

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



ANNUAL REPORTS



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ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Notes:**
- (i) Business commences at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
 - (ii) An “Introduction to Assembly Business” will be given in the Assembly Hall on Tuesday at 9.00 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 1p.m. each day.
 - (iv) Figures in brackets refer to page numbers in the Annual Reports.

Tuesday

Business

SPUD

General (p/t 1 – Appointments)

Presbyterian Women

Youth and Children

Mission in Ireland

Union Commission

Wednesday

Mission Overseas

Christian Training

General (p/t 2)

United Appeal

Trustees

Trusts

Thursday

Judicial Commission

Special Judicial Commission

Applications Commission

Special Commission (Principal)

Education

Social Witness

Finance and Personnel

NOTES

MONDAY, JUNE 2

Assembly Buildings

7.00 p.m. –

Service of Worship
Constitution of Assembly
Election of Moderator

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

9.30 a.m. –

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (1-8).
Arrangements Committee.
2. Overture anent Appendix 1 of the Code (9).
3. Reports of Presbyteries (10-16).
4. SPUD YOUTH ASSEMBLY: Report and Resolutions (279-281)

5. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.

Church of Scotland: Rt Rev John Chalmers, Rev Mary Ann Rennie;
Mr Angus Hogg

United Reformed Church: Mr John Ellis; Rev Nigel Uden

Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev Trefor Lewis

Church of Ireland: Rt Rev John McDowell, Rev Canon Ian Ellis

The Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev R Kenneth Lindsay; Mr David Twyble

Irish Council of Churches: Mr Mervyn McCullagh

Society of Friends: Eleanor Gaw

Presbyterian Church USA: Rev Doug Baker

Presbyterian Church of South Sudan: Rev Peter Gai Lual, Rev John Yor Nyiker Deng

Reformed Church in Romania: Bishop István Csury; Mr Janos Antal

Presbyterian Church of East Africa: Rev David Gathanju

Presbyterian Church of Pakistan: Rev Dr Maqsood Kamil

Iglesia Evangelica Espaniol: Rev Alfredo Abad

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

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(10.15) 6. GENERAL BOARD (Appointments): Report and Resolutions (17-65).

(11.00) 7. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: Report and Resolution (160-165).

(11.30) Intermission.

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

2.00 p.m. –

8. BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (190-202).
Ministry Opportunities; Research and Education; Ministry Resources; Ministry Events.

(3.00) 9. BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (124-153).
Strategy for Mission; Research and Resources; Church Architecture.

10. Overtures anent Pars 10-14 and 212 of the Code (153-158).

(3.45) Intermission.

(4.30) 11. DONABATE MEMORIAL (158-159).

(4.45) 12. UNION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (85-104).

13. Overtures anent Pars 82(4); 128(3) of the Code (104).

(6.00) Close of Business.

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

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

9.30 a.m. –

14. BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS: Report and Resolutions (105-123).
Outreach Ministries; Leadership Development; World Development; Mission Involvement.

(10.30) Intermission.

- (10.45) 15. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (203-216).
Training and Resources; Ministerial Studies and Development; UTC Management.

16. Overtures anent Pars 30(1); 30(3); 30; 35; 73(b); 177(2); 180(1); 201(1); 202(3); 202(7); 72(e); 285; 217(1)(b)(iii); 217(2)(b); 217(3) of the Code (217-218).

11.45 17. Forces Chaplaincy.

12.15 p.m. – **Worship.**

2.00 p.m. –

18. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (17-65).
Memorial Record, Priorities, Planned Giving; Doctrine; Moderator's Advisory; Church and Society; Global Concerns; Church Relations; Reception of Ministers and Licentiates; and Elders' Terms.

(3.45) Intermission.

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

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- (4.00) 19. GENERAL BOARD (cont'd): Report and Resolutions (17-65).
- 20. Overtures anent Pars 75(a); 132; 161(1)(b); 162(2); 128(1); 128(2); 268-288 of the Code (65-78).
- (5.00) 21. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (264-271).
- (5.30) 22. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (274-278).
- 23. Overture anent Par 97(h)(iv) of the Code (278).
- 24. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (272).
- 25. Overtures anent Pars 122; 126(5); 130 of the Code (273).
- (6.00) Close of Business.

