the need to cover districts) resulted in very unwieldy decision making. Some Kirk Sessions had alleviated this problem by forming ministry or 'action' teams.
- (c) Selection of Ruling Elders
 - (i) When asked what way Ruling Elders were elected most Congregations said they had used the first method outlined in the Code Par 178 (selection by the Congregation) rather than the second method (selection by the Kirk Session) because the former idea was considered more 'democratic'. In spite of our modern ideas, democracy is not central to the biblical idea of eldership. Ruling Elders should be selected based on gifting, calling and character and the method of selection should facilitate the right people being put forward. For some, a straightforward election by the Congregation might be the best method, but in other cases the courage may be needed to say that the Kirk Session could be in a better position to discern from the nominations who would make the best leaders, with the final approval of course given by the Congregation itself.
- (d) Holding onto what is good
 - (i) When the Congregations represented were asked what they would not want to lose in any changes in approach to leadership the key elements were:
 - The already committed people
 - Accountability
 - The voluntary nature of leadership

- The good training already available for youth and children's work particularly that provided by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.
 - (ii) The Panel strongly affirms these four elements and would not want to adopt an approach that weakens any of these. Therefore the Panel would affirm and commend those who are already involved in leadership and seek to help them grow in that role as well as encouraging new leaders to be raised up.
11. The Panel strongly affirms the biblical Presbyterian model of a plural leadership made up of Ruling Elders and the Teaching Elder as well as the role of Presbytery and the General Assembly. This allows accountability to work both vertically in the structures of the Church and horizontally in leadership teams. It should be noted that Presbyteries must also exercise inspirational and effective leadership.
12. While the Panel recognises the need for extra paid staff in some cases it affirms the need for voluntary involvement by all Church members, according to their gifts and abilities, and seeks to resource and equip them for service. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and other youth organisations are to be commended for their proactive approach and it is hoped that this will be also emulated for adult ministry.

The way ahead for congregational leadership development

13. As previously stated, the Panel affirms the work of the Panel on Pastoral Care (see pp 193-194 and Appendix 2 pp 208-211) in developing and promoting new models for pastoral care and particularly their impact in moving towards having more manageable numbers in Kirk Sessions and matching people appropriately to their gifts.

14. The specific leadership development initiatives proposed by the Leadership Panel fall into two general categories:

- Firstly, those which are optional and could be adopted by each Congregation if the Kirk Session decides they could be helpful. This is about equipping and resourcing the Church. The advantage of being part of a large denomination means that resourcing which would be beyond the scope of an individual Congregation can be made more readily available.
 - Secondly, there are those initiatives which would be of benefit right across the denomination which can only happen in a collective way. It should be noted that the initiatives proposed in this report are part of an on-going process and it is hoped that more will follow in the coming years. Leadership is a dynamic and on-going task of contextualising biblical paradigms to the situations God has called us to.
- (A) Equipping and resourcing the Church
- (i) Promoting general leadership training courses
- There are many resources developed by other Christian organisations that, if they were more widely used, could have a significant impact on developing congregational leadership. The Panel proposes to draw up a list of leadership training resources

which would be helpful for a spectrum of Congregation types. This list will include resources for training younger leaders. The Panel considered the option of developing PCI leadership training material, and this option was also considered at the Focus Groups, however given the wealth of material available, and acknowledging that one size does not fit all, it was generally agreed that this was not an appropriate way forward. It is therefore *recommended that* the Panel produces a list of leadership training resources and makes it widely available.

- (ii) Producing a resource on leading through change
The Panel recognises that a major challenge facing Ruling Elders and Ministers is leading a Congregation through change and proposes to develop a resource to help with this process. The resource will be in the form of a booklet and also available to download from the PCI website. It is *recommended that* this resource be produced by the Panel.
- (iii) Producing a resource on how to raise up Christian leaders
The Panel proposes to develop a resource on how to raise up Christian leaders within our Congregations including practices such as leadership mentoring, leadership succession, recognising leadership gifting, praying for new and existing leaders, how to encourage younger leaders and matching people to roles appropriate to their gifts. This resource will be in the form of a booklet and also be available to download from the PCI website. It is *recommended that* this resource be produced by the Panel.
- (iv) Training on identifying people's gifts
'Prepared to Serve' is a course on discovering people's 'grace gifts' developed by the Board of Christian Training which could be used very effectively in conjunction with the resource described in point (A)(iii) above. It has already been used by many Congregations (over 2000 participant copies have been sold). It is crucial in using this course or other similar courses that it is combined with a leadership approach which matches gifting to roles. It is *recommended that* Congregations make use of this existing resource.
- (v) Training for new Elders
Training for Elders Elect is available through the Board of Christian Training's 'Prepared to Lead' course and this material is currently being revised and enhanced. It is *recommended that* the use of the 'Prepared to Lead' course is encouraged for the training of Elders Elect.
- (vi) Producing a resource to assist Kirk Sessions organising 'away days'
All Kirk Sessions are encouraged to have an annual 'away day' which does not involve Church business but is a time for being built up spiritually as a leadership team. This time could also be used to take a step back and consider the 'big picture' of congregational life and mission. Drawing on the experience of

many Kirk Sessions which already do this, the Panel will prepare a booklet or leaflet with suggestions for facilitating 'away days'. It is *recommended that* this resource be developed by the Panel.

- (vii) Producing a resource to assist Kirk Sessions implement different ways of running meetings

Kirk Sessions are encouraged to rethink how their meetings are run. A booklet will be produced by the Panel with suggestions on how to include prayer and Bible study in Kirk Session meetings, how to delegate tasks and, for larger Kirk Sessions, how to delegate responsibilities to ministry or 'action' teams. This resource will include testimonies from Congregations with experience of different ways of running Kirk Session meetings. The resource could also cover the areas of mutual accountability, openness and how to handle potential conflict in a leadership team. It is *recommended that* this resource be developed by the Panel.

- (viii) A leadership development road-show

The Panel proposes holding a series of road-shows similar to those recently delivered by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry to equip and resource those involved in congregational leadership. It is *recommended that* this road-show be organised and delivered by the Panel.

- (B) Initiatives for developing leadership with a denomination wide effect
Initiatives in the second category that would have a denomination wide impact are as follows:

- (i) Enhanced involvement of Presbyteries in approval and training of Ruling Elders

Presbytery should be more proactively involved in the approval and training of new Ruling Elders selected by their Congregations. Currently Ruling Elders are ordained by Presbytery but many Presbyteries in practice have a minimal role in approval and training. It seems incongruous that Presbytery would take on the important spiritual responsibility of ordination without significant input into approval and training. Guidelines for how this could be done are found in **Appendix 3, pp 211-215**. Some Presbyteries already have guidelines in place. This is to be commended and the guidelines in **Appendix 3** should not be seen as a replacement for them, but rather an example of good practice.

- (ii) Encouraging on-going learning for Ruling Elders

The Panel strongly encourages on-going learning and equipping for Ruling Elders. This is to support the principle that those in leadership need to receive if they are to give to those they serve. The Panel recognises that this already happens in many Kirk Sessions but some Kirk Sessions and some Ruling Elders within Kirk Sessions do not seek such 'learning opportunities'.

Ruling Elders should be encouraged to participate in regular 'learning opportunities'. The possibilities for 'learning opportunities' are wide and diverse. A 'learning opportunity' could be a Kirk Session away day or a training course with Christian

content, for example, a training event organised by a Ruling Elders' Fellowship, the Accredited Preacher Scheme, a Christian counselling course, a Christian conference, distance learning, time specifically spent as a Kirk Session reflecting on the duties of an elder, etc. The intention is to encourage a culture of lifelong learning and increase the expectation that Ruling Elders should be in a strong position to provide effective spiritual leadership. The Panel proposes that, in order to support this, the Board of Christian Training produces an annual list of 'learning opportunities'

- (iii) Presbytery congregational consultations to include leadership issues
The Panel proposes that the Presbytery Consultation Process includes the vital aspect of challenging and encouraging congregational leadership in terms of its effectiveness in selecting and equipping members for ministry and providing inspirational, visionary and courageous leadership.
- (iv) Presbytery promotion of leadership development
The Panel are aware that some Presbyteries are actively promoting leadership development particularly for Ruling Elders. The Panel encourages all Presbyteries to bring leadership development onto their agendas and be instrumental in organising congregational leadership development within their bounds. This could involve organising training for Elders and other involved in congregational leadership and promoting resources developed by the Panel on Leadership.
- (v) Leadership development to be included when considering 'leave to call'
Currently mission plans are considered when a vacant Congregation seeks to call a new Minister. The Panel propose that Presbytery should be asked to also consider what congregational leadership development has taken place because effective leadership is key to the implementation of mission plans.

The Leadership Role of the Teaching Elder

15. The remit of the Panel covers congregational leadership by Ruling Elders and others but does not directly cover the role of the Teaching Elder. However, the Panel recognises that the Teaching Elder has a key leadership role as 'first among equals'. The Teaching Elder has the opportunity to encourage and influence change and to develop leadership within the Kirk Session and Congregation and also leadership of the Kirk Session.

16. The Panel *recommends that* the following issues are referred to other relevant Panels and Committees, especially the Committee on Ministerial Studies and Development:

- The Panel *recommends that* there be a greater element of training in leadership and leadership development at a college and licentiate level together with a clearer and stronger focus upon this in post ordination training.
- The Panel *recommends that* the issue of leadership should be highlighted at the first possible stage of the application process to

the Ordained Ministry and candidates be made aware of the expectations of leading Congregations in the 21st Century, along with the assurance that training will be provided in leadership.

17. The Panel also *recommends that* Presbytery explore the Minister's own leadership with him/her at Consultations along with his/her approach to leadership development (as well as looking at the leadership of the Kirk Session). The Panel suggests that a Minister's record of training be reviewed at consultation as part of this.

18. The Panel *recommends that* in any further correspondence concerning the Ministry Development Programme to Presbytery agents or Ministers, the issue of Minister's leadership and the Minister's role in developing leaders should be highlighted as a denominational priority.

RB SAVAGE, Convener

COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The Committee met on three occasions since the last General Assembly (October 2010, February 2011, April 2011).

2. The Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS), the Rev Ronnie Hetherington, acts as Secretary to the Committee and continues to advise prospective candidates and fulfil his duties in relation to students in training according to the Regulations of the General Assembly. The Committee wishes to record its appreciation to Mr Hetherington for the measure of pastoral sensitivity, wise counsel and administrative ability he brings to the role of DMS.

3. In the academic year 2010-2011 there were 60 students under the care of Presbyteries, as listed in the appended Schedule (see Appendix 1).

MINISTERIAL STUDIES

4. The Convener of the Board of Christian Training wrote to all Ministers requesting that they encourage those in their Congregations who appear to possess gifts for ordained ministry to consider application. Given the increased numbers of students studying for the ordained ministry the correspondence also urged Congregations to facilitate the training of future Ministers by considering applying for an assistant.

Training of Supervising Ministers

5. Following reflection on the pilot course which took place in January 2010, it was agreed to explore the provision of separate courses for three categories of Minister: (a) obligatory courses for Supervising Ministers with Assistants; (b) courses for Ministers working alongside Irish Mission workers or Deaconesses; and (c) courses for Ministers with Additional Pastoral Personnel.

Interviews

6. The interviews of 23 candidates were held in Union Theological College on Tuesday, 19 April, 2011. The Interviewing Panel comprised: the

Revs Alistair Bates, Robert Beggs, Amanda Best, Gordon Best, Robin Brown, John Coulter, Rob Craig, Kenneth Crowe, David Cupples, Mark Goudy, William Henry, John Hutchinson, Philip McCrea, Adrian McLernon, Ian McNie, Cheryl Meban, Adrian Moffett, Colin Morrison, Ivan Patterson, Dr Donald Patton, Dr Brian Savage, William Sinclair, Alan Thompson, David Thompson; Mr Joe Campbell, Mrs Isobel McAuley, Mr Basil McCorriston, Dr Lena Morrow, Miss Anne Taylor, Mrs Jayne Wright. Dr Joan McQuoid acted as Vocational Consultant, the Rev Noble McNeely as Chairman, the Rev Bill Parker as Secretary, and the Rev Ronnie Hetherington as Co-ordinator. The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary to the Board, was also present as an Advisor.

7. Having completed the interviewing process, 16 candidates are being nominated to the General Assembly by the Board of Christian Training.

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Post-Ordination Training

8. Ten Ministers, ordained in 2009, attended the first residential in November 2010. In May 2011, in a shared venue, the same Ministers undertook a Year 2 event alongside 14 Ministers (ordained in 2010) undertaking a Year 1 event.

Pre-Retirement Residentials

9. The Very Rev Dr John and Mrs Rosemary Dunlop, along with the Rev Bill and Mrs Margaret Sanderson facilitated 2 residential retreats in November 2010 and February 2011 which proved to be very beneficial and helpful to those who attended. The Committee wishes to record its appreciation to the facilitators for the significant role they played in the success of the retreats.

Sabbaticals and In-Service Training

10. As a consequence of an increasing array of scenarios concerning applications for sabbatical leave and In-Service training, the Committee has sought to bring a greater degree of clarity concerning the claiming of expenses. While it is acknowledged that Ministers may need to find 'space' to engage in study or reflection away from the manse, thus incurring travel costs and rental charges, it was felt that travel outside Ireland or the UK should be facilitated only if a Minister genuinely needs to visit a specific location or engage in a particular context for the actual purpose of that sabbatical or In-Service training. The Committee *agreed* that this is an appropriate, and indeed necessary, restriction on claims for travel and/or accommodation.

11. The Committee recognised that it is increasingly difficult for Ministers to pursue suitable courses or attend appropriate conferences within the current allowance. *It was agreed* to propose an increase in the expenses allowance from £250.00 per week to £300.00 per week from 1 September, 2011.

WJM PARKER, Convener

UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Much of the detailed work of the Committee is carried out through two Sub-Committees: the Curriculum Development Sub-Committee (convened by the Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson) and the Finance, Property and Administration Sub-Committee (convened by the Rev David Brice).

2. Following last year's decision to postpone temporarily the permanent appointment of a Principal with executive responsibilities, the Rev Prof Patton Taylor was appointed to this role by way of a three year secondment and is warmly thanked for his willingness to serve again as Principal.

3. The College has once again enjoyed teaching a large number of ministry and Queen's students: 54 students for PCI ministry (the largest number for many years) plus 240 other undergraduate students and 57 postgraduate students. While this has been encouraging it has not been without its challenges, e.g. timetabling the curriculum, given the range of courses and the overlapping nature of some degree programmes. The College Handbook for 2010-11 reveals the extent and range of courses offered and the commitment of the Faculty to both students and programmes.

4. A new Memorandum of Agreement with Queen's University Belfast was finalised, underpinning our working arrangement with Queen's. The Rev Prof Gordon Campbell and Dr Desi Alexander were appointed as Assistant Directors of the Institute of Theology, while Dr Alexander and the Rev Prof Laurence Kirkpatrick chair their respective subject boards within the Institute.

Curriculum Sub-Committee

5. The Curriculum Sub-Committee continues to consider ways in which the theological curriculum delivered by Union Theological College can be structured so as to prepare students for effective Christian ministry.

6. Since preparation for ministry involves more than academic qualifications and theological knowledge, material about development of personal qualities and ministry skills was prepared for the Board Conference in November. Conference feedback was assessed, and was generally affirmative of the approach of the Sub-Committee.

7. The Sub-Committee spent some time considering the overall goals and objectives of the curriculum and believes that future Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland need to be spiritually mature and pastorally sensitive, as well as being intellectually competent, in order to provide pastoral leadership to their Congregations. The Committee believes that the educational experience delivered by Union Theological College should address the issues of personal and spiritual development as well as offering a stimulating and challenging educational experience in terms of the traditional academic curriculum.

8. The Sub-Committee has also been working towards an agreed "academic spine" for the curriculum that will comprise 18 core modules which every student for the ministry must complete. This is comprised of 3 modules in each of the 5 main subject areas (Old Testament, New Testament, Systematic

Theology, Church History and Practical Theology) plus 3 elective modules in areas such as Missiology, Youth Ministry and Church and Society.

9. Questions have been raised about the effectiveness of a two-year course of study for ministry students of mature years and the Sub-Committee raised these concerns with the full Management Committee. Following discussion it was agreed to recommend to the Board of Christian Training that students for the ministry, commencing their course of study in or after 2012, should normally be required to complete a total of at least three years approved theological study prior to eligibility for licensing. This was agreed at the March meeting of the Board. A resolution to this effect is appended.

10. Consideration was also given to ways in which the regular term timetable can be used to deliver the curriculum without increasing the workload unnecessarily for either faculty or students. In particular, it is believed that a creative use of a two-week residential study block in September for first and second year students prior to the commencement of the regular term may allow the College to achieve some of the important goals of the theological curriculum. The Sub-Committee will continue to work on these areas with the aim of beginning a new pattern at the start of the 2012-13 academic year.

Finance, Property and Administration Sub-Committee

11. Mr David Kerry was appointed Librarian and took up post on 1 September. He has proved a welcome addition to the College staff.

12. The College received approval from the UK Border Agency as a Tier 4 Sponsor, and an excellent report was received on the College Accreditation carried out by ASIC. The Authorising Officer is the Secretary of the College Management Committee, the Rev Trevor Gribben.

13. Under the implementation of the College Review as agreed by the General Assembly in 2009, all administrative staff became PCI employees with effect from 1 October. The implementation process continues with regard to academic staff.

14. Alterations to 26 College Green began on 26 August. Internal works were completed early in October, but due to delays within the Planning Service planning permission for the external works was not received until December. The work was finally completed in March. The Presbyterian Historical Society is the ground floor tenant, while Fitzroy Avenue Presbyterian Church uses some office space on the first floor.

15. Fire damage re-instatement and completion of the Training and Resource Centre has progressed throughout the year. The contract commenced on 6 September and, despite some delay caused by severe weather in December/January, it is hoped it will be complete in June, with an official opening on 12 September. Tight control has been kept on costs and it is anticipated that, subject to full settlement by insurance, it will be finished within budget.

16. Following concern about the condition of the stonework of the College, due to some falling masonry, a report was commissioned and prepared by Alastair Coey Architects Ltd. The report, considered by the Management Committee at a meeting on 14 February, and reported to the Board on 9 March, revealed considerable deterioration. *“The deteriorating condition of the*

stonework has clearly been of concern for a considerable period of time as there is abundant evidence of previous repair schemes, most obviously the extensive use of cementitious mortar repairs at some time in the not-too-distant past. These cement-based repairs have not weathered well and the leaching out of artificial pigments, which were used to give the repairs a similar colour to the sandstone they replaced, have given the Main Building its distinctive and unsightly piebald appearance. More seriously, the survey has revealed that these hard, impervious repairs have, rather than consolidating the remaining masonry, served to accelerate deterioration of the underlying and surrounding stonework. This is because of the inability of the plastic repairs to breathe which allows moisture and migrating salts to be trapped at the interface between the repair and the original stone behind causing the stone to become saturated, crumble and, eventually, disintegrate. Freeze/thaw cycles (which have been more pronounced in recent years with more severe winter weather) have further contributed to acceleration in the rate of decay."

17. Immediate action was taken during the survey to remove loose pieces of masonry which posed a health and safety risk, and further action is scheduled immediately following the close of College on 13 May to provide protected access and egress to the College and to address related urgent work.

18. The report also revealed evidence of relatively recent structural movement on the south side (accommodation and administrative block) of the building. A report is awaited from a structural engineer.

19. The architect has been asked to provide a budget costing for a phased programme of stonework restoration over a number of years.

HA DUNLOP, Convener

APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	David Conkey	Union
	Andrew Conway	Union
	Aaron Ditty	Union
	Fiona Forbes	Union
	Andrew Galbraith	Union
	Robert Hamilton	-
	Edward Kirwan	Union
	Stuart McCrea	Union
	Paul Orr	Union
	Owen Patterson	Union
ARMAGH	Seamus Burke	Union
	Philip Cleland	Union
	Russell Edgar	Union
	Ashley Graham	Union
BALLYMENA	Simon Hamilton	Union
	Michael Currie	Union
	Philip Kerr	Union
	Philip McClelland	Union

	Scott Moore	Union
	Stephen Orr	Union
	Matthew Simpson	Union
NORTH BELFAST	Gareth Simpson	Union
	Lachlan Webster	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	Jonathan Abernethy-Barkley	Union
	Ross Collins	Union
	Corrina Heron	Union
EAST BELFAST	Andrew Boreland	Union
	Stephen Cowan	Union
	David Gray	-
	Edward McKenzie	Union
CARRICKFERGUS	Mark Dodds	Union
	Alan Moore	Union
COLERAINE & LIMAVADY	Alan Buick	Union
	Chris Cordner	Union
	Jonathan Doey	-
	Jonathan Frazer	Union
	Keith Hibbert	Union
	Stephen Hibbert	Union
	Ivan Linton	Union
	Gordon McCracken	Union
	Neil Stewart	Union
DERRY & DONEGAL	Brian Smyth	Union
DOWN	Gary Ball	Union
DROMORE	Nathan Duddy	Union
DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Damien Burke	Oakhill
	Kevin Hargaden	-
	Reuben McCormick	Union
NEWRY	Alan Smyth	-
OMAGH	Rodney Beacom	Union
	Jonathan Dunn	Union
ROUTE	John McConaghie	Union
	Stephen McNie	Union
	John Mullan	Union
TEMPLEPATRICK	Mark Johnston	Union
	Stuart Morrow	Union
TYRONE	Trevor Boyd	Union
	Nigel Kane	Union
	Graeme Orr	Union
	Ben Preston	Union
	Roland Watt	Union

APPENDIX 2**MODELS FOR PASTORAL CARE****Model One: An Enhanced Traditional Model of Pastoral Care**

This model is particularly suited to smaller and more rural Congregations. For some of these Congregations the district system is not only preferred but still actually works. Bearing in mind that even smaller rural Congregations are not immune to changing social and family dynamics in the early 21st century the following suggestions may enhance the traditional model of providing pastoral care.

1. The district model needs to be led, closely monitored and encouraged by the Teaching Elder and/or another Elder(s).

2. Each Elder's district must be of manageable size so that the Elder can give sufficient time to each family.

3. Regular training should be in place for all Elders regarding what pastoral care is and what it is not, what it means to be a pastoral carer and how to provide pastoral care.

4. Cross-district fluidity. Some Elders could be trained in a particular aspect of pastoral care and if allocated a smaller district than other Elders could respond to pastoral issues they are particularly equipped to deal with in any district, for example divorce care, bereavement, single parent families or suicide.

5. Responsibility for a people group. It may be appropriate to relieve an Elder entirely of a geographical district and instead allocate responsibility for a grouping of people such as new families who associate themselves with the Congregation, elderly in Nursing Homes, students or immigrants.

6. As the Teaching Elder will probably be the first point of contact when a member or adherent of the Congregation is admitted to hospital, or has some other pastoral need, he or she should seek to pass appropriate details on to the respective district Elder to follow up.

7. Though visitation in homes remains an important element of pastoral care, visits or other arranged contact, at a mutually convenient time and venue, could be much more beneficial than calling at a home without prior notice. For example, an Elder could organize a venue and invite families from his/her district to come to 'visit' him/her. This could be repeated if it was impractical to involve all the families from the district on one occasion. A barbecue during the summer months or a buffet dinner at any time of year would give opportunity for friendship, fellowship and the building of relationships that are essential to pastoral care. Other possibilities include going for a walk together, meeting for coffee or lunch, visiting someone in their workplace and so on.

8. The Elder of a smaller district should be intentional about approaching and chatting to folk from his or her district at public worship or other Church gatherings. A simple 'How are things?' not only demonstrates interest in the person but also gives opportunity for the person to raise issues that may require pastoral care. In light of this, a particularly effective time for initiating pastoral care is during a time of tea and coffee before or after a Sunday service.

9. When it has become clear that Elders through age, health reasons or other reasons cannot carry out pastoral care, the Kirk Session should consider if pastoral care can be provided in another way or elect new Elders.

Model Two: Particularly Suited for Medium Sized Congregations

1. In this model, responsibility for the coordination of pastoral care would be allocated to a Pastoral Care Co-ordinator (PCC), someone other than the Minister, but reporting to the Minister and Kirk Session. This could be a full-time, part-time or voluntary position.

2. The PCC would be supported by a team of trained carers who would work alongside the PCC, providing a link with the pastoral work going on in the Congregation. This team would be made up of trained people, Elders and others, who have a heart for and are gifted in this ministry. Elders not in the pastoral care team would be expected to be involved in the life and witness of the Congregation in ways appropriate to their gifting.

3. Pastoral care would be primarily delivered through small groups, whether study groups, prayer meetings or various organisations within the Congregation. If a Congregation has home groups these could be a very effective means of delivering pastoral care. A member of the pastoral care team would be involved with each of these groups and have responsibility to see that needs are communicated to the PCC and are met within the group. Small group leaders would also be expected to create opportunities for pastoral care to take place by encouraging appropriate openness along with love and support for each other. Pastoral care would often be spontaneous as situations arise, varying from prayer and spiritual support to practical input such as providing food or transport. The Kirk Session should also consider the best way to care for and reach out to those on the fringes of Church life.

4. It is recommended that the different ways pastoral care is available be communicated using a leaflet given to the Congregation.

5. In implementing this model of pastoral care, Elders should draw up an inventory of those in their original districts not covered by the provision in small groups so that some members of the pastoral care team can be given responsibility for them. It is important that individuals not in a small group are not overlooked. Home or hospital would be obvious places to visit the elderly and the ill but for others the time and place of pastoral visits should be flexible to meet the needs of the individual. Individuals who are not able to regularly attend small groups because of other commitments could be attached to a small group for the purpose of prayer support.

6. Many Churches now serve tea and coffee after the Sunday service. This is an opportunity for Elders and pastoral carers to interact with those who might want to talk or need to be followed up. It is a time for initiating genuine fellowship and caring for one another.

7. Particular attention would need to be paid to the pastoral care of new families or individuals, to make them feel welcomed and accepted. They would be reported to the PCC who would be expected to have good organisational skills in order to make sure no one is overlooked. A Church database could be a useful tool for this purpose. A specific team should be allocated the task of

visiting new people to get to know them and facilitate their integration into the Congregation, perhaps by introducing them to a home group or organisations for both adults and children.

8. Pastoral care for specific situations could be offered by other teams, complementing the provision already offered by the pastoral care team, e.g., a prayer ministry team available after Church services or, a bereavement care team to visit after funerals. In addition to the above provision, a range of courses, led by those with a personal interest in the subject, should offer proactive care – such as Marriage Preparation, Marriage Enrichment, Preparation for Baptism, Parenting, Grief Share, Divorce Care, etc.

9. All those involved in pastoral care should have appropriate gifts, be appointed by the Kirk Session, and receive suitable training for their role and support in it.

Model Three: Particularly Suited for Larger Congregations

1. In this model, responsibility for the co-ordination of pastoral care would be allocated to a member of staff who would both act as Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, someone other than the Minister but reporting to the Minister and Kirk Session, and also have responsibility for delivering major aspects of that pastoral care. This could be a full-time or part-time salaried position.

2. The Congregation would be divided into various grouping for the purposes of delivering basic pastoral care, with each individual group known as a Unit of Pastoral Care, (UPC), and the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator being responsible for the overall co-ordination of the scheme. UPCs would fall into the following categories:

- (a) Those requiring staff visitation – those **permanently** on a regular staff visitation list would be pastorally cared for by the staff, supplemented by a team of trained pastoral visitors. They would not be in another UPC and the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator would be the lead pastoral contact;
- (b) Home Groups – here ideally the host, or host couple, of the home group would be responsible for the pastoral care of all members of the group, (with the exception of any in category (a) above), with the leader of the group ideally being a different person (with teaching skills);
- (c) Youth leaders – here a member of staff (ideally the Youth Pastor), or a number of elders, would have specific responsibility for most of the youth and children’s leaders within the Congregation (with the exception of any in category (a) or (b) above);
- (d) Agreed key adult organisations, e.g., PW, – here designated suitable individuals within the organisation would have specific pastoral responsibility for members of that organisation, (with the exception of any in category (a) or (b) above);
- (e) New members – here specific elders would have responsibility for one or more UPCs made up of new families joining the Congregation. They would stay in a new member UPC for a fixed period of time, then transfer into another appropriate UPC;

- (f) A limited number of district style UPCs – to cover those not in any of the above groupings. These could be organised geographically or in another way, e.g. ‘younger families’, ‘fringe members’ etc., and would receive pastoral care from Elders who have a heart for and are gifted in this ministry, supported by trained people.
3. Those responsible for a UPC would have the task of seeking to ensure that the pastoral needs of the members of the UPC are met either within the group, by them as an individual, or referred to the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. Pastoral care would often be spontaneous as situations arise, varying from prayer and spiritual support to practical input such as providing food or transport, and could be delivered in a variety of appropriate settings. Pastoral care need not happen for an individual through one specific UPC but could also happen in an overlapping way.
4. Pastoral care for specific situations could be offered by other teams, complementing the provision already offered through the UPCs e.g. a prayer ministry team available after Church services; a bereavement care team to visit after funerals etc. In addition to the above provision, a range of courses, led by those with a personal interest in the subject, should offer proactive care – such as Marriage Preparation, Marriage Enrichment, Preparation for Baptism, Parenting, Grief Share, Divorce Care, etc.
5. A prayer triplet scheme could run alongside the UPC scheme. As well as the obvious benefits for intercession, these prayer triplets could also provide an enhanced and deeper pastoral experience for those involved and are particularly useful for those unable to attend home groups because of work or family commitments.
6. All those involved in pastoral care should have appropriate gifts, be appointed by the Kirk Session, and receive suitable training for their role and support in it.

APPENDIX 3

PROPOSED PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES FOR APPROVING ELDERS-ELECT

1. Whenever a Kirk Session requests authorisation from Presbytery to elect new elders, the Commission should be appointed at this stage to discharge the duties of the Presbytery in this matter. This is in accordance with the Code 177(2). The Commission will normally comprise the Moderator, Clerk, two other Ministers plus corresponding elders but will not include the Minister and representative elder of the Congregation holding the election.
2. The Clerk of Presbytery will consult with the Minister to ensure that the procedure for holding an election is understood. This will help the Minister fulfil the Code 177(3).
3. Following the election, representatives of the Commission will meet with the Minister first and then the elders-elect to inquire from the Minister what training will be given and to explain to the elders-elect the vows they will be asked to make at the ordination service and the procedure that will be followed. This is in part fulfilment of the Code 180(1) and it serves to remind the elders-

elect that Presbytery is to be involved in their preparation for ordination. The Commission will also draw to their attention that any elder-elect may withdraw at any stage if he or she no longer believes the eldership is right for them. (See NOTES below)

4. The training will be held to fulfil the Code 180(2). It is recommended that the 'Prepared to Lead' course be used and it is strongly recommended that the six sessions should be spread over at least six weeks.

5. Following the training and at least one month before the ordination service, the Commission will meet with the Minister first and then the elders-elect to confer with them in accordance with the Code 180(1).

- (a) The questions for the meeting with the Minister will be as follows:
 - (i) Have the minimum six lessons required in the Code been fulfilled?
 - (ii) What system of instruction has been followed for the Confession of Faith and for the duties and responsibilities of the eldership?
 - (iii) Have any problems arisen in regard to matters either of doctrine or practice in respect of which the Commission might be of help?
 - (iv) Have the elders-elect considered the prescribed questions to be put to them at their ordination?
- (b) Having allowed the elders-elect to introduce themselves, the questions for the meeting with each elder-elect will be as follows:
 - (i) Having been elected by the Congregation and having completed your training, can you please tell us what you are most looking forward to and what gives you the greatest concern in entering this office?
 - (ii) Since we affirm that the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, can you please tell us briefly what place the Scriptures have in your own life? (Prescribed Question II)
 - (iii) Are you satisfied that you are sufficiently acquainted with the substance of the Confession of Faith as to be able to subscribe it as the confession of your faith? (Prescribed Question III+IV)
 - (iv) Is there any matter of doctrine or practice arising from your reading of the Confession of Faith on which you feel you would need or like further guidance or help? (Prescribed Question III+IV)
 - (v) The duty of ruling elders is to work together with the Minister in the spiritual oversight and government of the Congregation (Code Par 30). How will you seek to discharge this duty?
 - (vi) By their calling, ruling elders share with the Minister the responsibility for practical witness both in the Congregation and in the wider world (Code Par 30). How do you hope to fulfil this responsibility?
 - (vii) The Kirk Session is responsible for admission to both sacraments. What challenges do you think this raises for you and have you any concerns about your role in this aspect of the Session's work? (Code Par 39(2))
 - (viii) Are you familiar with the prescribed questions which will be put to you at your Ordination and are you ready to answer them?

6. The Commission, being satisfied on these matters, will arrange for the ordination service to be held (Code Par 180(3)).

NOTES:

With reference to the meeting with the elders-elect after they are elected and before their training begins (referred to in point 3 above).

- (a) Why hold a meeting like this?
- (i) To fulfil requirements of the Code
- 177(2) The decision of the Session shall be reported to the Presbytery for authorisation to proceed with the election and for the appointment of a commission to discharge the duties of the Presbytery in the matter.
 - 180(1) The name of every ruling elder elect shall be reported to the appointed Presbytery commission, who shall confer with him respecting his acquaintance with divine truth, his personal faith, and his sense of the responsibilities and duties of the office.
 - 180(3) The Presbytery commission, being satisfied on these matters, shall report thereon to Presbytery or shall themselves proceed to ordain those approved, if this lie within the terms of their appointment.
- (ii) To highlight the relationship between Congregation and Presbytery
- 69(1) The Presbytery is the body primarily responsible for corporate oversight of the Congregations and causes assigned to it by the General Assembly, and of the Ministers and elders connected with it, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom generally within its bounds.
- (iii) Presbytery's desire to do things better
- (b) What could be covered on this evening?

The paragraph above (in point 3) refers to meeting with the Minister first of all to inquire what training will be given – its contents, who is delivering it, etc. At the subsequent meeting with the elders elect, three areas should be covered:

- (i) The vows:
- Firstly, on your personal sense of calling: So far as you know your own heart, are zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and desire for the salvation of souls and the upbuilding of the Church, your chief motives in entering upon the office of ruling elder to which you have been called?*

Comment: This is concerned with our motives in becoming an elder in the Church. In this question we're asking the new elders: Why do you want to be an elder? Some people want to become leaders of an organisation because they want people to look up to them and to speak well of them. They're concerned about their own name and their own glory. But when we enter into the office of the eldership we shouldn't be seeking our own glory, but the glory of God; elders are people who love the name of the Lord

Jesus and not their own name; and they're people who love the Church and want to see it built up.

Secondly, three questions on the Rule of Faith and Standards of the Church:

Do you believe the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

Comment: This is about ensuring the elders believe that the Bible is God's word so that they will want to uphold it and submit to it.

Do you accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as described in the Statement from the Code, read by the Clerk, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God; as such do you acknowledge it as the confession of your faith; and do you accept the Catechisms compiled by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster and received as the Catechisms of this Church? Are you resolved, through God's grace, firmly and constantly to adhere to the fundamental doctrines of the faith set forth in the said Confession and Catechisms so long as you remain an elder of this Church?

Comment: There are two things that will ruin the Church. One is when the leaders of the Church don't believe the Bible. The other is where the leaders of the Church are divided over what the Bible teaches. So these two questions are about ensuring that our elders agree with one another over what the Bible teaches. Different denominations will disagree and, in a sense, that's fine and understandable: that's what makes us different. But when the leaders of one particular Church begin to disagree over what they should believe and teach, then the Church will be ruined. And so every elder is asked: Before you become an elder, do you agree with what this Church believes the Bible teaches? Those things are summarised by the WCF and Catechisms.

Finally, two questions on the discharge of your duties as a ruling elder in this Church Do you believe the Presbyterian form of Church government to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God; and do you promise to adhere to and to support it, and to yield submission in the Lord to the courts of this Church?

Comment: The courts of the Church are the Kirk Session, the Presbytery and the General Assembly. The Assembly has oversight over every Presbytery and a Presbytery has oversight over every Congregation within its bounds. So, if there's a dispute in this Congregation, the Presbytery has the right to intervene in order to sort it out. This question therefore ensures that new elders understand and accept that we do not exist on our own. We cannot do whatever we please. We are responsible to the wider

Church and must answer to the wider Church for what we do.

Do you pledge yourself as a member of Kirk Session to work together with the Minister in the oversight and government of this Congregation, for the upbuilding of God's people in spiritual fruitfulness and holy concord, and for the extension of Christ's Kingdom?

Comment: It's interesting that one of the qualifications Paul gives for elders in 1 Timothy is that they should not be quarrelsome. When the Session meets, we don't want elders who are arguing constantly and fighting with one another and who are never willing to accept that someone else might be right. So, we need elders who are the kind of people who are able to work together with others to build up the Church and to extend Christ's kingdom.

(ii) The Procedures

Go over the procedure with the elders and the questions they'll be asked at the conferral before ordination.

(iii) Important Reminder

Draw to their attention that any elder-elect may withdraw at any stage if he or she no longer believes the eldership is right for them.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That the following candidates, their nomination having been sustained by the Board of Christian Training, be accepted as students for the Ordained Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

Name	Congregation	Presbytery
Adrian Adger	Trinity, Ahoghill	Ballymena
Chris Barron	Fisherwick	South Belfast
Jeffrey Blue	Mourne	Newry
David Cromie	Fisherwick	South Belfast
David Currie	Mountpottinger	East Belfast
Michael Fryer	Carnmoney	North Belfast
Ross Kernohan	Kells	Ballymena
Philip Leonard	1st Cookstown	Tyrone
Gary McDowell	Ballygilbert	Ards
Mark McMaw	1st Holywood	East Belfast
David McMillan	1st Portglenone	Ballymena
Trevor McNeill	Ravenhill	East Belfast
Graham Mullan	Newmills	Iveagh
John O'Donnell	Greystones	Dublin & Munster
James Warburton	Whitehead	Carrickfergus
Keith Ward	West, Bangor	Ards

3. That students for the ministry, commencing their course of study in or after 2012, should normally be required to complete a total of at least three years approved theological study prior to eligibility for licensing.

Pastoral Care Panel

4. That the General Assembly endorse the three models of pastoral care proposed by the Panel on Pastoral Care (Appendix 2) and commend them for use throughout the Church.

5. That the General Assembly, having endorsed three models of pastoral care, requests the Clerk of Assembly to consult with the Panel on Pastoral Care and bring appropriate overtures to the 2012 General Assembly to ensure that the Code reflects the variety of approaches which may be adopted by Kirk Sessions.

6. That the General Assembly authorise the printing of 6,000 copies of the three models of pastoral care as set out in Appendix 2 for study by Kirk Sessions.

7. That the General Assembly request all Kirk Sessions to review their pastoral care, in light of the three models of pastoral care endorsed by the Assembly, by the end of September 2013.

8. That the General Assembly request the Panel on Pastoral Care to commend and/or produce resources and training courses to assist Kirk Sessions in considering and implementing new models of pastoral care or enhancing existing ones.

Accredited Preacher Panel

9. That the General Assembly welcome the large number of applicants for the Accredited Preacher Scheme and commend both the course and the new Accredited Preachers to the Church.

Leadership Panel

10. That the General Assembly commend the production and promotion of the leadership development resources outlined in paragraph 14(A) of the report of the Panel on Leadership (**pp 198-200**) and approve the recommendations therein as a means of equipping the Church for effective leadership in the 21st century.

11. That the General Assembly recommend the use of the guidelines for the involvement of Presbyteries in the approval and training of Elders Elect referred to in paragraph 14 (B)(i) of the report of the Panel on Leadership (**p 200**) and fully outlined in Appendix 3.

12. That the General Assembly encourage Ruling Elders to participate in 'learning opportunities' as outlined in paragraph 14 (B)(ii) of the report of the Panel on Leadership (**pp 200-201**).

13. That the General Assembly request that the Panel of the General Board currently reviewing the guidelines for the Presbytery Consultation Process include the area of congregational leadership within that review.

14. That the General Assembly encourage all Presbyteries to actively promote and facilitate congregational leadership development as outlined in the report of the Leadership Panel, particularly paragraph 14 (B)(iv) (**p 201**).

15. That the General Assembly agree that Presbyteries be requested to inquire what leadership development has taken place in Congregations, or linkages, along with the other information being considered at the time of a vacancy.

16. That the General Assembly request that the Committee for Ministerial Studies and Development, and any other relevant panels and committees, consider the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 15-18 of the report of the Panel on Leadership (**pp 201-202**) and take action where appropriate.

General

17. That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme for 2011 be 0.25p per £ of stipend.

18. That the rate of assessment for the Students Bursary Fund for 2011 be 5.75p in the £ of stipend.

19. That the General Assembly agree that the In-Service/Sabbatical Grant be increased to £300 per week from 1 September, 2011.

20. That the resignation of the Rev Dr RB Savage as Convener of the Committee on Training and Resources be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Rev NJ McCullough be appointed in his place.

21. That the Board of Christian Training, together with the appropriate working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 285 of the Code, as follows:

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 190 (2) (a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 190(2)(a) of the Code after the words “students for the ministry” the words “, accredited preachers” be added.

TD GRIBBEN

COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev Dr RA RUSSELL

Secretary: Mr STW LYNAS

1. Since its last report to the General Assembly the Board has continued to consider how to make an effective response to the communications requirements of the Church. In doing so, it has reviewed the history of the Board of Communications from its beginnings as 'Publications and Aids to Worship' through the developments that have led to the present structures of the Board. It has noted how the original technological and social conditions that prompted the Assembly to form a Board to deal with publications, television and broadcasting, public worship, architecture, the Presbyterian Historical Society, the Memorial Record and publications within the Church have evolved over the years as the patterns of our society have changed, often as a result of continued technological development. In addition, it would seem that there was a tendency to place responsibilities with the Board on a miscellaneous basis without consideration of a broad strategy for its work. Thus, as a result of the various Assembly reviews of its Boards various responsibilities of the Board of Communications have been transferred elsewhere. As matters now stand, the Board has been left with two Committees – Communications Administration (jointly convened by the agent for the Presbyterian Historical Society) and Church Architecture. Although the Architecture Committee appears to function well within the Board it would seem that, given the nature of the Board's primary responsibilities, the Board of Communications may not be its obvious natural home. Effectively, therefore, the main work of the Board of Communications has shrunk to duplicate the function of the Communications Administration Committee.

2. The roles of those who work under the oversight of the Board have also altered over the years. The operational demands on our Communications and Press Secretary/Officer have grown in various directions since his appointment in the mid 1990s. Both parts of our island, as well as the wider UK, have seen dramatic political and social change and methods of communication have emerged that were technological dreams more than 15 years ago. The Board has come to the conclusion that it is no longer feasible to combine the growing necessities of public relations, the efficient management of press and media relations, media training and the implementing of communication strategies both within and outside the Church with the management of a department designed for the practical delivery of resources.

3. The present Department continues to be run by skilled and experienced staff who bring strong commitment to their work. However, two of them are now part-time, one position has become vacant since last Assembly and, with a reduced work force, there are severe limitations to what can be achieved. Again, technological and associated social changes have spawned urgent requirements to redesign the Church website (as opposed to keeping it up to date), and provide a wider range of video and other electronic media. The

Board believes that this would best be achieved by new managerial arrangements.

4. Since the middle of the last decade plans have been made for the Board to construct and implement a communications strategy for the Church. The time has come to acknowledge that it has not succeeded. Whatever the internal shortcomings, the Board has concluded that this failure mainly lies with the nature of the Board itself and its present place in the structure of Assembly Boards. The reasons for reaching this conclusion include the conviction that the Board would be unable to deliver any communications strategy with the necessary authority to determine the communications activity of other Boards and agencies. Also, the contraction of the Board's responsibilities has resulted in the difficulty of maintaining a sense of interested involvement from members of the Board – often shown in attendance figures at meetings.

5. The Board met on 3 November, 2010, and, with these considerations in mind, passed the following resolution: *“That the Board of Communications invites the General Board, along with the Communications Department and its Board Officers, to consider how the communications needs of the Church may be effectively carried out in the future and, if appropriate, bring forward proposals for the discharge of the Board of Communications.”* The General Board considered this resolution at its meeting in March 2011 and passed the ensuing resolution: *“That the General Board approves the structure for communications co-ordination under the General Board, as outlined in the Clerk's report, and recommends that the Board of Communications be thanked and discharged at the next Assembly.”*

6. The Communications Board met on 31 March, 2011, and after the sharing of information and discussion, agreed to endorse the recommendation of the General Board according to the resolution submitted below. This was done with the understanding that, since the Board would continue in operation until the General Assembly, Board representatives and Officers would be involved in arranging the details associated with setting up the new Committee under the General Board.

7. In the meantime, the Board continues to address its responsibilities as described in the remainder of this report.

8. In his work as Communications and Press Secretary, Mr Stephen Lynas covers a wide range of responsibilities, from his supervision of the Church's public relations and media services, to managing the work of the Communications Department. The Board has appreciated his judgement and the experience he has gained over the years in guiding those who respond on behalf of the Church through difficult and sometimes delicate relationships with the press and other media. In addition, Stephen has been editing the *Presbyterian Herald* since the beginning of 2008. He has been successful in developing the magazine in a fresh and relevant direction. The possibility that he might retain the position of editor on a permanent basis has been explored, but it was concluded last year that this is a role in which it will be increasingly difficult for him to continue. However, the Board has not been successful in making alternative arrangements and now considers that it would be best to wait for the decision of the Assembly as to the future of the Board.

9. The Communications Department continues to incorporate the offices of information, publication and the production of the *Herald*. Once again the work of our dedicated and skilled staff: Mrs Anne McCully (Administration Manager), Mr Edward Connolly (Production Manager), Mrs Sarah Harding (Projects Manager). As with others in Church House, they have had to cope with the disruption of temporary accommodation and are looking forward to new facilities in the refurbished building.