7.45 p.m. – Evening Rally.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

In Private

- 9.30 a.m.** -
- 26. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolution (79-80).
- 27. Overtures anent Pars 127(1); 127(2)(a); 137; 230(3)(a); 219(3)(b)(i); 111(6); 311(4)(a); 313(2); 317(a) of the Code (80-81).
- 28. SPECIAL (JUDICIAL) COMMISSION: Report and Resolution (82).

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

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29. COMMISSION ON APPLICATIONS: Report and Resolution (83).

30. SPECIAL COMMISSION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL FACULTY, IRELAND: Report and Resolution (84)

(10.15) Intermission.

In Public

(10.30) 31. BOARD OF EDUCATION: Report and Resolutions (219-226).

(11.30) 32. BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (166-182).
Specialist Ministries; Older People Services; Family Services; Adult Services.

33. OLD AGE FUND MEMORIAL (182-183)

12.15 p.m. – Worship

2.00 p.m. –

34. BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Report and Resolutions (227-263).
Pensions and Assessments; Personnel; Property and Management; Finance, Legal and IT.

35. Overture anent Par 257(2)(a) of the Code (263).
Lapsed Business.

(3.45) Intermission.

(4.00) 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 met in October to review the 2013 General Assembly held in Londonderry. It was generally agreed to have been a successful meeting with a good attendance at business sessions and a relaxed atmosphere. This was partly due to the weather and unfamiliar venue, but also to the helpfulness of staff at the Millennium Forum and the outstanding contribution of the local Presbytery organising Committee and stewards. The staff in the General Secretary's Office are also to be commended for carrying out the additional workload cheerfully and efficiently.

2. This year, back in Assembly Buildings, the Arrangements Committee has made a few changes but more significantly the Business Board has appointed a panel to respond to the resolution of the last Assembly, "to consider ways in which the business of the Assembly may allow for greater engagement and accountability". This work will influence the arrangements for the next Assembly when the Board will make a fuller report.

3. The recommended Order of Business has been considered and is as printed. It should be noted that tickets are not required for any of the events at this Assembly.

4. The Business Board was pleased to agree a request from the SPUD Youth Assembly to provide a prayer space and hold some fringe events. SPUD has had a considerable and positive influence on recent Assemblies and the Business Board wishes to commend and encourage their committed involvement.

5. Delegates were appointed to other Church meetings as follows:
- Presbyterian Church of Wales 2014 : Rt Rev Dr Michael Barry;
 - General Synod of the Church of Ireland 2014 : Very Rev Dr Roy Patton and Mrs Cherry Poynton;
 - Methodist Conference 2014 : Very Rev Dr Rob Craig and Mr Stuart Ferguson.

6. As always the hard work of producing the Annual Reports, inviting guests and making arrangements for this meeting rests with the General Secretary's Office. It also depends on other Board Offices to produce their reports and co-operate together. Thanks are due once again to Mrs Joyce Anderson for leading the team so effectively, especially her own staff and those in the Creative Production Unit.

7. Until the debate on the Structures Review takes place under the General Board report it will not be clear whether Boards and Committees are to be appointed for a full year or to 31 December 2014. It has therefore been agreed to recommend the appointment of all Boards and Committees under the Final Report of the Business Board. The proposed membership will be found as usual in the Board and Committee Membership Booklet.

8. The General Assembly's Standing Orders are found in Appendix 1 of The Code. An Overture is appended to bring them into line with current practice.

Business Board

9. 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 2014-15, 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 JH Flaherty; Mrs EJ Mann – Rev CUR Bradley; WK Belshaw – Rev MJR Neilly; James Lamont – Rev GF McKeown; George Crooks – Rev MS Gault; David McCleery – Rev MR Burnside; John Black – Rev TR Graham; R Kennedy – Rev JA McCaughan; J Cassells – Rev Dr RL Craig; William Watson – Rev SA Woodburn; William Reid – Rev AS Thompson; Gordon Lindsay – Rev SJ Lockington; Stuart Ferguson – Rev MG McClelland; Albert Johnston – Rev GJ Mackarel; Ronnie Gillanders – Rev DB Murphy; J Copeland – Rev RN Orr; NC Morrison – Rev RW Gaston; Mrs Mabel Campbell – 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, Head of Press and Media, Hospitality Secretary, Buildings Manager; Committee Convener.
- (x) Rev Dr RL Craig; Mrs Joyce Anderson, Mrs Fiona Watts, Gary Nesbitt.
- (y) Revs JH Flaherty, RN Orr, WJ Murdock, JA McCaughan, MG McClelland, MR Burnside; David McCleery, WK Belshaw.