10. During the year the Historical Society moved out of Church House to its new residence at 26 College Green, Belfast, BT7 1LN; Tel. no. (028) 9072 7330. This required considerable expense (so far approximately £23,600, for which an appeal brought in £17,150) and a considerable amount of hard work, especially for the Librarian, Miss Valerie Adams, and the office bearers of the Society.

11. The opening hours are Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am-1pm; 1.30pm-4.30pm; Thursday 9.30am-1pm.

12. In addition to the usual varied programme of lectures and the annual *Bulletin*, the major publishing event was the reprint of the autobiography of Robert Blair of Bangor, including, as an introduction, Dr. John Lockington's lecture on Blair. This was launched in May 2011 and sells for £20.

13. Finally, gratitude is expressed for the work of the Committee Conveners. Mr Maurice McNicholl, Convener of the Communications Administration Committee, has been invaluable in helping to think through the proposals for the future of communications in the Church. His Co-Convener, the Rev Ivor Smith, continues to raise awareness of the work of the Presbyterian Historical Society. The Church Architecture Committee, which also functions under the supervision of the Board, is ably convened by the Rev George Simpson. The Board would pay tribute to its thoughtful and thorough work as outlined in its own report.

14. This report ends with the aspirations and prayers of the Communications Board for whatever future arrangements the Assembly might make for the communications needs of our Church. It also looks back with thankfulness to achievements made under the Board and for the work and thoughtful support that so many people have given from the setting up of the Board of Publications and Aids to Worship in 1976 to the decisions of the General Assembly of 2011.

The Rev Dr Donald Watts writes:

Thanks are also due to the Rev Dr Alan Russell who, as Convener, has led the work of the Board since 2009. It is to his credit that he has seen the vital role of communications as more important for the Church than the preservation of any particular structure and so has brought this insightful report to the General Assembly.

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has met on 9 occasions since the last report.

2. Fifty-four submissions were dealt with and these ranged from new Church buildings, new Church halls, new manses, audio/visual installations, stained glass windows, major and minor renovations.

3. A number of site visits were made by some of the Committee members and these proved very useful.

4. It is always helpful if Congregations submit plans at an early stage and preferably before working drawings are produced. Guidance is given by the Convener to any who are unsure of the procedure.

5. All submissions receive a written reply immediately after the Committee meeting.

6. In September a visit to a number of recently renovated Church properties in London proved to be of benefit to the Committee.

7. Sincere thanks are expressed to all the members of the Committee who have supported and encouraged the Convener during his Convener'ship, which has proved to be an interesting and pleasant task.

8. Many thanks to Anne McCully who faithfully sends out the minutes after every meeting, and to the Architects for giving their time and expertise so willingly and completely free of charge.

GEORGE SIMPSON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That a grant of £1,000 for 2011 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.

3. That a grant of £16,750 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Presbyterian Historical Society.

4. That the resignation of the Rev George Simpson as Convener of the Church Architecture Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and _____ appointed in his place.

5. That the Church Architecture Committee be transferred to the supervision of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

6. That the resignations of Mr Maurice McNicholl and the Rev Ivor Smith as Co-Conveners of the Communications Administration Committee be accepted and that they be thanked for their services.

7. That the Presbyterian Historical Society be invited to report annually to the General Board.

8. That the resignation of the Rev Dr Alan Russell as Convener of the Communications Board be accepted and that he be thanked for his services.

9. That the Board of Communications together with its associated Committees be thanked and discharged and its responsibilities transferred to a Committee to be formed under the supervision of the General Board.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev Dr CD McCLURE

Secretary: Rev TD GRIBBEN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S REPORT

- (a) **Supporting Christians in Education and Supporting Your Local School:** Affirming and encouraging individual Presbyterians and Congregations to optimise their shared role in the education of our young people. (See Board Convener's Introduction, par 2; Appendix 1; Resolution 2)
- (b) **Church in the public square:** Affirming the right of Christians to work, in partnership with others, in the area of education for the good of society as a whole. (See Board Convener's Introduction, par 2; Resolution 3)
- (c) **Republic of Ireland:** Issues relating to the funding and maintenance of ethos of schools for Protestant pupils. (Republic of Ireland sections A and B; Appendix 2)
- (d) **School Chaplains Report:** A report of the work of the school chaplain of the Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe. (See Republic of Ireland section C)
- (e) **Review of Public Administration (RPA):** Transferor Church Representatives provide continuity of commitment and expertise on Education and Library Boards at a time of uncertainty about the shape of governance and when difficult resourcing decisions are imminent. (See Northern Ireland section A; Resolution 4)
- (f) **N.I. Draft Education Budget 2011-15:** The Department of Education (NI) proposes savings of £300 million during the period 2011-15. (See Appendix 3)
- (g) **Shared and integrating education in Northern Ireland:** SPUD placed this matter on the Education Board's agenda prior to a speech by the incumbent First Minister on shared education in Northern Ireland's schools. (See Northern Ireland section C; Resolutions 5 and 6)
- (h) **Responding to reports and consultations focusing on educational provision in disadvantaged areas and, in particular, educational underachievement and the "Protestant Working Class".** (See Northern Ireland section D; Resolution 7)
- (i) **Religious Education:** In a context of severe financial and staffing constraints it remains a priority to provide effective support and resourcing for teachers. (See Northern Ireland section E)
- (j) **Proposed merger of the QUB School of Education and Stranmillis University College:** In a measured response to an Equality Impact Assessment the TRC Churches seek assurances to mitigate against possible adverse effects upon students from the Protestant community

and schools in the controlled sector. (See Northern Ireland section F; Appendix 4)

BOARD CONVENER'S INTRODUCTION

1. The Board has met twice since the last Assembly, on Tuesdays 12 October, 2010 and 8 March, 2011. In accordance with the policy of the General Assembly, Board officers represent and advocate for PCI in various educational bodies and structures. In the midst of political and bureaucratic complexities and minutiae the Board's primary purpose is to nurture a confident, clear and shared vision of education enlivened by the core values of the Christian faith.

2. The Board, along with colleagues in the Transferor Representatives' Council, is increasingly aware of voices being raised objecting to the involvement of Churches in the public square, and specifically in the area of education. The position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is to join in partnership with others in the area of education to work for the good of all children, irrespective of faith commitment, if any, and that this is not only a contribution which the Church has a right to make, but is also an important contribution for the good of all society. The Board of Education upholds this fundamental right of Church members to continue to make a contribution to all aspects of common life in society and in particular the presentation of the values of the Christian faith as a vital element in the education of children and young people in schools. In Resolution 4, the Board invites the General Assembly to make this clear affirmation.

Supporting Christians in Education and Supporting Your Local School

3. The Board resolved to facilitate the building of confidence throughout PCI that faith input is valid in education – at a personal and congregational level. With the encouragement and support of SPUD a working group produced the two “seeding” discussion papers – “Supporting Christians in Education” and “Supporting Your Local School” (Appendix 1). After referring them to a representative group of educationalists, and then group and plenary discussion at the Board, Resolution 2 is offered to the Assembly for endorsement.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

(A) Secondary Education Committee (SEC)

1. The functions of the SEC are twofold. Firstly, it administers the distribution of a Block Grant provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S) to ensure necessitous Protestant children may attend Protestant secondary schools; secondly it represents the interests of the member denominations in the post-primary education system.

- Enrolments for 2009/10 in the twenty-one Protestant fee-charging schools totalled 9,794 (9,863 in 2008/9). This figure does not include students in the five Protestant Comprehensive Schools.
- In the school year 2009/10 the total amount received from the DE&S was €6,381,185 (€6,555,763).

- A total of 2,482 (2,546) grants were awarded in respect of the 2010/11 school year: 1,588 day grants (1,622) and 894 boarding grants (924).

(B) Educational Developments (see Appendix 2 for useful background information)

1. Changes to funding of schools under Protestant Patronage, introduced in the 2008 Budget, continue to impact on the Protestant community. These changes were: the withdrawal of grants for administration and caretaking, a reduction in the teacher-pupil ratio and a change in the basis for calculation of capital grants to these schools from 100% to 50% (bringing it in line with schools in the Roman Catholic fee-charging school sector).

2. It was agreed in 2010 that a dialogue should begin with the Department of Education and Skills. The first set of discussions related principally to the funding of the SEC and have been positive. However, the Department has begun all its discussions to date by restating the premise that the advice from the Attorney General's Office to the Department is that schools under Protestant Patronage which charge fees must be treated in the same manner as schools of other religious denominations in like circumstances. This imposes a considerable limitation on the scope for discussions; nonetheless dialogue has continued as representatives seek ways in which adequate funding to schools serving the Protestant community might be restored. It is hoped that the appointment of a new Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn, and the formation of a new government in March 2011 will offer the opportunity for a new direction in these negotiations.

3. Protestant schools are to be commended for the manner in which they have worked to limit the impact of the budget cuts. However, schools have, at this point, run out of scope to trim their budgets; the impact of these cuts is now being seen in classrooms. It is important to be aware that an ongoing deficit of funding in this sector will now result in Protestant families finding it increasingly difficult to exercise their constitutional parental right to choose a school for their child which reflects the ethos of their home. It is also important to note that the moratorium on public service appointments, and the proposed redeployment scheme for teachers, will likely mean that fewer young teachers from the Protestant community will be afforded the opportunity to work in schools with a Protestant ethos, further threatening the values and identity of these schools.

(C) School Chaplain's Report: Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe

The Rev. Stanley Stewart reports:

1. It continues to be my privilege to serve as full-time school chaplain in this school within the area of the Derry and Donegal Presbytery. I am the teacher and co-ordinator of Religious Education with responsibility for faith development throughout the school, including organising school assembly. I

serve as part of the pastoral care team and am a member of the management committee of the Boarding Department.

2. Within this last year Dr Howard Welch has been appointed Headmaster. Despite the prevailing uncertainty, accompanying economic cutbacks and the consequent effects on staff morale I have been encouraged by the continuing good relationships. This can be seen in the ongoing effectiveness of the Mentoring, Transfer and Induction programme. In addition, with the assistance of Derek Roulston (PCI missionary), we developed our partnership with Bombi School in Kenya. Three teachers from that school visited us and we reciprocated by sending five teachers and seven students to Kenya.

3. In the coming year, in addition to my ongoing professional duties, I strive to communicate the relevance of the Church to teenagers and to have the Christian ethos of the school made more visible and permeate all activities. With the impetus provided by the arrival of a new principal I will seek to consolidate and develop new ways for Christian students to confidently grow in and witness to their faith.

NORTHERN IRELAND

(A) Review of Public Administration (RPA)

1. The Northern Ireland Executive did not endorse the legislation required to establish the Education and Skills Authority (ESA). Consequently the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs), with a severely reduced membership, were given the burden of administering services to NI schools. The Board of Education salute the Church nominees who continue to selflessly serve and have borne a heavy load of responsibility along with their trustee and other professional colleagues at a time when, with the absence of political representatives, there was a clear democratic deficit. Some movement has been made to rectify this undesirable and unrepresentative arrangement. However the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) continues to have concerns about the situation pertaining in the South Eastern Education and Library Board, where, at the time of writing, the Minister of Education continues to refuse to reconstitute the Board. (See Resolution 4)

2. It is envisaged that within the interim ELB structure services will be converged resulting in the eventual establishment of a body comparable to the originally planned ESA. However, all political parties now recognise that the original plan for ESA, which intended to remove historic rights from the transferor Churches, would have produced a totally unacceptable inequality to the Protestant community in general and Controlled schools in particular. During this last year TRC office bearers have lobbied extensively with all political parties to find a way that retains the rights of transferor Churches to nominate members to serve on any ownership and decision-making body for Controlled schools. At the time of writing no political agreement on the way forward has been announced and the task of a solution awaits the new Assembly and new Minister of Education following the elections in May 2011.

(B) Draft Education Budget 2011-15

1. The Department published its draft budget for consultation over the new year period. Proposals have been made to save money over the next four years, beginning with £139million in 2011 rising to £300million in 2015. This scheme includes the release of £41million of capital monies to “resource” in 2011-12. This is designed to minimise the impact upon funding directly available to schools. In addition, a number of spending areas have been protected: allocations for Special Educational Needs, post-primary counselling services, Early Years and Extended Schools.

2. It is far from ideal that schools planning for capital investment to address inadequate and/or unacceptable facilities will be held back for the foreseeable future. It is also obvious that many of the savings measures will have a direct impact on “frontline” services through reductions in the Aggregated Schools Budget, school transport and curriculum support for teachers. How can schools be expected to prioritise school improvement measures, such as raising standards, closing the performance gap, and increasing access whilst managing such radical fiscal constraints? (See Appendix 3 for the TRC response.)

(C) Shared and integrating education in Northern Ireland

1. In October 2010 a speech by the First Minister, the Rt Hon Peter Robinson MP, MLA, unexpectedly questioned the viability and validity of our established and structurally segregated educational system. The First Minister allowed for denominational schooling – but not at the state’s expense. Accepting the historical realities, nevertheless he seemed to indicate the need for a staged process of integration.

2. SPUD, the Presbyterian Church’s Youth Assembly, has ventured into this debate and, with an objectivity unrestrained by the constraints of history, are requiring all of us to consider answers many have been apprehensive about contemplating. The Board recognised SPUD’s challenge to consider the Christian integrity and societal viability of “living together apart”. The Board transmits, for consideration by the General Assembly, a resolution from Spud on this issue (see Resolution 6), and in so doing recognises that it is in itself a timely call to lead relationally rather than merely by resolution.

3. The issue of shared education has also been debated extensively within the Transferor Representatives’ Council and at the March Education Board. Resolution 5 is a common resolution which will be before the annual meetings of each of the three main Protestant Churches.

(D) Responding to reports and consultations focusing on educational provision in disadvantaged areas and, in particular, educational underachievement and the “Protestant Working Class”

1. In conjunction with TRC colleagues thoroughgoing responses have been made to two consultation processes emanating from the Stormont Assembly. Whilst one is somewhat more focused than the other, both are urgent for young people the Church needs to be advocating for. *Educational Underachievement and the Protestant Working Class* is a private member’s report facilitated by Ms Dawn Purvis MLA, bringing to bear various

professional and community insights in response to previously existing and compelling empirical data underlining an alarmingly inequitable situation. (See Resolution 7)

2. The NI Assembly's Committee for Education undertook an *Inquiry into Successful Post-Primary Schools Serving Disadvantaged Areas*. This sought to at least begin a process of examining and subsequently disseminating good practice.

(E) Religious Education

1. TRC representatives meet each term with the RE Advisers from the Education and Library Boards. Within the context of ongoing governance uncertainty these highly committed professionals are now fewer in number and have found their energies taken up with an ever-widening range of school improvement tasks. When the proposed budget cutbacks to professional services for teachers are added to this already prevailing context there will undoubtedly be a considerable impact on the capacity of advisers to support RE teachers in school. The Board has expressed serious concerns about the curriculum support for RE and gives high priority to the monitoring of this situation. In particular, options will be investigated to see how the probable shortcomings and inequalities can be alleviated.

2. The Board Convener chairs the RE Advisory Group in conjunction with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). This group, representative of the full range of educational stakeholders, seeks to resource teachers to apply the NI Curriculum approaches to teaching and learning through RE. Work has already been produced on Thematic Units. These are based on an ICL (Ideas for Connected Learning) and set out a range of teaching and learning activities that fit in with the objectives of the NI Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to make connections between Areas of Learning e.g. RE; Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU); The World Around Us. Despite organisational and budgetary uncertainties within CCEA there is a commitment at the highest level to progress and develop non-statutory guidance, further resourcing teachers in a manner they recognise and which enhances the role of RE within the curriculum.

3. Through the Board Convener and Secretary, and in collaboration with TRC colleagues, the Board is consulted by various local and national groupings engaged in research and evaluation concerning RE. In particular the Board has engaged with a research project undertaken by the QUB School of Law and School of Education *Opting Out of Religious Education: The Views of Young People from Minority Belief Backgrounds* and a collaborative project undertaken by the Schools of Education of Glasgow University, King's College, London and QUB *Does Religious Education Work? A Three-year Investigation into the Practices and Outcomes of Religious Education*.

(F) Proposed merger of the QUB School of Education and Stranmillis University College

1. The TRC response to an Equality Impact Assessment regarding this proposal made an informed contribution to the process. The TRC Churches

consider the proposed development to hold the potential of enhanced provision for education programmes, research expertise and longer-term financial viability. However, legislative and institutional provision is required to protect ethos and mitigate against potential negative impacts on prospective students from the broadly Protestant community, with knock on detrimental effects on pupils and parents within the Controlled sector. (See Appendix 4 - Response of the TRC to the DEL Minister's Proposals for the future of Stanmillis.)

APPENDIX 1

SUPPORTING CHRISTIANS IN EDUCATION

1. We want to encourage Christian teachers, pupils, school staff and governors in their ongoing, vital, and challenging role in schools. Christians in education have an important influence for good and for God in how they teach, administrate, learn, and take part in their school's community. We want to affirm teachers, pupils, staff, governors, and PTA members and value them for who they are and the work they do. If we haven't done this enough in the past, we need to do this more in the future.

2. We recognise the opportunities that exist in education. In most Churches a significant proportion of the Congregation are involved in schools in some way or another, as a parent, pupil, governor, cleaner, administrator, principal, teacher, and so on. In many schools a high percentage of the staff, pupils, and volunteers are Christians. It is hard to think of another context that regularly involves so many Christians, and that puts those Christians in constant contact with those who do not yet know Jesus.

3. We acknowledge the huge pressures that are on everyone involved in education today – Christians are not immune – and we want to help people to face those pressures in the power and peace of God. We need to learn to listen to people's stories of what it is like to be a Christian pupil, principal or PE teacher today and we need to understand better the context in which followers of Jesus are trying to live for Him.

4. We want to envision Christians in schools as to the impact they can have in the name of Jesus. We need to see Christian cleaners, science teachers, GCSE students, primary school governors and PTA treasurers (to name but a few) as Ministers and missionaries where God has placed them. We want to help them to see that their identity in Christ is central to their administrating, teaching, and learning, and that they are called as Christ's witnesses to be salt and light in the classrooms, corridors and playgrounds of our schools.

5. We want to equip and resource children, young people, and adults for the role they play in their school. We want to help teachers to think Biblically about the subjects they teach and the challenges they face in the classroom. We want to help Principals to have the mind of Christ as they think through the direction and ethos of their school and the big issues in education today. We want to help pupils to live Jesus way amongst their classmates, to understand what the Bible says about some of the subjects they study, and to know God's strength in the difficulties that come their way. We want to help all Christians

involved in education to live in a way that demonstrates the values of God's Kingdom, and to speak in a way that commends Jesus to all who listen.

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL SCHOOL

1. **We want to encourage** and affirm our local Schools in the essential service they provide to our children. School life contributes significantly to all aspects of development in our children and young people. We acknowledge the challenges and seek to better understand the pressures under which Schools and teachers work. We also acknowledge the additional pressures upon local Schools as a consequence of tighter budgets and limited resources, as well as a plethora of political and educational changes and controversies.

2. **We want to recognise** that Church input to our local Schools can seem defensive and aloof. Our involvement can appear superficial and rather formal, preoccupied with maintaining, protecting and asserting our rights. Whilst we believe our historic and statutory contribution remains beneficial we recognise that this should not be the defining aspect of a dynamic School-Church relationship.

3. **We want to actively and creatively engage** our Churches with our local Schools in partnership that enables us to understand more fully the work of our schools, and how to be a support in this work. We want our Churches to develop effective relationships with their local Schools that are warmly pastoral, encouraging and go well beyond merely formal business. We want our Churches to see it as an indispensable opportunity and responsibility to assist Schools in the cognitive, physical, social, emotional and spiritual development of our children and young people.

4. **We want to challenge** our Churches to think creatively about how they can practically support their local Schools. For instance, Congregations often have material resources such as halls, with staging, musical equipment and so forth. There is also the vast human resource – talented and willing members who could offer their time and support to assist schools in a variety of ways. This could range from helping with outings to making input across the curriculum, not least as a resource in RE.

5. **We want to consolidate and enhance** the spiritual and pastoral support that Congregations provide to their local School. Teachers and pupils may require support in difficult times and the Church, through a variety of people, is often well placed to provide a listening ear, and offer prayer support. Regular contact with the School Principal and staff can keep us in an informed position to pray for ongoing issues within the School, its pupils and staff, in an intentional and sensitive manner.

APPENDIX 2

Mrs Eleanor Petrie, PCI representative on the SEC, reports:

SUMMARY OF FUNDING POSITION OF PROTESTANT SCHOOLS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

1. To understand the cuts implemented by the Minister for Education and Skills to moneys previously paid to Protestant fee paying schools, it is

necessary to understand a little of the history of how these payments were first put in place.

2. In 1967 the then Minister for Education, Donnach O'Malley, made the decision that if Ireland was to have an educated workforce he needed to do something to encourage pupils to stay in education until they had completed their Leaving Certificate, and the concept of Free Secondary Education in Ireland became a reality.

3. The Government invited schools to enter the "free scheme". The vast majority of Catholic schools took this path with just a few remaining as fee paying and separate from the scheme.

4. Because the Protestant population was so widely dispersed throughout the State the majority of Protestant schools were boarding and therefore fee paying. So if Protestant parents wanted to ensure that their children were educated in a faith school that reflected the ethos of the home, many had to either board or travel long distances.

5. So how could the Department of Education ensure they treated all the children of the State equally? It was decided that it would treat Protestant fee paying schools as a part of the "free scheme", by providing money in two ways:

- (a) The Block Grant, which is calculated by multiplying the number of pupils attending the 21 Protestant schools by the amount of the per capita grant paid by the Government to Roman Catholic schools. This "Block" is given to the Education Board of the Protestant Churches (Secondary Education Committee) for distribution on a means tested basis to Protestant families to assist in paying school fees.
- (b) A contribution towards the running costs of Protestant schools, in the main to pay for the Caretaker and Secretarial support, in line with the same grants paid to Roman Catholic schools in the free scheme.

6. It is the second area of funding, removed by the 2009 Budget (a sum of €2.8 million) which has left each of our schools seriously underfunded.

7. Since this funding was provided to ensure a "level playing field" for all the children of the State, to remove it is to disadvantage the children of Protestant and minority religions.

8. Up until the 2009 Budget the Department have always provided State paid teachers to all schools on an equal basis – the pupil teacher ratio was 18/1 the revised figure is to be 19/1. However, the Minister has now increased this ratio by one pupil for **all** fee paying schools to 20/1. This entirely disregards the action of the Government in 1968, reinforced by every Government since then, to assist Protestant families to educate their children in Protestant schools. Roman Catholic families can choose to have their children educated in either "free" or fee paying schools.

9. The Government now say that advice obtained from the Attorney General does not allow them to continue giving "preferential treatment" to Protestant fee paying schools, although they say they can continue to give the Block Grant.

APPENDIX 3**SUBMISSION BY THE TRANSFEROR REPRESENTATIVES’
COUNCIL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****DRAFT BUDGET 2011-15: DRAFT ALLOCATIONS AND SAVINGS
PROPOSALS****INTRODUCTION**

1. The Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department of Education’s draft proposals for the allocation and savings relevant to the Draft Budget 2011-2015 and presents this submission on behalf of the Boards of Education of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland.