The Welsh Assembly 2013

The Rt Rev Dr Rob Craig reports:

1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales met in the Aberystwyth Arts Assembly between 16-18 July. The first impressions which Karen and I received were of the beauty of North Wales through which we travelled; of the warmth of the welcome which we received from our Welsh Presbyterian brothers and sisters; and of the incomprehensibility of the Welsh language. We were very grateful for the simultaneous translation which was provided, although the intense effort of concentration required did prove demanding.

2. Being largely ignorant of the Presbyterian Church in Wales I was interested to discover that it is largely located in the north of the Principality, that two-thirds of its Congregations are Welsh speaking and that its General Assembly is smaller in number than our own, with some 150 delegates. In common with PCI, the Welsh General Assembly welcomed delegates from sister Reformed Churches and I was intrigued to discover that much of their Assembly was taken up with addressing business similar to our own.

3. Unlike our General Assembly the Opening Service was led entirely by the outgoing Moderator, the Rev Dafydd Andrew Jones. Strangely to our way of doing things – it was he who introduced and preached on the chosen theme for the coming year – “You go and do likewise” Luke 10:37.

4. Among the business of the Assembly the most contentious debate centred on the report concerning the offering of a blessing on civil partnerships. It was reported that after much reflection, consultation and prayer the recommendation was that there would be no one policy to govern the practice of the whole denomination but that the leadership of each local Congregation could reach a decision regarding its own practice. In this debate the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Rev Lorna Hood, was invited to address the Assembly. She explained how the Church of Scotland had chosen to adopt a similar practice of local autonomy in respect of the ordination of practising gay ministers. At the conclusion of this debate the request was made that a report be prepared for the 2014 Assembly with recommendations regarding the practice of the denomination regarding same sex marriage, given that such marriage would become law in 2014.

5. In common with PCI, the PCW has been reviewing its structures, with a report being received arising from the comments forwarded from Presbyteries. Among the recommendations before the Assembly was the recommendation to reduce the number of Boards from three to two, the number of departments from 12 to 10 and to remove the panel tiers. Alongside the lengthy report were diagrams, similar to those within the PCI Structures Report, detailing the relationship between the Assembly, Boards, Presbyteries and local Congregations.

6. The outgoing Moderator in his valedictory address affirmed that PCW must change its structure to make it easier for local Congregations to “dream dreams” and put their dreams into action. Although the PCW has 650 Chapels many are without a minister and the membership is few and elderly.

7. It was reported to the Assembly that in the previous year the target has been set to raise an average of £12 per member towards the ¡Viva Guatemala! Appeal. PCW met its target and was able to make a gift of £233,391 to Christian Aid – the total raised is more than the sum which Christian Aid is able to donate to Guatemala in a normal year.

8. The current Moderator is the Rev Trefor Lewis who was installed on the second evening. He acknowledged the difficulties with which the denomination was struggling – not least the fact that it was shrinking, despite its leaders’ best attempts.

9. Reminding the Assembly of the experience and example of Nehemiah the emphasis of his address was upon the importance of teamwork: he foresaw the day when there might be one ordained minister within a given region, with teams of gifted people sharing in the pastoral, youth and sacramental work of the Church.

The Methodist Conference 2013

The Very Rev Dr Roy Patton reports:

1. The Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland was held in Carrickfergus Methodist Church with the opening and closing services being

held in Joymount Presbyterian Church. As a Presbyterian observer, I was joined by one of our elders from Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church, Mr David Thompson.