2. In addressing this issue it is important at the outset to acknowledge the economic context in which the proposals are made, namely the overall reduction in the block Northern Ireland grant brought about by the challenging fiscal environment and current policies being pursued by the Treasury at Westminster. In the light of this, it is acknowledged that the need for savings is inevitable and the need for prudent management of the funds available essential.

3. The proposals provide for savings within the sector of £139.2m in the year 11/12 rising to £303.4 in the year 14/15. However, there is a lack of clarity in the proposed savings areas and a degree of ambiguity in the format in which the information is presented. Without any detailed analysis of the planned spending it is difficult, if not impossible, to reach any appreciation of the impact the suggested saving will have. With this in mind, the TRC makes the following comments.

End of Year Funding (EYF)

4. The issue of the removal of “End of Year Flexibility” (EYF) continues to be a matter of concern. Transferors acknowledge subsequent Ministerial statements of assurance to schools on the safeguarding of accumulated funds from previous years. However, there would appear to be continued lack of clarity as to arrangements for future years. It is important that such clarification is provided at an early date to minimise the effects the removal of EYF will have on the overall budgetary situation.

Budgetary setting and presumptions

5. It is noted that the budget allocations have been fixed within the overarching vision of the Department of Education; founded upon the Strategic Priorities for Education outlined in the Executive’s Programme for Government. These five principles: raising standards for all, closing the Performance Gap, development of the Education Workforce, an improved learning environment and Transformed Education Management, are laudable objectives. Likewise the TRC welcomes the Minister’s undertaking to protect the allocations to Special Educational Needs, Extended Schools, Post-Primary School Counselling Service and the boosting of funding for Early Years. However, it is difficult to

see how these worthy objectives can be attained, bearing in mind the scope of the reduction of funds available. Particular mention must be made to the references in respect of the provision of Special Educational Needs in regard to which some of the proposals would appear to be predicated on a policy which has yet to be published.

6. The reference for the need to reduce bureaucracy in the system is noted. Few would contest the argument that the current system is economically inefficient. However, savings in this area cannot be made without political agreement on the future structure of the administrative system. The TRC is of the opinion that progress on this is possible under proposals that will safeguard the rights of all stakeholders and would encourage our politicians to come to a resolution that will break the logjam of the past years.

Savings Areas

7. The TRC offers the following comments on some of the specific proposals on allocations:

(a) **Professional Support for Schools:**

There is an urgent need for clarification of the term “Professional Support for Schools.” Transferors would be concerned that this is a term not previously used within the system and that it is open to wide interpretation. The TRC seeks further clarification: Does this refer to the CASS system? Does it include “Educational Welfare” or the Psychology Service? Does it include CEA, CCMS, the RTU? All of these provide valuable professional support for schools and the reduction of the budget to any of these services will present major challenges to the delivery of the strategic principles.

(b) **The position of Religious Education:**

In the absence of clarity it would be important that the transferring Churches voice their concern for the delivery of Religious Education in schools in a situation in which support services are already limited. Any further diminution of support in this area would reduce the capacity of schools to deliver on the legal requirement in respect of this subject. Steps must be taken to insure its continued support role within schools.

(c) **Entitlement Framework:**

The proposals in respect of the “Entitlement Framework” in the context of a revised formula for the distribution of resources to post-primary schools are noted. It is essential that detailed proposals are made available at an early date for consultation with the schools concerned.

(d) **Teacher Substitution:**

The TRC expresses concern regarding the proposals on Teacher Substitution for Sickness Absence. These would seem to be predicated on the assumption that a proportion of the current absences are not genuine illnesses or that they fail to take into account long term illness. Information from Transferor Representatives on the ELBs would suggest that the former is not the case. It would therefore seem to be difficult to sustain these savings.

(e) Aggregated Schools Budget:

Concern is expressed regarding reductions to the Aggregated Schools Budget. Section 5.24 refers to the rationalisation of the schools estate and the sustainable schools policy. Transferors believe that rationalisation, undertaken as a purely financial exercise, could have the potential to have serious social and community consequences. This could also have serious implications for the achievement of the five strategic principles.

Such a rationalisation would also have knock on implications for other budgetary areas, primarily “Home to School Transport.” Given the current pressures upon this service, the aim of the proposed £5m saving per year in this draft budget may prove unattainable under current policies. This cutback may also prove unjust given the potential effect on those from poorer backgrounds who depend upon this service.

(f) Capital Budget:

The TRC would question rationalisation in the context of the Capital budget proposals. The cap on new builds when there is currently a huge maintenance backlog and some of the estate not fit-for-purpose, will present major challenges to the provision of modern 21st century accommodation. The conversion of £41m from capital to resource for this year should help to lessen the human impact of the budgetary proposals. However, this is unsustainable year on year. Some of the key structural changes proposed, e.g. area based planning, will also be unsustainable without adequate capital funding.

In Conclusion:

8. Recognising the serious economic situation, the TRC acknowledges the need for prudence in the use of limited funds available. However, in view of the magnitude of the proposed cuts the TRC is of the opinion that the implementation of the ‘proposed savings’ will adversely affect core educational services, be detrimental to the attainment of the Five Strategic Principles and will have far-reaching social consequences for local communities.

APPENDIX 4**RESPONSE OF THE TRC TO THE DEL MINISTER’S PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF STANMILLIS**

1. The Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC) welcomes the statement by Minister of Employment and Learning Danny Kennedy MLA outlining the terms under which it is proposed to merge Stranmillis University College with Queen’s University, Belfast.

2. We believe that the proposed merger with Queen’s University has potential to bring many educational and other advantages to Stranmillis including economic sustainability, the enhancement and increased breadth of learning opportunities for students and the development of a strong research programme.

3. We are encouraged that the Minister's statement has addressed three major concerns of the TRC that: the ethos of Stranmillis will be protected; the necessary training for teachers of RE will be continued; and there will be a creative partnership with the Churches and other appropriate stakeholders through institutional involvement.

4. The TRC believes it is vital that all that is best of the traditions and ethos of Stranmillis is both respected and given expression after the merger and that students in the new arrangement are given an introduction to the distinctive history, ethos and values present in Controlled schools. The Minister makes clear his intention that this will be the case, stating that such elements would *"add value to the educational experience, enhance educational outcomes and contribute positively to a shared future for all in Northern Ireland."*

5. The TRC also firmly believes that, as teachers appointed to Controlled primary schools in particular are expected to deliver religious education, it is essential that such teachers are given the necessary training in appropriate methods to teach undenominational RE with a distinctively Christian and biblical basis. Therefore we welcome the assurance from Queen's University, contained in the Minister's statement, that *"there will be no change to the teaching of the agreed RE curriculum should the proposed merger take place."* The Minister's clear statement, that the legislation to enable such a merger will also require Queen's University to continue, *"to prepare a sufficient number of RE teachers to deliver the agreed curriculum in any school in Northern Ireland"*, is also reassuring.

6. Finally the proposal to establish a 'Strategic Stakeholders Forum' that will "provide for relevant key stakeholders, including the Transferors and the wider Controlled sector, to have a direct advisory role," is very welcome. We believe that such a body will enable the Transferring Churches to continue their long standing interest in teacher education and further develop the TRC's affinity with Stranmillis as the main provider of teachers for schools within the Controlled sector in which Transferring Churches are the major stakeholders at governance level.

7. The TRC note that what is being launched today is a public consultation on the Minister's proposals. It is recognized that, following the consultation period, appropriate enabling legislation will come before the Northern Ireland Assembly. It will be important that the various assurances contained in the Minister's proposals will be fully reflected in this legislation.

NOTE: The Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) represents the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and Methodist Church in Ireland in matters of educational policy in Northern Ireland.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly welcome the reports on 'Supporting Christians in Education' and 'Supporting our Local School' and encourage the Board of Education to progress this work.
3. That the General Assembly uphold the fundamental right of church members to continue to make a contribution to all aspects of our common life in

society and in particular the presentation of the values of the Christian faith as a vital element in the education of children and young people in schools.

4. That the General Assembly express thanks to those who serve as Transferor representatives on Education and Library Boards in the current difficult transitional period and again express deep regret that the legal right of representation continues to be denied for Transferors on the South Eastern Education and Library Board.

5. That the General Assembly welcome a public debate on the potential for shared education in NI and encourages dialogue between schools and educational sectors with the aim of developing closer relationships through opportunities for collaboration and sharing.

Spud Resolution

6. That the General Assembly encourage the Board of Education to take steps to promote enhanced educational opportunities that will enable young people from across the different school sectors in Northern Ireland to integrate together through contact, collaboration and sharing.

7. That the General Assembly strongly support recent efforts to identify factors contributing to educational underachievement particularly among disadvantaged Protestant communities and call for the identification of policy and practical measures to help address these issues.

8. That the Board of Education be appointed in accordance with Par 284 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Convener: Mr JOHN HUNTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Board is seeking the General Assembly's approval to:
 - (i) rates of assessment which would reduce the overall rate on Congregations from 73.50 pence per £ of stipend in 2010 to 69.00p in 2011.
 - (ii) implement, following consultation with Congregations and Presbyteries during 2010, the recommendations of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel on the remuneration of Ministers. This is subject to the General Assembly agreeing to the proposal of the General Board Panel on Pensions and Assessments to change the basis of assessment from stipend to assessable income.
 - (iii) introduce updated Rules for the Retired Ministers' House Fund.
2. The report provides an update on the external stonework repairs and internal refurbishment works.
3. The Board acknowledges the challenging financial circumstances many Congregations are facing which have resulted in some Congregation being unable to pay their stipends and assessments.
4. A Summary of Congregational Statistics is appended along with, for the first time, a summary of Presbytery accounts.
5. Finally, the Board wishes to acknowledge the contribution of several Committee Conveners who have completed their terms of office.

THE BOARD'S REPORT

1. Over the past year the Board of Finance and Personnel has carried forward a number of important issues on behalf of the General Assembly including Congregational assessments, various personnel policies, the refurbishment of Church House and the operation of the shopping mall, the auditing of accounts and the strengthening of the IT Department.
2. The Board is conscious of the very difficult financial circumstances facing many Congregations and members. With that in mind, it has continued to exercise tight control of expenditure in an effort to reduce Congregational assessments. The PCI Pension Scheme (2009) continues to be the largest single item of assessment and reflects, in part, the large deficit in the Scheme at its last revaluation. The next revaluation of the Scheme, due at the end of December 2011, will provide an opportunity to review the position. Meanwhile, the low level of both interest rates and investment returns have exacerbated the Church's overall financial position. Nevertheless, by paring various individual assessments and other financial adjustments the Board proposes to reduce the overall level of assessments from 73.5p in 2010 to 69.0p in 2011.

	2011 p/£stipend	2010 p/£stipend	2009 p/£stipend
Central Ministry Fund	18.50	18.50	20.00
Retired Ministers' Fund	1.50	2.75	4.25
Widows of Ministers' Fund	4.00	4.50	5.00
Prolonged Disability Fund	0.25	0.25	0.50
Incidental Fund	5.00	5.00	5.00
Ministerial Development Fund	0.25	0.25	0.25
Special Assembly	—	0.25	0.25
Church House Repair Work	3.50	3.50	3.50
Sick Supply Fund	0.25	0.25	—
Students' Bursary Fund	5.75	5.25	—
Sub-Total	39.00	40.50	38.75
PCI Pension Scheme (2009) Fund	30.00	33.00	33.00
Total	69.00	73.50	71.75

Please refer to Appendix 3, which provides a history of assessments from 1994 to 2011 in the form of a graph.

3. At its October meeting the Board considered the stipends of Ministers (and associated grants) and the salaries of Church House staff. The Board reluctantly concluded that against a backdrop of the economic recession it could not recommend any increase in 2011. It reached this conclusion with much regret, conscious of the pressures facing Ministers and their families on the Ministerial Minimum scale and those on the lower pay scales in Church House.

4. The Board noted the outcome of the employee consultation process on changes to the Pension Scheme agreed at the General Assembly in 2010 and welcomed the appointments of Mr Bob McCullagh, Mr Dougie Crowe and Dr Rosemary Hamilton as Employer Nominated Pension Scheme Trustees. It also noted the government delay in implementing the new Charities legislation due to technical issues surrounding the “public benefit test”.

5. The Board is responsible for the “Retired Ministers’ House Fund”. It approved revised scheme rules at its March meeting and a copy is included in Appendix 4. The Board also approved various new personnel policies – the latter consistent with the requirements of NI legislation.

6. Throughout the year, the Board kept under review the progress of the various building projects in Church House. It was pleased to learn that the external stonework contract had been completed slightly under budget. The internal renovations have proved very disruptive to staff in Church House to whom the Board is grateful for the understanding they have shown. At the time of the March Board meeting, the contract was slightly behind schedule but the contractor remains hopeful of completing the work in time for the General Assembly. The refurbished facilities should prove to be a most attractive city centre conference venue. Meanwhile the Board has been disappointed by the

difficult trading climate affecting units in the Mall. Efforts continue to find suitable retailers.

7. The Board's Tyrone Memorial Review Panel continued its work throughout the year. In accordance with the decision of the General Assembly last year, the Panel referred its report to Congregations and Presbyteries for discussion and comment, aided by a questionnaire covering the key issues. Five open meetings were held across Ireland at which Panel members presented and explained the report and its recommendations. The Board was pleased to learn that the 207 responses received showed a substantial measure of support for the proposed reduction in stipend differentials between Ministers, including the introduction of a Local Allowance and new arrangements for the payment of Incremental Allowances. Appendix 1 contains a full report on the consultations, together with specific recommendations. In response to a request at one of the consultations, a separate report has been made to those who responded to the consultations.

8. However, the consultation showed serious concern on the part of some Congregations over the proposed new "assessment" methodology, based on "assessable income" rather than "stipend". The Board recognises that it would be unfair to continue to use stipends as the basis for assessment, as this would favour larger Congregations at the expense of smaller ones. This issue falls to be considered by the General Board's Panel on "Pensions and Assessments", on which a separate report has been prepared for the General Assembly. The Board is therefore seeking the Assembly's agreement to its proposals for achieving over time and with transitional arrangements a reduction in stipend differentials – subject to the Assembly's agreement to the recommendations in the Report of the General Board's Panel on "Pensions and Assessments". Should the Assembly agree to the proposal an appropriate overture to amend Code Par 315 is appended.

9. The Board also endorses the conclusions reached by the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel on its associated review of Ministerial expenses. The existing arrangements would continue, but with more vigorous oversight by Presbyteries.

10. Finally, the Board wishes to express its sincere thanks to those Committee Conveners who have completed their terms of office. Mr Douglas Crowe (Pensions and Assessment Committee), Mr Michael Fitch (Finance, Legal and IT Committee), Mr David Lamb (Personnel Committee) and Mr Hubert Martin (Co-Convener, Property Management Committee). They have all devoted a significant amount of time and effort to the work of their Committees and to the wider work of the Board. Their contributions have been invaluable and they have carried out their roles with a deep sense of calling to the work and of faithful service. The Board would also wish to thank the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for all their work on behalf of the General Assembly. They have responded efficiently and effectively to all the requests made of them by the Board and have continued to provide important advice and support to Ministers and Treasurers.

PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Pensions and Assessments Committee continues to be aware of the heavy burden placed upon Congregations by the payment of assessments.

2. Last year a new approach was used to minimise the impact of the transfer of financing for Students' Bursary Fund from United Appeal to Assessments. This involved a phased release of cash reserves in the Retired Ministers' Fund (RMF) and the Widows of Ministers' Fund (WMF), over the expected period during which substantial benefits are to be funded.

3. The Committee now wish to implement further changes which will have a significant effect on the assessments levied on Congregations in both the short term and the long term.

4. The RMF and the WMF, in addition to having cash reserves, also have investment assets which were accumulated to provide income for the purposes of these funds.

5. The Committee considered, and agreed to recommend, that assessments for these funds should be further reduced by a phased disposal of investment assets, over the expected period during which substantial benefits are to be funded. The Committee reserves the right to recommend that disposals be deferred, should investment conditions prove to be particularly adverse. In extreme circumstances, this might necessitate, from time to time, an increase in assessments to raise sufficient cash to meet grants as they fall due.

6. Disposals will normally take place by the sale of units in the General Investment Fund each half year. The Board wishes to enter into discussions with the Church Trustees about the process for managing this planned disinvestment.

7. Another change in practice, which will have a shorter term effect, is with regard to the management of contributions to The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009). Funding rates for the pension scheme are calculated as a percentage of pensionable income. Congregational contributions to the scheme are collected by an assessment on stipend rather than as a percentage of pensionable income. Matching these two different calculations has proved, over the years, to be not an exact science. Clearly the assessment, if anything, has to err on the side of caution and this has resulted in more being collected than is precisely needed for Scheme contributions. The existing practice has been to invest any such surplus in the Pension Scheme, which has helped, in some measure, to reduce the deficit in Scheme funding. The Committee now believe that the reduction of Congregational assessments is of more pressing importance and have, therefore, recommended that any surplus, instead of being invested, is used to reduce assessments in a way that is prudent. The effect of these recommendations on the individual funds is set out in the Paragraphs below, relevant to RMF, WMF and PCI Pension Scheme (2009) Fund.

8. Taking these changes together with the Committee's recommendations for other funds will have the combined effect of reducing total assessments, for 2011, to 69.0p per £ of Stipend, a 4.5p reduction from 73.5p per £ of Stipend in 2010.

9. Prolonged discussion took place regarding the issue of the ministerial minimum, family grants and Tyrone Memorial increases. The position of many

Ministers, particularly those on the minimum stipend with young families, was recognised.

10. It was agreed that the payment of any salary increases this year, in the context of what is being faced by people in the workplace generally, would, at best, seem to be insensitive. The Committee, therefore, with reluctance, recommended that no stipend increases are awarded for 2011. This also applies to those grants that are linked to the minimum stipend and to grants made under the Prolonged Disability Fund.

11. The General Assembly, in 2009, passed a resolution 'authorising the Board of Finance and Personnel to set provisional assessments for existing funds which can be applied from 1 January each year and approved, or otherwise, at the ensuing General Assembly when over or under-provisions can be corrected'.

12. Recommendations were made by the Pensions and Assessments Committee and approved by the Board in October. These recommendations were subsequently reviewed in February and further reduced by 2.0p per £ of Stipend to take into account the factors described in Par 8 above. The revised provisional assessments have been applied with effect from the February direct debit.

13. The recommendations for each fund are set out in the Paragraphs below.

Central Ministry Fund

14. At the end of 2010, CMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £2,172,927 an increase of £5,998 on 2009, in line with budgeted forecasts.

15. The proposed rate of assessment for 2011 is 18.5p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2010.

16. No increases were set by the Board, under the Tyrone Memorial Scheme.

17. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2011:

(a) Ministerial Minimum

	Northern Ireland 2011	Rep of Ireland 2011
Ministerial Minimum	£22,416	€35,241
After 5 years service	£22,977	€36,123
After 10 years service	£23,538	€37,005
After 15 years service	£24,099	€37,887
After 20 years service	£24,660	€38,769
After 25 years service	£25,221	€39,651
After 30 years service	£25,782	€40,533

(b) Family Grants 2011

	2011		2010	
	£	€	£	€
Birth to 10 years	335	982	335	982
11 to 15 years	502	1,548	502	1,548
16 years and over				
At school	752	2,862	752	2,862
At university	2,503	4,774	2,503	4,774
Bands – Joint Incomes				
<i>Reduction - Nil</i>	26,771	40,940	25,673	39,404
<i>Reduction - £1 for every £5</i>	36,002	55,066	34,538	52,999
<i>Reduction - £1 for every £2</i>	36,002	55,066	34,538	52,999

- (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 £4,680 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code, or £2,350 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under the above paragraphs shall be £4,680.
- (e) That in reckoning augmentation for 2011, 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).
- (f) The Board recommended that in the light of the strain placed upon CMF funding by the continued growth in Bonus payments as highlighted in Reports 2008, p 238, par 5, CMF Bonus for 2010 continues to be held at £1,518 pa. The future of bonus forms part of the discussions of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel.

Widows of Ministers Fund

18. At the end of 2010, WMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £912,906, a decrease of £73,250 on 2009.

19. Factors contributing to the reduction in the retained balance were a decrease in assessment of 0.5p per £ of Stipend together with a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £6,000.

20. The Committee, nevertheless, wish to reduce further the assessment for the reasons stated in Pars 3 to 5 above.

21. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2011:

22. That the assessment for 2011 be 4.0p per £ of Stipend, a reduction from 4.5p in 2010, continuing with the pattern of reductions over recent years.

- (a) That the maximum Widows Pension be £ 6,165.
- (b) That widows, not in receipt of the Northern Ireland State Pension, receive a maximum of £ 6,165 plus £475.

- (c) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWFA receive a maximum of £ 6,165 plus £500.
 - (d) That widows, whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension receive a maximum of £6,165 plus £5,018.
23. The recommended reduction in assessment implies, on budgeted figures, a planned further reduction in reserves during 2011 of some £184,000.

Presbyterian Widows Fund Association

24. All Ministers, under the provisions of the Code, are required to 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 an annuity to widows, which is currently £1,200.

Retired Ministers Fund

25. At the end of 2010, RMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £1,444,107 a decrease of £305,344 on 2009.

26. Factors contributing to the reduction in the retained balance were a decrease in assessment of 1.5p per £ of Stipend together with a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £12,000.

27. The Committee, nevertheless, wish to reduce further the assessment for the reasons stated in Pars 3 to 5 above.

28. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2011:

29. That the assessment for 2011 be 1.5p per £ of Stipend, a reduction from 2.75p in 2010, continuing with the pattern of reductions over recent years.

30. That the maximum Basic Retirement Allowance be £11,208.

31. That Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension is currently £8,037 married, £5,018 single.

32. The recommended reduction in assessment implies, on budgeted figures, a further reduction in reserves during 2011 of some £458,000.

PCI Pension Scheme (2009)

33. Changes to the benefit structure under the scheme, reducing future accrual rate to a $\frac{1}{70}$ th basis from a $\frac{1}{60}$ th basis, and a change to the definition of normal retirement age to match male State Pension age, were agreed at the 2010 General Assembly.

34. Under the law, scheme members must be consulted about such changes. A formal period of consultation was undertaken between 1 October, 2010 and 30 November, 2010. No issues were raised during this period and, consequently, the changes were implemented with effect from 1 January, 2011.

35. Following the Actuarial Valuation of the scheme, at 31 December, 2008, the funding rate required for the provision of future benefits and to repay the actuarial deficit, is 34.4% of pensionable earnings, 7% of which is paid by the scheme members and 27.4% by the Church.

36. Congregational contributions to the scheme are collected by an assessment on stipend rather than as a percentage of pensionable income.

37. Following the Committee's recommendation that collection of assessments in excess of the required scheme contribution be used to reduce assessments, as explained in Pars 8 to 11 above, the following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2011:

(a) That the assessment required to fund the agreed contribution is 30p per £ of Stipend, a reduction from 33p in 2010.

38. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire, at or over age 65, by their Presbyteries: Rev Dr D Murphy (First Ballymacarrett), Rev JK McCormick (Second Derry & Burt), Rev JW Fleck (Upper & Lower Clonaneese), Rev JF Murdoch (First Omagh), Rev HS Boyd (Millisle & Ballycopeland), Rev WJ Keefe (Sloan Street, Lisburn), Rev G Moore (Kilbride), Rev D Bannerman (Toberkeigh), Rev J H McIntyre (Cregagh), Very Rev Dr REH Uprichard (Trinity, Ahoghill), Rev ST Carson (Dunluce), Rev WPH Erskine (Windsor) and Very Rev Dr HA Dunlop (Knock).

39. Leave to retire early on ill health grounds was granted to the Rev T Harte (Trinity, Boardmills), having been approved by his Presbytery and Pensions and Assessments Committee.

40. Unanimous approval was given to the Rev Dr JA Thompson (Dervock) to seek the permission of the 2011 General Assembly to retire following his 64th birthday, on 4 May, 2011.

41. The Trustees did not award any discretionary increase for pensions in payment, accrued pre 1997, in excess of the Guaranteed Minimum Pension.

Ministers Prolonged Disability Fund

42. At the end of 2010, the Fund had a retained balance of £726,134, a decrease of £21,223 on 2009.

43. Factors contributing to the reduction in the retained balance were a decrease in assessment of 0.25p per £ of Stipend together with a decrease in Bank Interest on reserves of circa £4,000.

44. This fund remains 'sensitive' to low interest rates as, historically, interest represents a significant proportion of its income.

45. The Committee, however, feel that it is prudent to maintain the assessment at the 2010 level.

46. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2011:

(a) That the assessment for 2011 be 0.25p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2010.

(b) That the maximum level of grant for 2011 remains at £11,298.

47. In 2010, 4 Ministers received benefits under the Fund.

48. In addition to annual grants, pension contributions to PCI Pension Scheme (2009) 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 in excess of £19,000 pa.

49. The Committee agreed that explanatory notes should be appended to Rule 6(b) of the Prolonged Disability Fund making it clear that an application

for benefits under the Fund can be considered, in principle, prior to a Minister resigning his or her charge.

50. It was also agreed to recommend that changes to Rule 17(c) should be submitted to the General Assembly in order to provide greater clarity regarding current and future courses of treatment.

Sick Supply Fund

51. At the end of 2010 the fund had a retained balance of £9,019, an increase of £10,095 on 2009, when the fund had shown a deficit of £1,076.

52. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2011:

53. That the assessment for 2011 be 0.25p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2010.

Incidental Fund

54. At the end of 2010, the Incidental Fund had a retained balance of £102,095, a decrease of £54,781 on 2009, but substantially less than the projected deficit of £87,814.

55. Grants from the Incidental Fund are approved by General Assembly under resolutions pertaining to individual Boards. It is the role of the Board of Finance and Personnel, acting on advice from its Pensions and Assessments Committee, to recommend an appropriate assessment, sufficient to meet the grants agreed and to maintain a prudent reserve.

56. On budgeted figures, should the assessment remain at 5p per £ of stipend, the underlying reserve in the Incidental Fund at the end of 2011 will be circa £67,500. The Committee's view is that, in normal circumstances, a minimum retained balance of £100,000 is more prudent and provides greater resilience against unexpected 'events'.

57. Being mindful, however, of the burden of assessments on Congregations, the Committee agreed to recommend that the assessment for 2011 should remain unchanged.

58. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2011:

(a) That the assessment for 2011 be 5.0p per £ of Stipend, the same as in 2010.

Collection of Congregational Assessments

59. During the past year, a small but increasing number of Congregations have not met the full amount of their assessments on time. Additionally, in some cases, payment has not been received in respect of Stipend. The Committee seeks to treat situations of hardship sympathetically and continue to monitor this area carefully.

60. Union Commission is considering guidelines as to how such matters should be dealt with, believing that the payment of Stipend should be the first call upon a Congregation's finances.

61. The Code provides sanctions that can be used in such circumstances but these sanctions are solely against the Minister and not the Congregation. The Committee expressed the view that they would be most unwilling to exercise sanctions against a Minister.

62. A Panel, consisting of representatives of Union Commission and the Pensions and Assessments Committee, has been set up to explore how these matters should be handled, to develop guidelines for the Committee and Presbyteries and to consider making urgent recommendations to the General Assembly for changes in the Code. An appropriate overture is appended.

63. Currently requests from two Congregations, to diminish their assessments under Par 316(3) of the Code, are under consideration.

The Students' Bursary Fund

64. Responsibility for recommending the assessment for the Students Bursary Fund lies with the Board of Christian Training.

The Ministerial Development Fund

65. At the end of 2010, the Ministerial Development Fund had a retained balance of £349,667. Responsibility for recommending any assessment for this fund lies with the Board of Christian Training.

Church House Stonework Repair

66. Responsibility for recommending any assessment for repairs to Church House lies with the Property Management Committee.

DOUGLAS CROWE, Convener

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on two occasions during the year.
2. An excellent and professional Human Resources service continues to be provided by the team headed by Mrs Laura Palmer, Head of Personnel, and thanks are due to all of them.
3. Thanks are also due to Mr Herbie Smyth and Mr Ian McElhinny for the sterling work carried out to further the work of the Retired Ministers' House Fund.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

4. Work on the implementation of the Job Evaluation Scheme has continued, although at a somewhat slower pace than had been hoped. Executive posts are now being processed.
5. Work on policy development has been progressed through the Personnel Advisory Panel. Following changes in legislation, the Paternity Leave and Maternity Leave policies were amended and the Retirement policy will be withdrawn in due course. The Equal Opportunities policy was amended, while policies for New Drivers and the Acceptable Use of Electronic Media were introduced.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

6. The Health and Safety Panel has continued to make progress on this important area of work.

7. Advice on the use and maintenance of congregational mini-buses is currently at draft stage. Peninsula Business Services have updated the Health and Safety manual for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND

8. During the year, the Fund was bequeathed a property in Bangor which was the former home of the late Mrs Eleanor Doris Clark. The Fund is extremely grateful for this most generous bequest and once transfer arrangements have been completed the house will be made available for rent under the Rules of the Fund.

9. The scheme rules were redrafted, discussed with the Assembly Solicitor and approved (See Board Appendix 4).

10. The land in Cullybackey continues to be held and routine maintenance carried out as necessary, awaiting sale in better market conditions.

11. The Fund continues to provide assistance either by loans or letting of available property. The Ministers newsletter is used to advise on the availability of properties.

12. To allow the Fund to continue to meet demand for financial assistance through loans etc. the Committee and Board have approved an overdraft limit of £350,000.

DAVID LAMB, Convener

COMMITTEE APPENDIX 1

Sterling Salary Scales of Staff in post on 1 January, 2011 (no discretionary increase was applied from 1 January, 2011 following the annual review of salaries.)

EXECUTIVE POSTS

Scale 1 (£22,200 - £26,565)

Communications Officer, BMI
Payroll and Assessment Manager

Scale 2 (£25,201 - £30,519)

General Secretary, PW
Taking Care Trainer and Co-Ordinator
Assistant Residential Services Manager
Buildings Manager & Safety Officer
Children's Development Officer
Young Adults Development Officer
Youth Development Officer
Director of Nightlight
Financial Manager
Finance Manager, BMI
Project Manager, Willowbrook
Support Officer, BMI

University Chaplain UUJ
 Minister/Ministry Co-ordinator, Kinghan Church
 Mission Training Officer, BMO
 Chaplain in Residence, Queens University, Stranmills, Union College
 College Librarian

Scale 3 (£28,316 - £34,730)

Director of Programmes
 Education in Mission Officer, BMO
 Mission Development Officer, BMI
 Personnel Officer, BMO

Scale 4 (£31,311 - £39,367)

Head of Personnel
 Residential Services Manager
 Senior Financial Accountant
 IT Development and Support Manager
 Christian Training Development Officer

Scale 5 (£34,730 - £42,539)

Communications Secretary and Press Officer
 Director of Youth & Children's Ministry
 Executive Secretary BMI
 Deputy General Secretary

Scale 6 (£37,374 - £45,750)

Executive Secretary, BMO
 Director of Social Service

Scale 7 (£42,539 - £55,006)

General Secretary
 Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS

Scale 1 (£12,205 - £14,250)

Clerical Officer (FSO)
 Secretary/Receptionist (BMO)
 Secretary/Receptionist (BSW)
 Secretary (GSO)
 Telephonist
 Clerical Officer (8) OPS/BSW

Scale 2 (£13,208 - £15,431)

Clerical and Resource Officer, Nightlight
 Clerical/Secretarial Assistant (FSO)

Handyperson
 Personnel Assistant (2)
 Receptionist/Telephonist
 Secretary (JS), (BMI)
 Secretary/Receptionist (PW)
 Taking Care Administrator
 Office Secretary, (BMI)
 Clerical Officer – Carlisle House (3) (BSW)

Scale 3 (£14,944 - £17,435)

Co-ordinator – Counselling Services
 Clerical Officer (FSO)
 Deputy Building Manager
 Nightlight Development Officers (one FT)
 Personnel Assistant (BMI)
 Secretary (YACM)
 Senior Secretary (BSW)
 Senior Secretary (PW)
 Senior Secretary – Publications & Information (BMO)
 Senior Secretary – Mission Training & External Funding (BMO)
 Senior Secretary (BMO)
 Senior Secretary (BMI)
 Senior Secretary (GSO)
 Senior Secretary, Finance (YACM)

Scale 4 (£17,066 - £19,805)

Administrative Assistant (JS) (YACM)
 Administrator, Derryvolgie
 Departmental Secretary
 Payroll and Clerical Assistant
 Personnel Administrator
 Personal Secretary (FSO)
 Senior Secretary (GSO)
 Senior Secretary (JS) (YACM)
 Wages Clerk

Scale 5 (£18,766 - £21,819)

Communications Co-Ordinator
 Assistant Accountant
 Development Officer, PW, (FT)
 Financial Assistant
 IT Support Assistant
 Office Supervisor and Personal Secretary, BMI
 Personal Assistant to the Director of Social Service
 Production Manager
 Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale)

Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£20,828 - £23,953)

Assistant Chaplain, QUB
Personal Secretary and Office Supervisor (GSO)
Personnel Officer
Senior Administrative Officer (BMO)
Senior Administrative Officer (YACM)

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly in 2010 approved the refurbishment and redevelopment of the first phase of Church House, comprising the upgrading of the Assembly Hall and second and third floor offices, together with the provision of a new entrance, lift and reception area from Fisherwick Place. This contract commenced on site in August 2010 at a total cost of approximately £4,200,000 including professional fees, furniture and VAT at 17.5%.

2. The Contract is progressing in a satisfactory manner and despite several difficulties due to unforeseen structural problems on the ground floor and in the existing lift shaft, it is anticipated that all work will be completed to the required quality standards, within the agreed timescale and within the approved costs.

3. It is anticipated that the building will be formally handed over by the contractor on 19 May, and will be available for the PW Rally in late May and the Meetings of the General Assembly in early June.

4. The Spires Shopping Mall continues to struggle in the present economic climate. The reality is that this is a small shopping mall on, at best, a secondary retail pitch and increasingly as Landlord the Church is responsible for the voids and service charge liabilities resulting from vacancies. The Committee is constantly monitoring the situation and agree, in the absence of any initiative to use the space for Mission or wider Church use, to maximise the income stream from the Mall, Fisherwick Buildings and Assembly Hall lettings.

5. DTZ continue to act as Managing and Letting Agents but the Committee has recently appointed Osborne King as joint letting agents and the Committee is actively marketing the vacant retail units in Spires Mall and office accommodation in Fisherwick Buildings.

6. Due to the internal refurbishment work, the Assembly Hall and some ancillary meeting space has not been available for hire since Summer 2010. However the Committee is preparing for the re-opening by launching a new web site and brochure to assist in the marketing of this unique building as a Conference and meeting facility in the heart of Belfast. The proximity to the City Centre, Hotels, George Best City Airport and public transport links means that Church House is well placed to take advantage of the local, national and international markets. There appears to be mild optimism that this market sector has the potential to grow. Church House offers conference space for over 1,000 delegates, sufficient flexible meeting space for groups ranging from 10-200 people and, if required, exhibition space.

7. The Committee wishes to thank those members of staff who worked so hard during the renovations to ensure that Church House remained functional.
HUBERT MARTIN & ADRIAN McLERNON, Co-Conveners

FINANCE, LEGAL AND IT COMMITTEE

1. **General Expenses** – General Expenses (which is the cost of the General Secretary's Office and Financial Secretary's Office) for the year ended 31 December, 2010 were 3.4% below budget and considered to be satisfactory.

Budgeted expenses for the year ended 31 December, 2011 reflect a budgeted increase of about 5.98% compared to 2010. This reflects the additional IT posts, which were expected to fill in 2010, a new receptionist post and staff incremental scale point increases.

2. **Auditors/SORP accounts** – For the year ended 31 December 2010 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. The audit opinion was unqualified. Further to consultation with the Trustees and the General Assembly Solicitor it has been agreed to consolidate the Trustee Accounts into the Accounts of the General Assembly for year ended 31 December, 2011.

3. **Statistics** – see appended tables

4. **Statistics Form and Statement of Recommended Practice** – A final draft of the new Statistics Form was completed during the year. A consultation evening was held with Presbytery Clerks and Finance Conveners in December. It is hoped that all Congregational Treasurers will attend training courses in 2011 and complete a new return for 2010 on a trial run basis sometime in mid 2011. The new return will be introduced for 2011.

5. **Statistical Returns from Presbyteries** – Annual Financial Returns from Presbyteries are now being submitted to the Board of Finance and Personnel and a summary is appended to this report.

6. **Regulation of Charities** – The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 will result in some significant administrative changes over the next few years. Although the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has now been established, much of its work has been put in hold pending a legal challenge to the Primary Legislation. It is expected that this matter will be resolved in 2011. The Committee will continue to inform proactively Presbyteries and Congregations about their obligations under the new legislation.

7. **Fraud Policy** – A Fraud Policy and Response Plan was developed and approved by the Committee during the year.

8. **Risk Assessment** – Risk Assessment is ongoing. A questionnaire was passed to all Board Conveners/Secretaries to enable them to report to The Board. At the time of writing nothing yet has come to our attention which we need to report on.

9. **Bank Overdrafts and deposit accounts** – The Committee continued to receive reports on overdrafts and deposit accounts. The four banks used met

the agreed minimum credit ratings in accordance with the Board's policy set in 2009.

10. **Ministerial expenses** – A number of Treasurers failed to submit Ministerial Expenses Returns and their names were reported to Presbytery Clerks accordingly.

11. **Handbook for Treasurers** – The update of the handbook, last updated in 2002, has been deferred until the introduction of the Charities legislation.

12. **Insurance** – Overall premiums are expected to be £151,739 for 2011 compared to £155,867 for 2010. Rates and sums assured for 2011 have been fixed at the 2010 levels and overall premiums reflect the benefit of some 3 year fixed agreements.

13. **Information Technology** – Mr Steve McMurray has made an extremely valuable contribution with respect to IT and is now providing valuable support to IT systems in PCI projects outside Church House. An additional IT Support Officer was appointed and is settling in well. The recruitment exercise for an IT Development Officer was not successful and the position is to be re-advertised.

14. The Committee continues to work on a number of other tax, finance, legal and IT matters.

15. Special thanks go to the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for their hard work and assistance to the Committee during the year.

16. The Convener would also like to express his own personal thanks for the opportunity to serve the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as Convener of the Finance Legal and IT Committee over the last 7 years.

MICHAEL FITCH, Convener

TABLE ONE
PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	2009	2010	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	205	220	15	
Ministers in Active Duty	385	390	5	
Retired Missionaries	11	13	2	
Missionaries in Active Duty	46	43		3
Total Ministers and Missionaries	647	654	7	
Licensures	10	18	8	
Congregations	549	545	0	4
Total Families	106,475	104,931	0	1,544
Persons of All Ages	251,053	246,480	0	4,573
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	84,450	82,642	0	1,808
Baptisms	1,689	1,624	0	65
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	2,061	1,863	0	198
Communicants	108,246	107,743	0	503
Attended at Least One Communion during year	65,634	66,318	684	0
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	6,685	6,660	0	25
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	25,515	24,617	0	898

TABLE TWO

CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

	2009		2010		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Specified Sources	31,345,545	3,145,614	31,621,051	3,122,831	0.9%	-0.7%
Building Fund etc.	16,676,447	1,982,620	14,400,937	1,703,047	-13.6%	-14.1%
Received "For Others"	7,648,728	626,742	8,664,071	609,450	13.3%	-2.8%
Raised from other sources	4,780,361	1,074,431	5,109,897	1,119,867	6.9%	4.2%
Bequests, etc.	5,402,954	911,911	7,266,214	388,800	34.5%	-57.4%
Total Receipts	65,854,035	7,741,318	67,062,170	6,943,995	1.8%	-10.3%
Total Receipts Less						
Bequests etc.	60,451,081	6,829,407	59,795,956	6,555,195	-1.1%	-4.0%
Bequests	2,071,455	211,865	2,086,096	95,121	0.7%	-55.1%

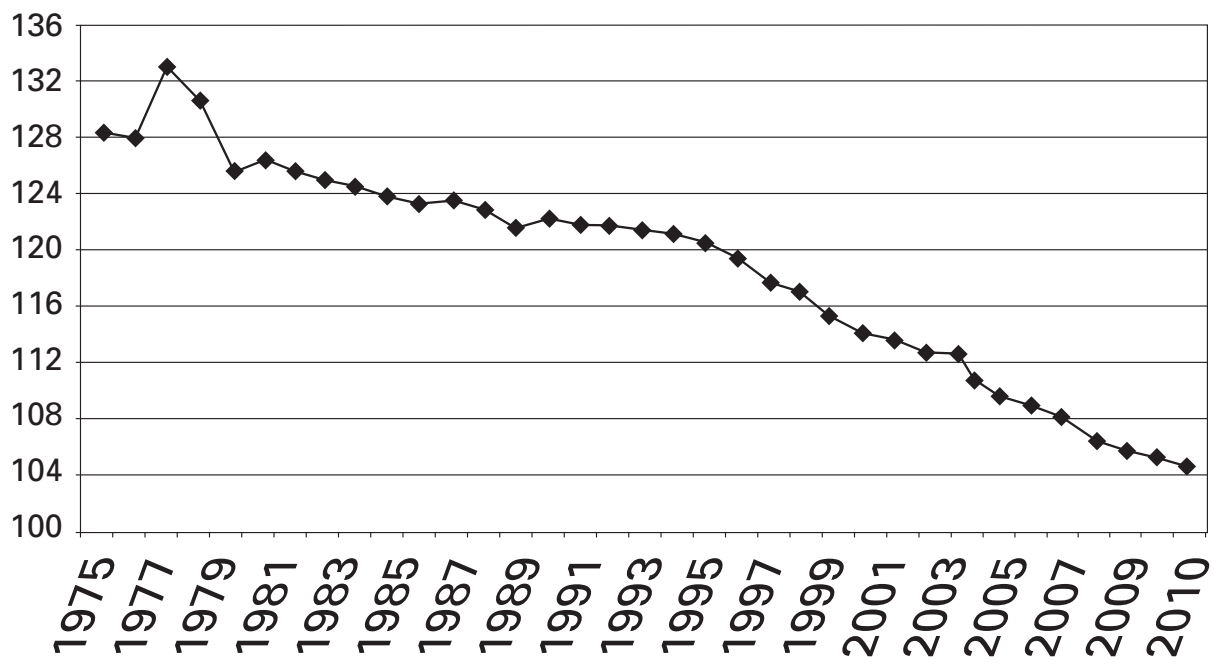
TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

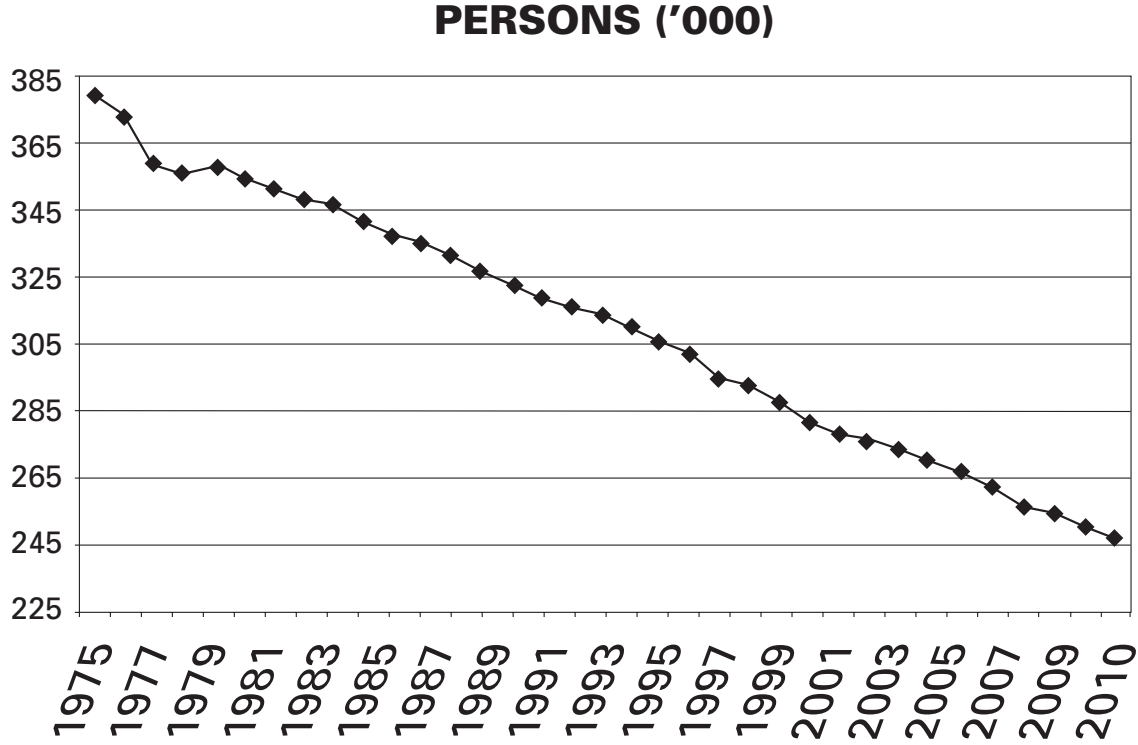
	2009		2010		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	17,537,744	1,706,655	17,685,415	1,732,085	0.8%	1.5%
Payments under Assembly Assessments	6,705,091	678,686	7,027,900	714,583	4.8%	5.3%
Building, Repairs, etc.	16,951,593	2,677,047	15,520,793	2,108,950	-8.4%	-21.2%
United Appeal Schemes	3,381,809	227,308	3,168,834	250,658	-6.3%	10.3%
Supplementary Schemes Other Religious and Charitable Objects	5,359,337	563,115	6,896,076	578,562	28.7%	2.7%
General Expenses	10,372,708	1,278,163	10,110,112	1,272,102	-2.5%	-0.5%
Total Payments	60,308,282	7,130,974	60,409,130	6,656,940	0.2%	-6.6%