2. On the first evening history was made as the Rev Dr Heather Morris was installed as President, the first woman of the Church. Mr Ken Twyble was also installed as the Lay Leader of Conference at the same event. Speaking on the theme of the Conference “A people invited to follow” Dr Morris challenged Methodists to trust God and not be afraid of getting their feet wet. The address was marked by faithfulness, relevance, warmth and sincerity which were also the marks of how Dr Morris and Mr Twyble led the entire Conference.

3. Conference has been extended by one day and each Circuit may send an additional Member. Up to 50 young adults will also participate. The usual business will be integrated with sessions intended to provoke and inspire members to agree why the Methodist Church in Ireland is here in this time and place.

4. This year the Conference had a different format from previous years. Together voting members and non-voting members from District Circuits explored the theme through Bible Study, Keynote Speakers, Group discussions and other exercises. There was much less time given to formal business sessions. Reports from a number of Committees, Missions and Institutions were taken en Bloc.

5. The Conference affirmed Methodist traditional opposition to gambling reversing last year’s Conference decision to allow mission and other Church bodies to apply for lottery-sourced funding.

6. A highlight of the Methodist Conference is the Ordination Service in which each Ordained is given the opportunity to share their own spiritual journey. This was a very significant occasion for those being ordained, for their family and friends but also very much a heart-warming experience for all present as we heard from those who had responded to Christ’s call to follow Him.

Ireland Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends

The Rev John Faris reports:

1. It was a great honour and privilege to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at the Ireland Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends held in Cork for the first time in July 2013.

2. There has been a Quaker presence in Cork from the earliest days of the Society of Friends. After a dip in numbers in recent years, interest has revived and the local Meeting felt strong enough to host around 100 people attending from different parts of Ireland and overseas. Presbyterians in Co Armagh may well be acquainted with the Quaker community there who maintain an evangelical witness.

3. I was struck by the friendliness of the ‘Friends’. They seem to be at ease with each other across a broad theological spectrum and listened courteously to a Presbyterian’s contributions to their morning bible study groups. The breadth of opinion was seen in an evening lecture presented by Julia Ryberg from USA where she sought to reconcile a personal experience of Christ with an endorsing of contemporary theological trends such as the ‘Jesus Seminar’.

4. The Clerk of the Yearly Meeting, Felicity McCartney, presided with calm and warmth. She emphasised at the start the core value of speaking kindly in debate, without putting others down. Other values were seen in the way that

the Friends cherish their heritage, not only in the worship times characterised by an almost sacramental stillness but also in things such as the discouraging of applause and the receiving of Friends from other countries by ‘epistles’ of commendation. Things are done differently from our Presbyterian usage but with an equal commitment to doing things ‘decently and in order’ and we should ponder the injunction to ‘speak kindly’.

5. The traditional social concerns of Quakers were given much time with an evening session on ethical investment and a report on correspondence with the Irish government on ‘rendition flights’ through Shannon. The full text was read of a letter from An Tanaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Eamon Gilmore, in which he acknowledged the significant contribution to peace issues of Irish Quakers and their concern for people in the Great Famine. He stated that the Irish Government opposes the use of its airports and air space for rendition flights and would act on evidence being provided that rendition is happening in its jurisdiction. The Society intends to pursue this matter with his Department.

6. Among presentations on social outreach was one from ‘Cork Penny Dinners’ a charity started in famine times by Quakers and in which they are still involved with other volunteers, which now provides 1,500 meals a week without government assistance.

7. Concern was raised that the principled pacifist stance of Quakers and other conscientious objectors should not be overlooked in the Decade of Anniversaries and I believe that their witness for peace is something that other Churches should consider positively, if involved in the planning of various anniversary events.

8. I am grateful to the Business Board for nominating me to attend this gathering. It was a refreshing exposure to an egalitarian Christian tradition with which we can resonate in many ways. One example is in the Queries for Serious Consideration (www.quakers-in-ireland.ie/about-us/principles/queries) which any Christian would do well to use for self-examination. One speaker made the point that when Quakers meet they tend to ask ‘How many attend your Meeting?’ when the ‘query’ should be something like ‘How is the presence of God in your Meeting?’ We too need to make sure we are asking the right questions.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (2013)

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. I had the privilege last September, with Fiona, to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, meeting in Sydney. I was particularly pleased to be present at the final Assembly of the retiring Clerk, the Rev Paul Logan, who has been present with us here in Ireland. This is the national Assembly which meets every three years with commissioners from all over Australia appointed by each State Assembly and Presbytery. However, as each of these bodies has a limited number of nominations the overall size of the Assembly was much smaller than our own.