TABLE FOUR
CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES

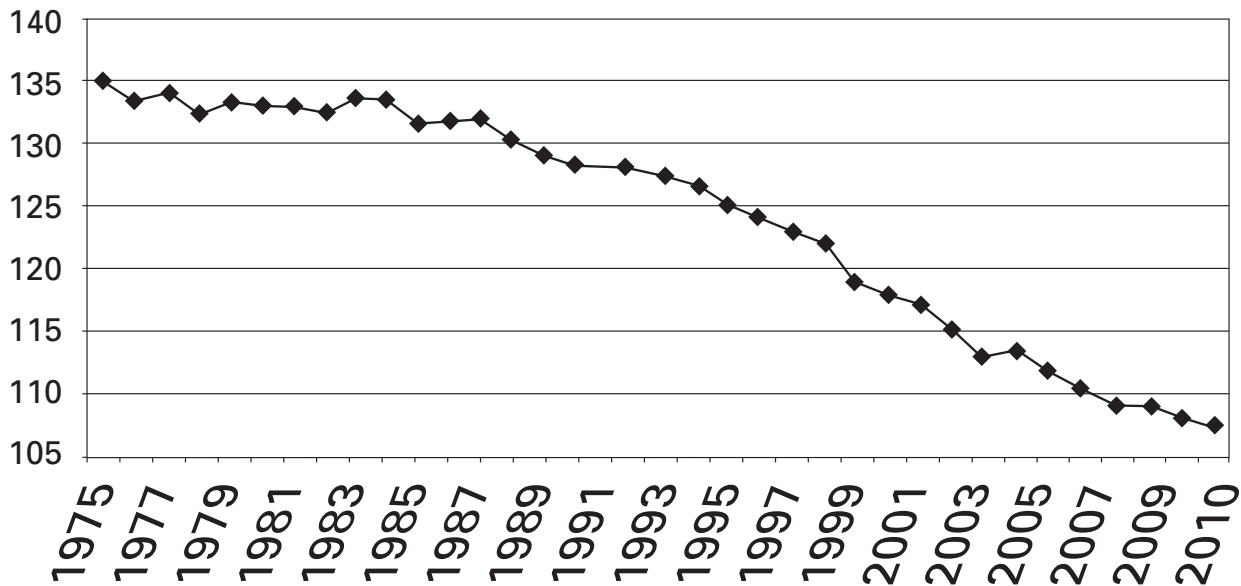
	Closing 2009		Opening 2010		Closing 2010		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Credits	47,972,851	5,044,929	47,814,277	5,028,867	48,125,218	4,705,683	0.7%	-6.4%
Debits	8,788,995	359,159	8,655,750	358,773	9,652,925	250,235	11.5%	-30.3%
Net Credits	39,183,856	4,685,771	39,158,527	4,670,094	38,472,293	4,455,448	-1.8%	-4.6%

FAMILIES ('000)

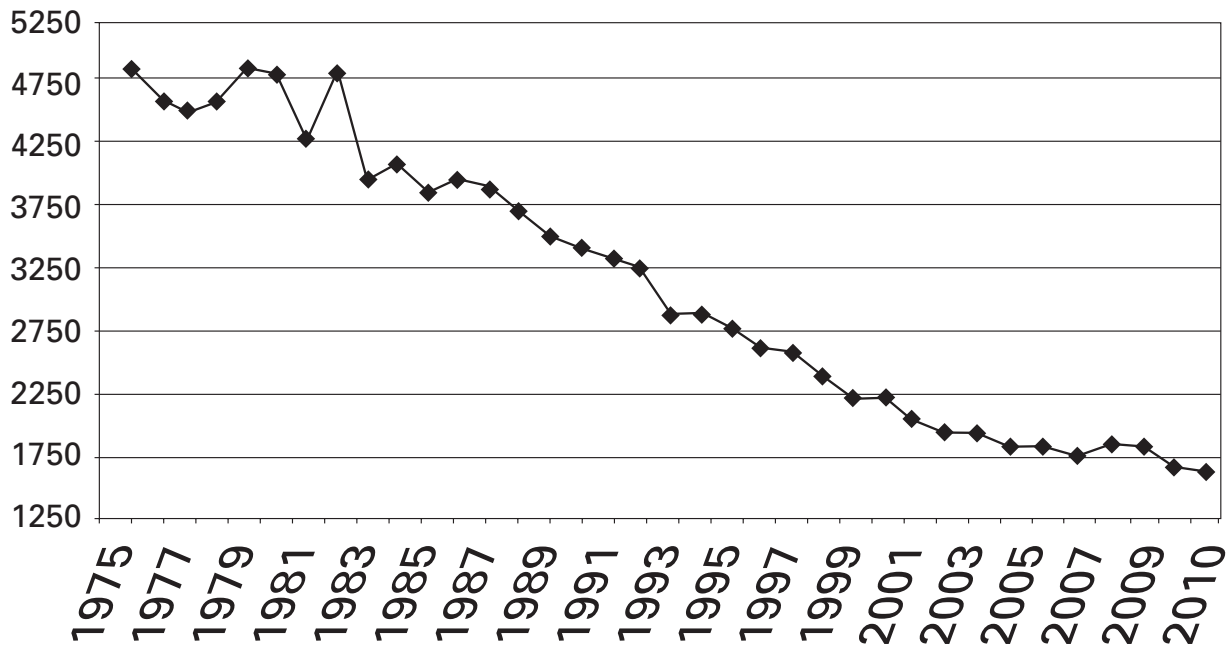




COMMUNICANTS ('000)



BAPTISMS



APPENDIX 1**TYRONE MEMORIAL REVIEW PANEL****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report summarises the outcome of the consultations initiated at the 2010 General Assembly on the proposals for the payment of Ministers set out in the report of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel (see pages 296-302 of Annual Reports, Belfast 2010.) The consultations show a substantial measure of support across Congregations and Presbyteries for the proposed reduction in stipend differentials between Ministers, including the introduction of a Local Allowance and new arrangements for the payment of Incremental Allowances.

2. However, it is clear that the implementation of the proposed measures has raised serious concerns – not least in regard to the proposed change in the method of assessment from “stipend” to “assessable income”. The Panel is clear that it would be unfair and inequitable to continue to use stipends as the basis of assessment, since this would favour larger Congregations at the expense of smaller ones. (It would also be necessary to introduce some transitional arrangement to protect any Congregation whose assessments would substantially increase under the adoption of an “assessable income” methodology.) This issue falls to be considered by the General Board’s Panel on “Pensions and Assessments”, on which a separate report has been prepared for the 2011 General Assembly.

3. The Panel is therefore seeking the agreement of the General Assembly to its proposals for achieving, over time, a reduction in stipend differentials, subject to the Assembly’s agreement to the recommendations in the report of the General Board’s Panel on “Pensions and Assessments”.

4. The report also endorses the existing arrangements for the payment of Ministerial expenses, but recommends that they are more vigorously overseen by Presbyteries, as set out in Par 237 of The Code.

BACKGROUND

5. At the General Assembly in June 2010, it was agreed that “the General Assembly send out the proposals set out in the paper on the Review of the Tyrone Memorial to Presbyteries and Congregations for discussion and comment, with report to the Board Convener by 31 December, 2010, and ask the Board to bring a report with appropriate Code changes to the 2011 General Assembly.” A Consultation Document was issued in September 2010, containing a questionnaire covering the proposals in the report to the General Assembly. In addition, the Panel organised five Consultation Meetings in Londonderry, Banbridge, Dublin, Belfast and Cookstown, to aid the process of discussion.

6. At the Consultation Meetings, a request was made for a summary of the responses to the questionnaire to be issued to Presbyteries and Congregations in advance of the General Assembly. In fulfilment of that request, a summary that draws largely on this report has been circulated widely to recipients of the questionnaire.

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

7. The Appendix to this report contains a summary of the 207 responses received up to 3 February, 2011; the closing date for responses was 31 December 2010. The Appendix does not summarise the wide range of comments received to those supplementary questions that invited a narrative answer. As far as possible, those comments have been taken into account in the following analysis, which follows the order in the consultation response form. (The statistics included below have been rounded to the nearest full percentage point.)

Aims and Objectives

8. 89% of respondents agreed that the Church “should seek to reduce the inequality in stipends between Ministers”. 6% disagreed and 4% was undecided. One Presbytery disputed the assertion in the consultation document that “the chief aim of the Tyrone Memorial was ... to reduce the inequality in stipends between Ministers”. It is true that this aim was never expressly stated in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial in 2000. However, there is no doubt that the intention of the report’s recommendations (accepted by the General Assembly) was to reduce the differential between Ministers by the application of a basic rate percentage increase to stipends below £20,999, with a sliding scale and lower rate of increase payable to Ministers on stipends above this figure.

9. The second question in this section sought views on a possible reduction in the disparity between the highest and lowest stipend to “not more than 50% of the basic Ministerial minimum”. 77% of respondents agreed, with 20% opposed and 3% undecided. 13 respondents suggested, on average, that the differential should be 72%, rather than 50%. A similar number of respondents (78%) agreed that a Minister’s stipend should “be based primarily on years of service, with in some cases an additional local allowance”. 17% were opposed and 4% undecided. A few respondents suggested that the pay of Ministers should instead be based on performance.

Basic Ministerial Minimum

10. This section sought responses on whether the current Ministerial Minimum of £22,416 was set at an appropriate level. 78% of respondents agreed that it was set at an appropriate level, while 20% disagreed. 25% of respondents favoured an increase in the minimum, with 70% against. Those that supported an increase suggested, on average, that the Minimum should be set at £25,417. Several argued that increasing the Minimum was a more appropriate way to reduce differentials than setting a maximum figure, notwithstanding the current financial climate. Indeed, it was suggested that with no increase to the Minimum, ministry could become a second career option.

11. The Panel is sympathetic to the argument that Ministers are underpaid compared to their counterparts in other professions. While starting salaries may be comparable to those paid in other professions, Ministerial pay quickly falls behind as their counterparts receive annual increments and promotions. Nonetheless, the Panel concluded that it could not argue for an increase in the Minimum at the present time given affordability issues. Such an

increase would almost certainly require an acceleration in the pace of amalgamations, combined with higher CMF assessments. The Panel notes that these are issues explored in the recent paper from the Union Commission on “Ministry, Finance and Mission” and encourages their further consideration in that forum.

12. At one of the Consultation Meetings, it was suggested that the discussion should be informed by comparative figures for remuneration paid in other denominations. This information had been collected by the Panel at an earlier stage in its deliberations. It is difficult to make exact comparisons, given variations in remuneration packages, including pension provision, expenses and family grants. However, the Panel believes that at lower levels, the remuneration paid in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is either comparable to or in excess of, that paid to Ministers in other denominations. At higher levels, it is generally above that paid elsewhere. The Church of Scotland, for example, operates a scale with the minimum (£22,239 in 2008) rising to a maximum some 33% higher, over a period of 10 years.

13. Finally, in this section, an argument was made that the remuneration of Ministers employed in Church House or Union College should be reviewed in the light of decisions on the review of the Tyrone Memorial. This matter does not fall within the remit of the Panel, but the Panel supports the need to consider the position of Ministers in Church House and Union College in the light of decisions on this report and has referred the matter to the Personnel Committee of the Board of Finance and Personnel.

Incremental Allowance

14. This section sought views on the payment of an Incremental Allowance based on years of service up to 20 years, rather than the present 30 years. The increment would be paid every five years at the rate of 5% of stipend, instead of the present 2.5%. 88% of respondents supported the payment of an Incremental Allowance based on years of service, with 10% opposed. 59% supported a five year period for the payment of increments, with 37% opposed. 60% favoured the payment of increments over a 20 year period, with 36% opposed. The latter group favoured, on average, extending the incremental period from 20 years to 27.5 years. Lastly, 64% of respondents accepted that the increase in the level of Incremental Allowance (from 2.5% to 5.0%), partially offset by a reduction from 30 years to 20 years, would result in an increase in costs. 33% questioned whether an increase in the cost of the Allowance was affordable and rejected the proposal, while others suggested that progression should be dependent on some measure of performance or output, without defining precisely what the measure might be.

Local Allowance

15. The responses showed broad support for a Local Allowance – 78% in favour and 18% against. There was an almost identical level of support for the principle that a Local Allowance should be the only way a Congregation could pay their Minister more than the appropriate point on the scale. (The proposed scheme was costed on the basis that any Local Allowance should be funded by

the Congregation and not paid by way of augmentation.) The responses of the 18% that opposed this principle reflected, at least in part, a concern over local autonomy and a belief that it represented a transfer of authority over stipends to Church House, although the Union Commission already exercises a role in regard to setting stipends in respect of granting “leave to call”. Nonetheless, the proposals were perceived by this group to represent a centralisation of authority at variance with congregational responsibility.

16. In regard to the factors to be taken into account in setting the level of the Local Allowance, some 82% of respondents supported the inclusion of the size of the Congregation, any specific Ministerial responsibilities, local additional responsibilities and the general needs and resources of the Congregation. A number of respondents suggested additional factors, while others noted the challenge the proposals would present to the Union Commission in setting the level of stipend when granting “leave to call”. However, the Commission’s present process for setting stipend levels is arguably equally challenging. The local Congregation makes its case to the Commission, whose decision is far from formulaic.

17. Finally, 62% of respondents agreed that the maximum Local Allowance should be set at 30% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum. 30% of respondents disagreed with the level: the average increase suggested by this group came to 22%, although there was a wide range. The Panel believes that the size of the Local Allowance is central to its proposals. It reflects a belief that Ministers undertake broadly the same duties, wherever they are called to serve: the Allowance is designed to reflect appropriately the variation in the scale of responsibilities at local level.

The Bonus

18. Responses to questions on the payment of the Bonus produced a mixed response. 52% of respondents favoured continuing to pay the Bonus in accordance with the provisions of the Code. 37% disagreed. Only 30% of respondents favoured fixing the Bonus at the present level and not applying any further increases – a view rejected by 57% of respondents. There was a slight majority in favour of taking steps over time to reduce the Bonus to the amount required under the Regium Donum (approximately £275) – 48% to 41%.

19. A number of respondents expressed unease over the term “Bonus”, but were also unhappy with the proposed alternative “Discretionary Grant”. Following discussion in the Panel, it was agreed to adopt the term “CMF Grant”.

Existing Leave to Call Arrangements

20. A substantial majority of respondents (85%) supported the introduction of the “proposals to all new leave to call arrangements and the protection of the present leave to call arrangements”. That figure dropped to 66% in respect of the proposal that protected stipends should only receive an annual increase of 50% of the increase applied to the Basic Ministerial Minimum. 28% opposed the figure of 50% and on average suggested 26%. Again, there was a wide spread around the 50% figure. The Panel welcomed the

comment from a number of respondents that the call of God was the paramount consideration.

Assessments

21. This section concerned the proposal to move from assessments based on “stipend” to “assessable income”, with Congregations contributing according to their means. While 73% of respondents supported this proposal with 21% against, it was clear from comments that a number of Congregations have serious concerns about the implementation of this proposal and sought clarification of the definition of “assessable income”. The Panel still considers it necessary to change the method of assessments if the proposals in regard to stipends are accepted by the General Assembly. The proposals should have the effect over time of reducing the overall stipend bill, with a consequent saving to wealthier Congregations whose Ministers are currently above the Minimum. To maintain an assessment methodology based on stipends would have the effect of increasing assessments to smaller Congregations least able to afford an increase. Some respondents suggested that a “super” assessment should be introduced on stipends exceeding that recommended to discourage what were described as “maverick payments”.

22. At the same time larger Congregations already have substantial commitments, including staff, and cannot be expected to meet a greatly increased assessment in the short term – without the risk in some cases of making staff redundant. The Panel therefore believes that there needs to be some transitional arrangement to allow those adversely affected to plan for an increased assessment in the future and make any necessary adjustment to their local mission plans. The transitional arrangement should take into account the combination of increased assessments on such Congregations while still paying their existing Minister on his or her protected stipend. It would also be important to smooth out annual variations in the level of “assessable income” for assessment purposes. It is for these reasons that the Panel seeks the endorsement of the General Assembly to its proposals, subject to the Assembly’s agreement to the proposals in the report from the General Board’s Panel on “Pensions and Assessments”.

Overall View of the Proposals

23. The final question invited respondents to categorise their support or otherwise for the proposals. 71% of respondents expressed themselves either in “broad support” (26%) or in “support with reservations or suggested changes” (45%). 10% accepted that “change is necessary but do not support the proposals”, with 5% arguing for “no change”. No alternative schemes were suggested. 15% did not answer the question.

EXPENSES

24. The General Assembly also asked the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel to review the system for paying Ministerial expenses. The present system was devised by the Board of Finance and Personnel in consultation with the Union Commission. The basis for the present method, which enjoys the

endorsement of HMRC, is that Ministers are reimbursed for actual expenses based on certain assumptions about travel expenses, manse expenses etc. A single allowance is intended to cover all expenses incurred by the Minister. Ministers and Treasurers are regularly advised of the detailed procedures, which, if followed, satisfy the requirement to make an annual return of Ministerial expenses to HMRC.

25. The Panel reviewed the existing system and concluded that it remained fit for purpose. Any alternative could place potentially significant additional responsibilities on Treasurers and Ministers and add to the existing paperwork. The Panel believes that the problems lie not in the system itself but in the failure of some Congregations to pay adequate expenses or the practice in some Congregations of using expenses to add to the remuneration of Ministers. Income tax is levied on any amount paid over and above what is declared to be a legitimate expense by HMRC. However, if this additional amount becomes excessive it creates anomalies in the Church's own financial system. For example, it is unfair that Congregations, which draw on augmentation from the centre to fund their ministry, can by this method make an additional payment to their Minister over and above the agreed appropriate Ministerial minimum.

26. The Panel wishes to remind Presbyteries of their responsibilities in relation to expenses as set out in Par 237 of The Code. To that end, the Board of Finance and Personnel and the Union Commission intend to issue a joint communication to Presbyteries setting out their responsibilities and to organise a training event for Presbytery Clerks and Presbytery Finance Conveners.

CONCLUSIONS

27. The Tyrone Memorial Panel invites the General Assembly to:
- (a) receive its Report; accept the Panel's proposals for achieving a reduction in stipend differentials between Ministers, including the introduction of a Local Allowance and new arrangements for the payment of Incremental Allowances, subject to the agreement of the General Assembly to the proposals in the report of the General Board's Panel on "Pensions and Assessments";
 - (b) agree that Presbyteries should more vigorously exercise their responsibilities in regard to ministerial expenses, in accordance with the terms of Par 237 of the Code

TYRONE MEMORIAL REVIEW

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORMS

	YES No.	NO No.	N/A No.	TOTAL No.	YES %	NO %	N/A %
1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES							
1.1 Do you support the chief aim of the Tyrone Memorial which was that the Church should seek to reduce the inequality in stipends between Ministers?	185	13	9	207	89.37	6.28	4.35
1.2 One of the objectives in the Review Panel's Report is to reduce the disparity between the highest and lowest stipend to not more than 50% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum (see 2 below). Do you support this objective?	159	41	7	207	76.81	19.81	3.38
If you do not support the 50% is there another % that you believe the Panel should be trying to achieve (if so please specify)? (Average percentage and number of Congregations who responded indicated)	71.77	13					
If you do not support the 50% is there another % that you believe the Panel should be trying to achieve (if so please specify)? (Average percentage and number of Congregations who responded indicated)							
1.3 One of the fundamental changes arising from the proposals is that a Minister's stipend would be based primarily on years of service, with in some cases an additional local allowance. Do you support, in principle, the introduction of such a method of remunerating Ministers?	162	36	9	207	78.26	17.39	4.35

	YES No.	NO No.	N/A No.	TOTAL No.	YES %	NO %	N/A %
2. THE BASIC MINISTERIAL MINIMUM							
2.1 The Basic Ministerial Minimum for 2010 is currently £22,416. Do you consider that this is at an appropriate level? (Please note that Ministers in Congregations also receive a supplement from the Central Ministry Fund which is currently £1,518 – see Section 5 below))	161	41	5	207	77.78	19.81	2.41
2.2 Would you support an increase in the Ministerial Minimum recognising that this will result in an increase in the assessment for the Central Ministry Fund and may impact on the financial viability of some Congregations	52	144	11	207	25.12	69.57	5.31
2.3 If you support increasing the Basic Ministerial Minimum, have you a view on the level at which it should be set? (If so please indicate amount) (Average and No. of Congregations indicated)	35	25,417					
3. INCREMENTAL ALLOWANCE							
3.1 Do you support an increase in the incremental allowance recognising that this will result in an increase in the assessment on all Congregations for the Central Ministry Fund?	133	68	6	207	64.25	32.85	2.90
3.2 Do you support an incremental allowance based on years of service?	182	20	5	207	87.93	9.6	2.42
3.3 Do you support increments every 5 years of 5% (currently 2.5%)?	122	77	8	207	58.94	37.20	3.86
3.4 Do you support increments over a 20 year period?	125	75	7	207	60.39	36.23	3.38
If Not, What period do you suggest? (please specify) (AVERAGE INDICATED)	2.75						

	YES No.	NO No.	N/A No.	TOTAL No.	YES %	NO %	N/A %
4. THE LOCAL ALLOWANCE							
4.1 Do you support the introduction of a Local Allowance as part of the overall remuneration paid to Ministers?	161	37	9	207	77.78	17.87	4.35
4.2 Do you support, in principle, the proposal that the only way a Congregation could pay their Minister more than the appropriate point on the scale is through a Local allowance?	160	37	10	207	77.29	17.87	4.84
4.3 Do you agree that the factors to be taken into account should include the size of the Congregation, the staffing resources of the Congregation, any specific Ministerial responsibilities, local additional responsibilities, general needs and resources of the Congregation?	169	21	17	207	81.64	10.14	8.22
4.4 Are there any additional factors that should be taken into account or any that should not be taken into account? If so please detail below	57	92	58	207	27.54	44.44	28.02
4.5 Do you agree that the maximum local allowance should be 30% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum? (i.e. based on a Basic Ministerial Minimum of £22,416 it would be £6,725)	128	62	17	207	61.84	29.95	8.21
4.6 If not what percentage or amount do you suggest? (please specify) (AVERAGE INDICATED)		22%					
5. THE BONUS							
5.1 Do you believe that the Board should							
(i) Continue to pay the Bonus in accordance with the provision of the Code	107	77	23	207	51.69	37.20	11.11
(ii) Fix the amount of the bonus at the present level and not apply any further increases	62	117	28	207	29.95	56.52	13.53
(iii) Take steps over time to reduce the bonus to the amount which is required to be paid under the Regium Donum (i.e. approx £275)	99	84	24	207	47.83	40.58	11.59

	YES No.	NO No.	N/A No.	TOTAL No.	YES %	NO %	N/A %
7. EXISTING LEAVE TO CALL ARRANGEMENTS							
7.1 Do you support the proposals being introduced to all new leave to call arrangements and the protection of present leave to call arrangements?	175	26	6	207	84.54	12.56	2.90
7.3 Do you support the proposal that protected stipends should only receive an annual increase of 50% of the increase applied to the Basic Ministerial Minimum? If not, what increase should be applied? (please specify)? (AVERAGE INDICATED)	136	57 26%	14	207	65.70	27.54	6.76
8. ASSESSMENTS							
8.1 Do you support, in principle, the move from assessments being based on stipend to assessable income so that Congregations contribute according to their means?	151	44	12	207	72.95	21.26	5.79
9. OVERALL VIEW OF THE PROPOSALS							
9.1 Subject to your detailed responses to the questions above how would you categorise your support or otherwise for the proposals (delete as appropriate)							
- In broad support of the proposals	54						
- In support but with reservations or suggested changes	93						
- Accept that change is necessary but do not support the proposals	20						
- Prefer no change to present arrangements	10						
Did not answer question	<u>30</u>						
	<u>207</u>						

APPENDIX 2**COPY OF REPORT SUBMITTED TO 2010 GENERAL ASSEMBLY****TYRONE MEMORIAL REVIEW PANEL PROPOSALS****1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In accordance with a resolution of the General Assembly in June 2009 this report outlines new proposals for the financial support of Ministers. In bringing forward these proposals the Panel wishes to reaffirm the original aims of the Tyrone Memorial and address some of the issues arising out of its implementation and operation. It is proposed that a new Stipend Scale be introduced, with five-yearly service increments over a 20-year period. In addition, and depending on circumstances, a local allowance may be payable. Payment outside these arrangements would not be permitted. Present call arrangements would continue to be honoured and, if approved by the General Assembly, these proposals would only be implemented in respect of all future leave to call arrangements.

These proposals also include arrangements to change the basis of Congregational assessments from stipend to income.

2. BACKGROUND

At the General Assembly in June 2008, it was agreed that the Board of Finance and Personnel should “prepare detailed proposals for an alternative basis for the provision of financial support for Ministers and make a further report to the General Assembly 2010”.

The Board delegated this work to the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel, which includes representatives from the Board, Union Commission, the Board of Mission in Ireland and other interested parties.

The membership of the Panel is:

John Hunter (Board Convener), Revs Drew Abernethy, David Porter, Leslie Casement, Dr Uel Matthews, Dr Michael Barry, Dr Donald Watts (General Secretary), Messrs James Livingstone, Douglas Crowe, Douglas Cowan and Clive Knox (Financial Secretary).

3. AIMS/OBJECTIVES

In considering an alternative basis for the financial support of Ministers the Panel reaffirms the main aims of the Tyrone Memorial and in particular:

- to reduce the inequality in Stipends / disparity between Ministers
- to enable Bible teaching on giving to be carried out free from the accusation of self interest on the part of Ministers
- to enable Congregations to retain income for local mission

Based on experience of the Tyrone Memorial and in line with its original aims the Panel’s objective is to:

- (i) eradicate as many as possible of the present anomalies (e.g. Congregations exceeding recommended increases, the anticipated timescales required to reduce the gap between the highest and lowest

stipends, varying rates of annual increase under the Tyrone Memorial etc.)

- (ii) reduce the disparity between the highest and lowest stipends to not more than 50% and to take account, where terms permit, of additional sources of income such as bequests, land lettings and manse rents. *(The Panel notes that at one time the highest stipend paid was more than 2.6 times the minimum. At present apart from one instance no Minister has a stipend in excess of twice the minimum.)*
- (iii) address the anomaly which has arisen under the operation of the Tyrone Memorial arrangements where some stronger Congregations are contributing proportionately less by way of assessment than previously was the case.

While it is not within the remit of the Panel to increase the Ministerial Minimum the Panel did consider this matter but concluded that the additional cost to central funds would result in a considerable increase in the rate of the assessment for the Central Ministry and other assessment funds.

The Panel recognises that while some allowance needs to be made for additional responsibilities and pressures it believes the Church ought to recognise every call as a call from God and has a responsibility to provide adequately for the needs of every Minister no matter where the call takes him or her. The Panel does not believe that financial reward should be a contributory factor in a call.

4. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The Panel proposes that a Minister's remuneration is made up of 4 elements

- (i) A Basic Ministerial Minimum
- (ii) An Incremental Allowance reflecting years of service
- (iii) A Local Allowance (where appropriate) reflecting local congregational circumstances
- (iv) A Discretionary Grant which includes the amount due from the Regium Donum (this is an amount that used to be paid by the Crown to Ministers until a lump sum payment was made by the Crown to the Church to take over the payment of this. The amount received is invested in the Commutation Fund. The annual income from this Fund is paid through the Sustentation Fund to the Central Ministry Fund which pays the "bonus" to Ministers under the provisions of The Code Par 315.)

The total of (i) and (ii) above is referred to as the "Appropriate Ministerial Minimum" i.e. the minimum amount of remuneration a Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should receive based on their years of ministry.

Throughout this paper, references to "Stipend" mean the amount a Congregation contributes or pays towards a Minister's remuneration and not the total amount paid to a Minister.

(i) The Basic Ministerial Minimum

The Basic Ministerial Minimum is the minimum amount of remuneration a Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should receive.

Current:

The Basic Ministerial Minimum for 2010 is £22,416. The Panel compared the minimum with that in other denominations and found that the basic Ministerial minimum compares favourably, taking into account the additional bonus of £1,518 Ministers received from the Central Ministry Fund. However, some other denominations have better incremental allowances for those with longer service. The Panel therefore decided that rather than increasing the basic Ministerial minimum it ought to consider improving the incremental allowance.

Proposed:

No change is proposed. The Basic Ministerial Minimum should continue to be reviewed annually by the Board of Finance and Personnel under the provision of The Code, Par 314 in light of relevant factors and where appropriate a discretionary increase applied.

(ii) An Incremental Allowance**Current:**

At present Ministers are entitled to an increment of 2.5% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum after each period of 5 years up to a maximum of 15%, i.e. after 30 years service). The Panel considered a number of improvements to the incremental allowance but the costs of implementing some of these improvements were considered to be more than the Church could pay at this time.

Proposed:

It is proposed that the 5 yearly increments are increased from 2.5% to 5% but only up to 20 years service i.e. maximum of 20% after 20 years.

The proposed STERLING scale (using 2010 as a base year) is as follows

Year	STIPEND			
	Current (2.5%) £	Proposed (5.0%) £	Increase (2.5%) £	%
Increment	561	1,121	560	
1 to 5	22,416	22,416	Nil	
6 to 10	22,977	23,537	560	2.44%
11 to 15	23,538	24,658	1,120	4.76%
16 to 20	24,099	25,779	1,680	6.97%
21 to 25	24,660	26,900	2,240	9.08%
26 to 30	25,221	26,900	1,679	6.66%
31 +	25,782	26,900	1,118	4.33%

The proposed EURO scale (using 2010 as a base year) is as follows

Year	STIPEND			
	Current (2.5%) €	Proposed (5.0%) €	Increase (2.5%) €	%
Increment	882	1,762	880	
1 to 5	35,241	35,241	Nil	
6 to 10	36,123	37,003	880	2.44%
11 to 15	37,005	38,765	1,760	4.76%
16 to 20	37,887	40,527	2,640	6.97%
21 to 25	38,769	42,289	3,520	9.08%
26 to 30	39,651	42,289	2,630	6.66%
31 +	40,533	42,289	1,748	4.33%

The Panel notes that the Board of Finance and Personnel has undertaken a review of the differential between the Sterling and Euro scales. In the light of current cost of living and other relevant factors the Board has concluded that no changes are required to the differential at this stage, but will keep the matter under review.

The Panel proposes the following:

- (a) A Minister should be remunerated on the appropriate point on the scale and Congregations should not make any additional payment other than the local allowances if authorised by Union Commission.
- (b) An annual discretionary increase should be applied to the scales as approved by the Board of Finance and Personnel based on cost of living increases and other relevant factors.
- (c) The new scales should apply to all calls issued after 1 January 2012 following General Assembly approval of the Scheme and, from the same date, to all existing arrangements where a Minister is on the Basic Ministerial Minimum or Appropriate Minimum.
- (d) In the case of augmented Congregations, the Union Commission will continue to set the Stipend when leave to call is being granted. The Stipend paid by the Congregation should be increased annually in line with the annual discretionary increases in (b) above.

(iii) The Local Allowance

In addition to the Basic Ministerial/Appropriate Minimum, Ministers may be entitled to a local allowance as agreed by the Union Commission. The maximum allowance is 30% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum, which for 2010 would be £6,725 (30% x £22,416). In deciding the amount of the local allowance Union Commission will take into account a number of factors including, but not limited to

- the size of the Congregation in terms of families, membership etc
- the staffing resource of the Congregation
- specific Ministerial responsibilities

- any local congregational issues which may be appropriate and require additional responsibilities and experience (including missional issues)
- the general needs and resources of the Congregation

A Congregation's ability to pay will not be a determining factor in setting the level of the local allowance.

Congregations will normally be expected to pay the full amount of the local allowance as determined by the Union Commission.

(iv) The Bonus (including the Regium Donum) (to be renamed The Discretionary Grant)

Present:

Under the provisions of The Code Par 315(2) every "qualified" Minister receives a bonus. The amount of the bonus is calculated in accordance with the provision of Par 315(2) or is fixed by the Board of Finance and Personnel. For 2010 the Board of Finance and Personnel has fixed the bonus at £1,518

The Bonus is paid to all active Ministers in Congregations and Ministers who have retired from a Congregation. It is paid to active Ministers, as a monthly amount of £30 i.e. £360 for the year plus an annual bonus paid in December of £1,158. Retired Ministers receive the total bonus on a monthly basis. The following table summarises the position and approximate annual costs based on 360 active and 205 retired Ministers.

RETIRED MINISTERS		ACTIVE MINISTERS		ALL MINISTERS
When Paid	Monthly	Monthly	Annually	Total
Amount per annum	£1,518 (£126.50/month)	£360 (£30/month)	£1,158	£1,518
Active Ministers (360)	-	£129,600	£416,880	£546,480
Retired Ministers (205)	£311,190	-	-	£311,190
TOTAL BONUS	£311,190	£129,600	£416,880	£857,670

In the first place the bonus is paid out of income received from the Sustentation Fund (this includes the income from the Commutation Fund, the "Regium Donum"). In keeping with the principles of the Sustentation Fund, and based on present levels of income, each Minister should receive approx £550 per annum (assuming 565 eligible Ministers). The remainder of the bonus is paid for out of the Central Ministry Fund and it is this part which is discretionary.

Proposed:

It is proposed that the term Bonus is no longer used and a “Discretionary Grant” of an amount to be determined annually by the Board of Finance and Personnel, and set initially at £1,500, is paid to “qualified” Ministers. This is to be paid to active Ministers in December each year and monthly to retired Ministers. This Discretionary Grant is to include the amount due for the Regium Donum.

5. OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

Ministers will be entitled to receive in addition to the Basic Ministerial/Appropriate Minimum and Local Allowance any bequest or endowment income where the terms specify that it is “**for the benefit of the Minister**”. Bequest or Endowment income “**for stipend**” is a source of funds contributing to the cost of stipend and therefore should be applied for that purpose by the Congregation and not paid in addition to stipend.

Existing arrangements should continue to apply until a vacancy arises.

6. MINISTERIAL EXPENSES

The initial level of Ministerial Expenses is agreed when leave to call is granted. Congregations are entitled to review the level of the expenses allowance to cover actual expenses incurred but expenses should not be used as a means of increasing the level of Ministerial income.

The Panel support expenses being paid to Ministers based on a reimbursement of actual expenses incurred and recommend that the Board of Finance and Personnel undertake a review of the present system in conjunction with the Union Commission. The review should take account of the impact any change in arrangements would have on a Minister’s current level of remuneration.

7. EXISTING LEAVE TO CALL ARRANGEMENTS

It is proposed that where the level of remuneration from the Congregation in an existing leave to call arrangement exceeds the proposed stipend scales the original leave to call arrangement should continue to apply until the Congregation becomes vacant. In other words where a Minister’s stipend at the date of implementation is higher than the proposed scale their stipend will be “protected” and not reduced. However, in such circumstances the annual increases should be limited to 50% of the normal discretionary increase.

Where a Ministers existing level of remuneration is below the proposed scale, the new scale should be applied with effect from the introduction of the scheme. It is expected that non-augmented Congregations will meet in full the additional costs, but where this creates genuine financial difficulties for a Congregation, they may apply to Union Commission for a review.

8. CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

The Panel has also considered whether the assessments, which Congregations have to pay in addition to stipend, should continue to be based on the stipend paid to Ministers in the preceding year. The Pensions and

Assessment Panel of the General Board which was initially set up to review pensions but has had its remit extended to look at the level of assessments has also been considering this matter. It appears both panels are minded to recommend a change in the way assessments are levied to one based on Income rather than Stipend. The Panels view is that this will lead to a fairer distribution of the burden of assessments.

The change from Stipend to Income as a rule will mean that the level of assessment will better reflect a Congregation's ability to contribute. The rates of assessment for the various Assessment Funds will continue to reflect the ongoing expenditure requirements of those funds.

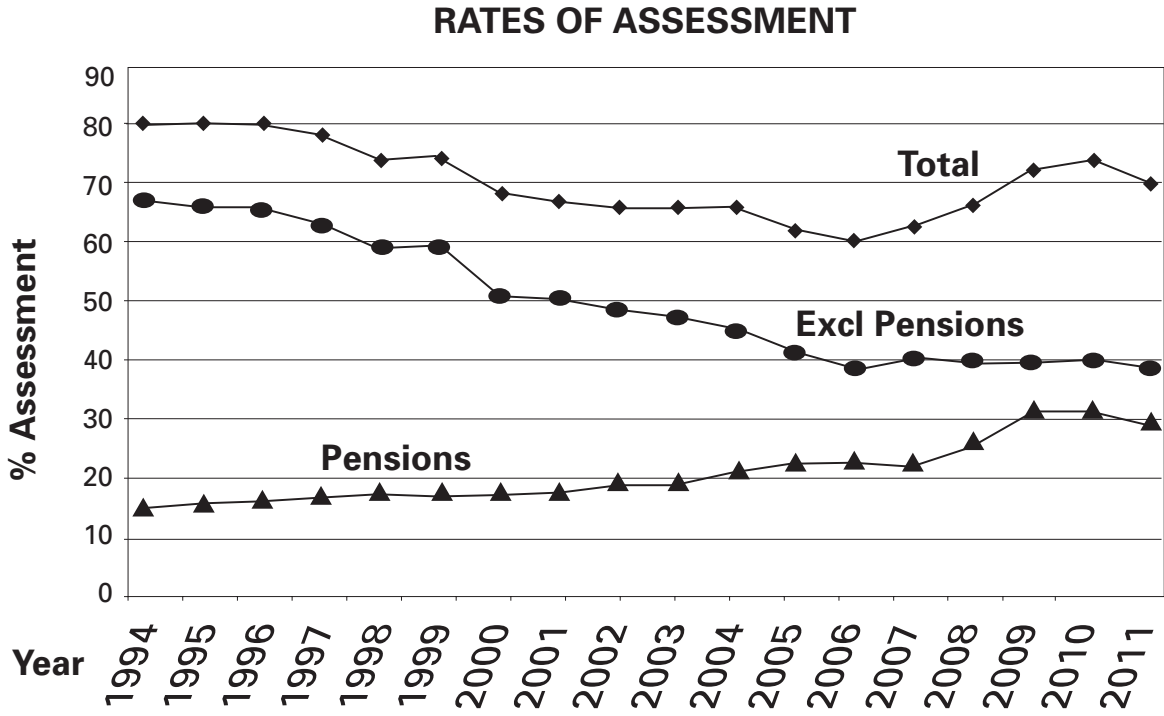
9. COST IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

In estimating the cost implications of the proposals it has been assumed that if a Congregation is currently augmented it will continue to be augmented and no increase in stipend will be requested from the Congregation. If the proposed scales were to be applied in 2010:

- (i) the overall cost of stipends to the Church would reduce from approx. £9.1m to £7.9m. There would, however, not be a saving of the difference as these proposals include provisions to protect the stipend of Ministers in excess of the proposed scales.
- (ii) it is estimated that the additional annual cost of augmentation to the Central Ministry Fund would be £180k. For those Congregations not augmented whose Ministers receive less than the proposed scales there would be an additional cost of £38k.
- (iii) There are currently 69 Ministers in Northern Ireland and 32 in Republic of Ireland receiving augmentation (via augmented or incremental grants).

APPENDIX 3

ASSESSMENTS



APPENDIX 4**RULES OF THE RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND****BRIEF HISTORY OF RULES OF RETIRED MINISTERS FUND**

The Retired Ministers' House Fund ("the Fund") was established in 1961. At the General Assembly in 1964 Interim Rules were approved (see Minutes, 1964, Pages 55 and 56). The Fund operated on those Interim Rules until 1967 when the General Assembly adopted Rules (see Assembly Reports Pages 203 to 206 and Minutes Page 37). At the General Assembly in 1970 Revised Rules were approved (see Annual Reports Pages 263-25 and Minutes Page 49). In 1996, in consultation with the Church's legal advisers, some amendments to the Rules were made (see Assembly Reports Page 193, Minutes Page 72). The General Assembly approved these updated Rules on [date] June 2011 [IF AGREED].

1. The Object of the Fund

The object of the Fund is to provide assistance to approved Borrowers seeking to make provision for a home for their retirement.

2. Administration

2.1 The Fund shall be administered by a Committee ("the Committee") appointed by the Board of Finance and Personnel ("the Supervising Board").

The Committee may appoint a Retired Ministers' House Fund Panel ("the Panel") to administer the Fund in accordance with these Rules. The Panel membership should include the Board and Committee Conveners, Financial Secretary and an appointed officer with responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Fund along with a person with an appropriate level of experience of the property sector.

2.2 The Committee shall prepare annual accounts and present these to the General Assembly to be examined by the General Assembly's Auditors.

3. Eligibility for Assistance

3.1 Ministers or servants of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (which may include spouses) of limited financial means ("the Borrower") who are retired or contemplating retirement may apply to the Fund for assistance.

3.2 The Committee is permitted to prioritise the provision of assistance to those who:

- 3.2.1 are over 60 years of age;
- 3.2.2 intend to repay the loan in less than 5 years;
- 3.2.3 require less than the maximum loan;
- 3.2.4 are willing to make regular repayments of the loan; or
- 3.2.5 have more limited financial resources.

3.2 For the avoidance of doubt, these Rules do not create a right to assistance. Furthermore, an application may be refused if the Fund does not have

sufficient financial or other resources available at the time of application or for any other reason at the absolute discretion of the Committee.

4. Forms of Assistance

The Fund is permitted to provide assistance on the following terms:

4.1 Loans

- 4.1.1 Loans may be provided:
 - 4.1.1.1 to assist with the purchase of properties for retirement;
 - 4.1.1.2 in exceptional circumstances for the improvement of properties;
 - 4.1.1.3 or to assist with the purchase of properties prior to personal funding becoming available as short-term bridging loans.
- 4.1.2 The maximum amount of a loan shall be determined by the Committee and approved by the Supervising Board.
- 4.1.3 The term of a loan shall not exceed 15 years and shall be repaid no later than 5 years after retirement.
- 4.1.4 Interest on a loan is to be calculated on a daily basis at a rate of 50% of the sum of The Bank of England Base Rate plus 2%.
- 4.1.5 Interest repayments on all loans approved after the adoption of these Amended Rules are to be deducted each month from the Borrower's remuneration or pension paid by the Financial Secretary's Office, Church House.
- 4.1.6 Failure to make payments for 3 months in breach of agreed interest repayment arrangements in respect of loans approved after the adoption of these Amended Rules may require the loan to be repaid in full.
- 4.1.7 A letter of offer setting out the terms of the Fund's offer must be accepted by the Borrower, a mortgage deed must be signed by the Borrower and title must be reviewed and found to be satisfactory to the Fund's legal advisers before any monies are released. The legal cost of preparation of the letter of offer and mortgage deed and review of title is to be borne by the Fund. The Borrower shall seek his or her own legal advice.
- 4.1.8 As long as any sum secured by a mortgage is outstanding, whether principal or interest, the documents relating to such mortgage shall be held by the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland ("the Trustees"). A first ranking mortgage against the property should be taken by the Fund in the name of the Trustees. A second ranking mortgage may be taken if there is evidence according to a valuation of the property that there is sufficient equity to discharge all sums due to the Fund.
- 4.1.9 The Borrower shall be responsible for arranging appropriate Building Insurance and shall provide satisfactory evidence of cover prior to completing the mortgage deed. The Borrower must provide evidence of the annual renewal of building insurance to the satisfaction of the Committee.

4.2 Equity Sharing/Joint Ownership arrangements

- 4.2.1 Equity Sharing/Joint Ownership arrangements may be entered into by the Fund up to a maximum amount determined by the Committee and approved by the Supervising Board.
- 4.2.2 The borrower must provide a minimum of 10% of the value of the property towards the purchase price.
- 4.2.3 Interest on the amount provided by the Fund will be charged at the rate for Loans (see 4.1.4 above).
- 4.2.4 The Borrower must obtain the approval of the appointed officer in relation to the price offered on any property and completion will be subject to a satisfactory survey and title review.
- 4.2.5 A letter of offer shall be prepared setting out the principal terms on which the monies will be advanced to the Borrower. A Trust Deed shall be prepared in respect of the Fund's interest in the property. The legal cost of preparation of the Trust Deed shall be borne by the Fund. The Borrower shall seek his or her own legal advice.
- 4.2.6 All rates, costs of regular maintenance, utility bills and all other routine outgoings relating to the property shall be borne by the Borrower. The Fund shall bear a proportion of any repairs to the structure of the property or repairs or replacement of fixed plant and equipment, based on the equity sharing interests.
- 4.2.7 The Borrower is not permitted to make any alterations to the property without the written permission of the Committee. The cost of such alterations shall be borne in proportion to the Fund and the Borrower's interest in the property. Where the Borrower proceeds with alterations without written permission, the Committee shall not be obliged to contribute towards the cost of work or amend its proportional interest in the property.
- 4.2.8 Building insurance will be included in the Fund's insurance policy Scheme and the Fund will recoup the appropriate proportion of the premium from the Borrower based on the equity sharing interests.
- 4.2.9 The Committee shall arrange for periodic inspection of all property owned on an equity sharing basis.
- 4.2.10 The Borrower must report any structural defects or faults to fixed plant and equipment to the Fund's appointed officer.

4.3 Renting Property owned by the Fund

- 4.3.1 The Fund may rent properties belonging to it with rent calculated based on 2.25% of the purchase price or estimated value of the property. Rents should be reviewed annually on 1 October and amended in accordance with adjustment approved by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on the previous 1 April.

- 4.3.2 In exceptional circumstances the Fund may reduce the rent payable depending on the Borrower's financial circumstances.
- 4.3.3 The Committee shall arrange for periodic inspection of the property owned by the Fund.
- 4.3.4 In exceptional cases, and resources permitting, the Fund may purchase properties for letting.
- 4.3.5 A letter of Offer and Tenancy Agreement setting out the terms of the tenancy shall be prepared when such a property is purchased. The legal costs of preparation will be borne by the Fund. The tenant shall seek his or her own legal advice.
- 4.3.6 The Fund shall arrange appropriate building insurance on all properties owned by the Fund.
- 4.3.7 All rates, costs of routine maintenance, utility bills and all other outgoings relating to the premises shall be borne by the tenant. The Fund shall be responsible for any repairs to the structure of the property and repairs or replacement of fixed plant and equipment.
- 4.3.8 The tenant must report any structural defects or faults in relation to plant and equipment to the Fund's appointed officer.
- 4.3.9 A right to continue as tenant passes to the tenant's spouse on the Borrower's death but terminates on the death of the spouse.

The Committee reserves the right to withdraw any of the above forms of assistance if the Fund does not have sufficient financial or other resources available at the time of application or for any other reason at the absolute discretion of the Committee.

5. Applications for Assistance

- 5.1 All Borrowers must complete a formal application in the form determined by the Committee.
- 5.2 The decision of the Committee in respect of any application or in relation to the termination of any form of assistance shall be final.

6. Income of the Fund

All payments of interest, rent, repayments of capital, or other income received by the Fund shall be held for the objects of the Fund and for no other purpose.

Amendment to Rules

Any changes to these Rules must be approved by the Supervising Board and reported to the following General Assembly.

8. Trustees

- 8.1 All property of the Fund shall be held in the name of the Trustees.
- 8.2 The Trustees are permitted to:
 - 8.2.1 purchase, take on lease or in exchange or otherwise acquire real or personal property and any right or privilege which the

Committee think necessary for the objects of the Fund and in particular any land, buildings, easements, rooms, furniture, fittings, apparatus, appliances, conveniences and accommodation.

- 8.2.2 Sell, lease or grant, with or without a fine, improve, manage, develop, exchange, mortgage or dispose of, all or any part of the real or personal property and rights acquired by the Trustees.
- 8.2.3 Invest and deal with personal property acquired by the Trustees, not immediately required for the purposes above mentioned, in such manner as may from time to time be determined by the Trustees.
- 8.2.4 Stand possessed of any real or personal property or rights acquired by the Committee as trustees for the objects of the Fund. It is declared that the Purchaser or Mortgagee or any real or personal property acquired from the Trustees shall hold the same freed and discharged from all trusts hereby created and shall not be bound to see to the application of the purchase or mortgage monies, the receipt of the Trustees to be sufficient discharge for the same.

9. Borrowing

The Committee is permitted to borrow to fulfil the object of the Funds as authorised by the Supervising Board.

These Rules were approved by the Board of Finance and Personnel on [ENTER DATE] and the General Assembly on [ENTER DATE] June 2011.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the rate of assessment for the Central Ministry Fund for 2011 be 18.5p in the £ of stipend.
3. That the rate of assessment for the Retired Ministers' Fund for 2011 be 1.5p in the £ of stipend.
4. That the rate of assessment for the Widows of Ministers' Fund for 2011 be 4.0p in the £ of stipend.
5. That the rate of assessment for the Prolonged Disability Fund for 2011 be 0.25p in the £ of stipend.
6. That the rate of assessment for the Church House Repair Fund for 2011 be 3.50p in the £ of stipend.
7. That the rate of assessment for the Incidental Fund for 2011 be 5.00p in the £ of stipend.
8. That the rate of assessment for the PCI Pension (2009) Fund for 2011 be 30.00p in the £ of stipend.
9. That the rate of assessment for the Sick Supply Fund for 2011 be 0.25p in the £ of stipend.
10. That the General Assembly approve the proposals of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel, subject to the General Assembly agreeing to the

proposal of the General Board Panel on Pensions and Assessments to move the basis of assessments to assessable income and that the proposals be implemented from 1 January, 2013.

11. That the General Assembly approve the new Rules as set out in Appendix 4 for the Retired Ministers House Fund.

12. That rule 17c of the Prolonged Disability Fund be amended to add the word “currently available” as follows “evidence which demonstrates to the satisfaction of reasonable medical opinion that all **currently available** appropriate treatment option have been thoroughly investigated and appropriately explained to the applicant/prospective applicant.”

13. That under the provisions of the Code Par 556(3) Rev Dr JA Thompson (Dervock) be given permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday, on 4 May, 2011.

14. That the resignation of Mr Douglas Crowe as Convener of the Pensions and Assessments Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev DC Porter be appointed in his place.

15. That the resignation of Mr Michael Fitch as Convener of the Finance, Legal and IT Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mr Robert McCullagh be appointed in his place.

16. That the resignation of Mr David Lamb as Convener of the Personnel Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mr Robert Campton be appointed in his place.

17. That the resignation of Mr Hubert Martin as Co-Convener of the Property Management Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev Adrian McLernon become sole Convener of the Committee.

18. 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:

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 315 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in sub-paragraph 315(3) of the Code the words “, or of more than 25 years service, or of more than 30 years service since ordination of 102.5%, 105%, 107.5%, 110%, 112.5%, and 115% respectively of the Basic Ministerial Minimum;” be deleted and the words “since ordination of 105%, 110%, 115% and 120% respectively of the Basic Ministerial Minimum;” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 318 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that sub-paragraph 318(2) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

“(2) If there is any failure to make the foregoing returns or notifications or any failure to transmit any portion of the quarterly moneys which may be due, either from a congregation or a minister:

- (a) the Financial Secretary shall immediately refer the case to Presbytery, which shall be under obligation to take such action as it may deem necessary to ensure that the information is supplied or moneys paid up without delay;
- (b) if the Presbytery fails to ensure that the information is supplied or moneys paid without delay, the Presbytery and/or the Board of Finance and Personnel shall refer the matter to the Union Commission which shall investigate and take whatever action it may deem necessary. This referral shall take place no later than following the third failure within any three year period to transmit any portion of the quarterly moneys which may be due.
- (3) The Union Commission shall have the power, in the foregoing circumstances:
 - (a) to instruct the Pensions and Assessments Committee to reduce the assessments payable by the congregation in the current financial year;
 - (b) to make any appropriate arrangement for future ministry in the congregation;
 - (c) to instruct the Presbytery, under the Union Commission guidelines, to loose the minister from the charge and to declare the congregation vacant, prior to a reconfiguration of ministry;
 - (d) to make whatever arrangements for the minister as are agreed by the Commission. In so acting, the Union Commission shall have power to fix a retiring allowance, according to the rules for the time being of the General Assembly, or to fix an allowance for a temporary period.
- (4) The Union Commission shall not give leave to call to any vacant congregation, or linkage, which remains in default to the Central Ministry Fund or other funds of the Church”.

JOHN HUNTER

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Rev RIA ALLELY

Secretary: THE CLERK

1. As in previous years the Board is only too aware of the financial problems faced by Congregations. This has been shown by the difficulty many have experienced this year in attaining their “Target of Honour”. The Board regrets to report that only two Presbyteries exceeded their Target. It applauds the efforts made by many to do so, but laments the fact that a number made little or no effort to raise funds for the mission of the Church.

2. When the 2010 Accounts were finalised, the Target had not been reached – falling short by £247,406 (£373,702 in 2009). However, the Board is greatly encouraged that at a time of financial stringency, allowing for late returns, the 2010 Appeal reached 97.1% of its target (2009 : 98.8%).

3. Late returns from Congregations do cause problems. Indeed the fact that most of the Appeal comes to the Financial Secretary’s Office during December-February means that reserves have to be kept to provide a cashflow throughout the year. The Board commends the Financial Secretary’s Department for handling this pressure wisely, but appeals to Congregational Treasurers to return United Appeal contributions regularly throughout the year, so that the monies may be passed on straight away to the receiving Boards.

4. As in previous years, many Congregations made their Target up by releasing funds from their General Accounts. While this is commendable it may have a detrimental effect on local mission which the Board recognises is also important.

5. In too many cases Gift Aid is either not being applied properly or not at all to the United Appeal. If Gift Aid is claimed on United Appeal contributions it must be credited to the United Appeal. Committees and Presbytery Finance Conveners should always ensure that this has been done before the Accounts are approved.

6. The Board carefully examined the budgets presented by the various Boards of our Church and arrived, after careful and prayerful consideration, at the figures shown in Schedule 4. Guided by the expertise of the Board’s Finance Committee, the Board agreed the 2012 appeal at £3,172,500 – a decrease of 0.55% (See Schedules 3 and 4).

7. The Board regrets being unable to grant receiving Boards the full amounts requested, and would want to record its appreciation for the hard work done in working out budgets as accurately as possible. The United Appeal Board recognises and welcomes the Mission Boards’ vision for the future – and calls on the Church to “dig deeper” to attain this, for the glory of God and the extension of His Kingdom. As in previous years, the Board has released £200,000 from reserves – but would point out that this trend cannot continue for much longer.

8. The United Appeal Finance Committee believes that while Boards will be able to live within their allocated figures for 2012 there will be a

significant problem in 2013. The Boards have effectively cut their budgets so that they now provide core funding for the present level of staff and administration. The United Appeal Board is therefore asking that the Priorities Committee initiate a fundamental review of the core costs, including staffing, of each Board. This will also inform the Panel on Governance Structures which will report to the 2012 Assembly. In the meantime, the Board is asking that, other than in exceptional circumstances, there be a moratorium on all new posts.

9. A resolution was passed by last year's Assembly to appoint an ad-hoc Committee to consider ways to encourage planned and generous giving throughout the Church. It reads:

That the General Assembly support a Church-wide policy to encourage Presbyterians to plan their Christian generosity as a percentage of their income and appoint an ad-hoc Committee to plan how this policy may be encouraged throughout the Church.

The Business Board will bring names of members to the General Assembly for approval.

10. The Board is grateful to the Board of Communications for its assistance in producing DVDs about certain projects funded by the United Appeal. These are beginning to be used in Congregations. They are succinct and to the point. Together with the Briefing, which has been made more user friendly (with bigger pictures and fewer words!), they provide very valuable information to Congregations. Perhaps a DVD could be shown before Prayers of Intercession. A number of Board members are willing to visit Congregations and speak about the work of the United Appeal. Please contact the Convener in the first instance for more information.

11. As the PMS crisis comes towards a resolution, thus releasing funds to Congregations, the Board asks that the Lord may guide His people wisely into ways of supporting the work of His Kingdom in the future. It prays that people may learn to give sacrificially and that a more biblical pattern of giving will spread across the land.

12. The Board acknowledges the huge amount of assistance and advice received from the Financial Secretary and his Department and commends them to the prayerful support of the Church.

APPRAISALS COMMITTEE

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. During the year the Appraisals Committee met as required to consider new posts and projects. Approval was given to:

- Purchase of new site at Mullingar, with conditions (BMI)
- Mission Training Officer (BMO)
- Grant towards an extension to Church at Arklow (BMI)
- Irish Mission Worker's House (BMI)
- Rumours Café – 2 part-time posts during term-time for one year (BSW)
- Information Officer/Receptionist (General)
- Capital Grant to new Church at Drogheda (BMI)

- Sale and redevelopment of Thompson House in partnership with HELM Housing Association (BSW)
 - Part-time (4 days) secretary at Union College (BCT)
 - Part-time, temporary worker at Migrants' Project (BMI)
2. Thanks are expressed to the members of the Committee who examine these projects in detail and often interview the Boards concerned.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal for 2012 be as set out in the Schedules (III) and (IV).
3. That the General Assembly instruct the Priorities Committee to initiate an independent review by an outside consultant of the core costs, including staffing, of each Board and report to the 2012 Assembly.
4. That the General Assembly impose a moratorium on all new posts during the year 2011-2012, unless approved in special circumstances by the General Board.
5. That the General Assembly commend the Briefing and DVDs on the work supported by the United Appeal to Congregations and ask that they be used creatively.
6. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with par 287 of the Code as follows:

SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2009	Specified Sources 2009 £	United Appeal 2011 £
Ards	8,133	3,149,620	300,696
Armagh	3,893	1,811,868	158,149
Ballymena	7,504	2,994,155	281,557
Belfast North	5,631	2,007,644	200,106
Belfast South	3,631	1,750,081	150,316
Belfast East	6,267	2,811,634	249,676
Carrickfergus	5,291	1,809,100	184,411
Coleraine and Limavady	5,611	2,238,085	210,496
Derry and Donegal	5,019	1,917,426	184,338
Down	4,813	1,593,691	165,324
Dromore	4,918	1,966,347	184,716
Dublin and Munster	1,286	1,312,997	85,624
Iveagh	3,655	1,429,806	135,805
Monaghan	1,108	648,163	51,201
Newry	2,745	1,149,108	105,511
Omagh	3,499	1,217,458	122,939
Route	3,594	1,286,133	127,941
Templepatrick	4,244	1,519,905	151,134
Tyrone	3,645	1,524,926	140,060
	84,487	34,138,147	3,190,000

50% of the allocation for 2011 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 2009 of 1.12.

SCHEDULE II

	Proposed Requested 2011 £	Grant 2011 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,190,000	1,070,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	40,000	40,000
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	407,000	390,000
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	500,000	490,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	367,000	350,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	1,000,000	882,000
BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS	135,000	130,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,639,000	3,352,000
Currency losses		
Contingencies		38,000
Allocation from reserves/other income		(200,000)
		<hr/>
Appeal to Congregations		3,190,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>

SCHEDULE III

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2010	Specified Sources 2010 £	United Appeal 2012 £
Ards	7,722	3,126,876	292,822
Armagh	3,800	1,788,487	155,648
Ballymena	7,395	3,056,094	283,272
Belfast North	5,420	1,992,937	196,197
Belfast South	3,549	1,783,164	150,585
Belfast East	6,003	2,863,898	247,665
Carrickfergus	5,140	1,825,969	183,102
Coleraine and Limavady	5,647	2,293,550	214,456
Derry and Donegal	4,922	1,955,527	184,909
Down	4,699	1,633,562	165,739
Dromore	4,826	1,985,054	184,431
Dublin and Munster	1,228	1,228,478	80,383
Iveagh	3,573	1,416,220	134,075
Monaghan	1,106	607,506	49,324
Newry	2,723	1,144,936	105,215
Omagh	3,459	1,235,560	123,533
Route	3,624	1,299,397	129,652
Templepatrick	4,199	1,570,206	153,212
Tyrone	3,607	1,493,022	138,280
	82,642	34,300,443	3,172,500

50% of the allocation for 2012 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 2010 of 1.1655.

SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 2012 £	Proposed Grant 2012 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,100,000	1,060,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	41,000	40,000
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	395,000	365,000
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	490,000	435,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	531,000	425,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	920,000	897,500
BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS	165,000	150,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Allocation from reserves	3,642,000	3,372,500 (200,000)
Appeal to Congregations	<hr/>	<hr/> 3,172,500

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:-

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 15 March, 2011.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2010 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 the Very Rev Dr David Clarke, seconded by the Rev WP Erskine, 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 Rev Dr RJT McMullan and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee will also receive and examine the audited Accounts for 2010 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College and The War Memorial Hostel and accept these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Mr Kenneth Gillanders, seconded by the Rev RJT McMullan, this report was received.

5. Three retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Mr David Bell, CB, Mr Wilson Ervin, and the Rev WJ Orr.

6. The Executive Committee were authorised to nominate members of the General Assembly according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

Trust Funds

7. A summary Account of the various Trust Funds is included in the Book of Accounts 2010. The following Trust Funds are distributed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Trustees.

As in 2010 the Trustees have agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that, where the terms of Trust permit, these should be distributed via the United Appeal rather than directly to various agencies or projects as had been the practice in the past.

Mrs A M Davidson Trust: The total income for 2010 available for distribution is £6,627.40. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£6,627.40</u>
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Sir Wm V McCleery Estate: The total income for 2010 available for distribution is £34,601.84. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

Estate of Miss Irene Scott: The total income for 2010 available for distribution is £7,169.24. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£7,169.24</u>
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Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown: The total income for 2010 available for distribution is £4,600.96. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£4,600.96</u>
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Estate of Mr Victor Morrow: The total income for 2010 available for distribution is £2,664.48. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	<u>£2,664.48</u>
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GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

The General Investment Fund was originally established under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 1964. It is a common investment Fund in which any charity connected with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland can invest.

Investments in the fund or shareholdings tend to arise from trust funds, bequests or donations which often have particular terms or restrictions attached regarding the application of the capital and income.

On occasions the Trustees are notified of bequests where the terms may state they are for the "benefit of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland" or to the "Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland". The present policy of the Trustees is to invest these in the Trustees Discretionary Fund in the General

Investment Fund, unless a specific project requiring funding is identified, and then to distribute the income annually. In allocating capital or income, and while recognising no restrictions have been expressed by the donor, the Trustees will have regard to expressions of wish or known interests of the donor.

In accordance with the Scheme Rules, dividends are declared on shareholdings in the fund, at 15 April and 15 October and the shares are also valued on these dates. Recent dividend levels and share values are set out below

Further details about the General Investment Fund, the investment performance and investment holdings, is available in a booklet available from the Financial Secretary's office. The accounts are included in the Book of Accounts presented to the General Assembly.

8. Declaration of Dividend	15.4.10	15.10.10
Number of shares qualifying	5,308,288	5,318,193
Income from investment for distribution and tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees	£632,246	£698,640
Dividend per share	12.00p	14.00p

During 2010 £45,907 was transferred from the Dividend Equalisation Reserve, in accordance with the Scheme Rules, and the balance on the Reserve at 31 December, 2010 is £468,562.

The combined annual Dividend of 26.00p per share is to be compared with 28.00p for 2009; 33.00p for 2008; 31.00p for 2007; 30.00p for 2006; 27.00p for 2005; 27.00p for 2004; 29.3p for 2003; 28.5p for 2002; 28.00p for 2001.

9. Valuation	15.4.10	15.10.10
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	37,794,147	37,986,006
Cash on Deposit	352,102	281,566
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	509,720	468,562
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£38,655,969	£38,736,134

No of Shares Issued	5,314,841	5,321,042
Share Value	£7.2732	£7.2798

The Trustees meet with Investment Managers, Newton Investment Management Limited, three times a year to review investment performance. During 2010 there was a positive return of 13.4% compared to a benchmark return of 13.4%.

Crescent Church Loan Fund

10. During 2010 loan requests of £197,500 were approved. Interest is currently charged on loans at half the total of bank base rate plus 2% (currently 1.25%) on the average balance outstanding over the term of the loan.

Getty Bequest

11. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2010 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	£2,330
Overseas – Jewish	£1,270
Home Mission	£3,070
Belfast City Mission	£2,330
TOTAL	£9,000

Stanley Hall Fund

12. During 2010 the Trustees agreed to take over the trusteeship of the Fund from the Northern Bank Executor and Trustee Company Limited. £68,100 has been received and invested in the General Investment Fund. The income is to be applied for the benefit of the Presbyterian Residential Trust.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

13. During the year the Trustees were kept up to date with efforts to find a solution to the Presbyterian Mutual Society issue. A scheme of arrangement was drawn up by the PMS Administrator, in which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland agreed to provide £1 million. At the request of the General Board, the Trustees agreed that, subject to the approval of the High Court as this would not be a charitable donation, the £1 million would be paid from the Trustees' Discretionary Fund. As reported in the General Board report, application was made to the High Court and approval received.

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 DJ Watts, RJA Bell, WJ Orr; Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, CB, Mr AT Ross, Mr John Millar, OBE.

2010 ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Co-Conveners: Revs TC MORRISON, DH THOMPSON

1. The Committee is grateful to God for the number of delegates who attended the Conference (approximately 750, from 240 Congregations), the warm sense of fellowship, the inspiring worship and thought provoking contributions of the keynote speakers, the Rev Ajith Fernando (Sri Lanka) and from PCI, the Very Rev Dr JS Carson and the Revs DJ Bruce and JD Woodside.

2. Both the volume and the content of the feedback from delegates (some 300 evaluation forms were returned) reflect that many who attended were convinced in heart and mind that despite the global challenges and social changes that have contributed towards moving the Church to the margins – in Western Europe at least – Jesus is Lord.

3. The feedback also indicated that many remain sure of the benefit to our denomination of a Residential Conference every five years or so and thus, as following “Get a Life” in 2004, a resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly.

The 2010 Conference aim was described as follows:

4. *In an atmosphere of praise and fellowship, through keynote addresses and seminar programmes the Special Assembly aims to:*

- strike a note of confidence in God and the gospel
- encourage and inspire delegates in their Christians lives
- focus on “being” not “doing”
- proclaim the wonder of grace and its implications
- be a joyous experience and celebrate the good news

5. In as far as it can be quantified, it is gratifying for the Committee to know that these aims were achieved.

6. Some comments in the evaluation returns centred around the necessity of having to use a tent (the Diamond not being available) and the associated difficulties of inclement weather, distance and poor access for pedestrians. Issues relating more directly to using the University included car parking, the distance to the seminar spaces in the South Building and ‘rooms that didn’t lend themselves to engagement’. Overall, however, Coleraine seemed a popular venue but it is recognised that it is not central to Ireland as a whole!

7. Having a main speaker from beyond Western Europe was appreciated. As one delegate commented, it was, ‘very helpful to have a perspective on evangelism and mission from Asia rather than the UK or USA’.

8. The balance provided by having three ‘local’ speakers was also overwhelmingly endorsed. The following comment by one delegate was typical of many. ‘I want to thank the organising Committee for turning to Stafford, David and John to teach us. This was incredible. Having Irish eyes telling us

home truths was tremendous – it was informed, chastening, prophetic and challenging.’

9. The seminar programme was of help to many. One issue for future consideration is making seminar material available before/after the event.

10. Delegate after delegate paid tribute to the work and talents of Karen Campbell and the group of musicians and singers.

11. The end of evening event, “Late Nite Extra”, continued to prove popular with its blend of humour and serious content enabling delegates to look at themselves as Presbyterians. There was much appreciation of the way Andy Carroll and Kevin Hargaden fronted the event, - ‘*The two boys are the PCI answer to Ant and Dec*’ was one comment!

12. The Committee believe that under God at the Conference many important insights were gained, much hope was revived and many delegates were encouraged in a new and powerful way to be “Confident in Christ”.

To Him be all the Glory, now and forever.

The Rev Dr Donald Watts writes:

For a Committee to work together to organise an event as successful as the 2010 Conference requires dedication among its members, but particularly from its Conveners. In the planning of this Conference there were a number of difficulties to be overcome which called for persistent but gentle leadership from the two Conveners. The Assembly is grateful to the Revs Colin Morrison and latterly David Thompson, who generously gave of their time and experience to lead the Committee towards such a successful outcome.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That consideration be given to holding a PCI Residential Conference in 2015; that the financial surplus from “Confident in Christ” be retained for this purpose; and that the General Board be instructed to report, with recommendations and costings to the 2012 Assembly.
3. That the Revs Colin Morrison and David Thompson be thanked for their services as Co-Conveners of the 2010 Assembly Conference Committee.
4. That the 2010 Assembly Conference Committee be thanked and discharged.

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Pars.	25; 48	75
	33; 81	76
	57	100
	106(g); 128(3); 128(5)(d); 128(5)(a); 128(6)(b)	101

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Pars.	190(2)(a)	217
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