2. It met in the Chinese Presbyterian Church, a reminder of the multi-cultural nature of Australian society. This Congregation was not always Chinese and I was interested to find a plaque to its founding minister, the Rev James Fullerton, who was born near Garvagh and arrived in New South Wales in 1837.

3. The Presbyterian Church is made up of those Congregations who did not join the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977. It was good that while in Sydney I was also able to meet up with the Clerk of the Uniting Church, the Rev Terence Corkin. From conversations with the Clerks and others it is clear that the Churches in Australia are facing similar issues to our own, but the challenge of secularism is more advanced and pervasive.

4. On the Opening Evening the new Moderator, the Rev David Cook, was installed. Compared to our own Assembly there were relatively few visitors, but it was interesting to meet the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu – a colourful character. From the visitors and the discussions it was very clear that we were in a Pacific context; Australia relating to South Africa, South-East Asia and America. At the same time the Church values its European links, particularly with the Church of Scotland. For example, the first act of the Assembly was to pass a Motion of Loyalty to the Queen.

5. The big issues of the Assembly had strong similarities to our own – baptism; human sexuality; but especially mission and church planting. There was a highly-charged debate on the growing weakness of the Presbyterian Church in large tracts of South Australia, specifically around Adelaide, but members also displayed a real concern to do something about it. A special Committee and Taskforce were set up to try to reengage with society. More positively new Congregations were being constituted in Alice Springs and Darwin.

6. Throughout the debates of the Assembly I had a growing sense that the real decisions, and certainly the financial ones, are made by the Australian Church in its State Assemblies. The National Assembly has influence rather than authority. Nevertheless, we thoroughly enjoyed our few days learning of the challenges the Church faces in a quite different setting to our own.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

1. This year we return to the familiar surroundings of Assembly Buildings after our visit to Derry/Londonderry in 2013.

Guidelines to New Members

2. There will be 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 briefing will take place in the Assembly Hall on Tuesday, 3 June, immediately prior to the first Business Session of the Assembly. Members of the Arrangements Committee are situated at the Carrickfergus Window desk to help members with general arrangements and information. The Convener's desk is located in front of the platform on the Main floor of the Assembly Hall, close to the Clerk's desk.

Opening Night

3. Doors will open to the General Public at 6.00 pm. Members of Assembly are strongly encouraged to be present at this service to hear the outgoing Moderator reflect on his year in office and welcome the incoming Moderator.

Wednesday Evening Event

4. This will be based on the Fit for Purpose theme for the incoming year – ‘A People of Service and Outreach’. Doors will open at 7.00 pm for this event.

Communion and Worship Services

5. The Communion Service 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 11.35 am. There will also be worship on Wednesday and Thursday 12.15pm, open to the public.

First Aid

6. 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 other times. Please notify the Convener or any of the stewards at the doors if First Aid is required.

Exhibition

7. Various exhibition stands will be displayed in the foyer area adjacent to the Reception desk. These will feature the work of Boards and other agencies within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Please take a few moments to browse around these during the Assembly.

Web Streaming and Twitter

8. The public sessions of the General Assembly will be streamed through the PCI Website, and you can also follow proceedings on @pciassembly. The Private Session and certain other items of business will not be streamed.

Tea/Coffee Breaks

9. Tea and coffee will be served in the Minor Hall and in the Concourse. We are positively encouraging as many people as possible to make their way to the relative comfort of the Minor Hall to minimise the usual congestion in the Concourse. We would ask you to move away from the serving areas once you have been attended to, to allow others following you to be served quickly.

Queuing to Speak

10. 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.

Voting Cards

11. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk located in the Foyer where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning, after which members should contact the Financial Secretary’s Office. Ministers please note that when obtaining your voting cards, you are asked to produce the Registration Card which is enclosed with these reports.

Admission

12. 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. Entrance to and exit from the Private Session is not normally permitted during an item of business.

Feedback Sheets

13. This year we are asking Members of Assembly to complete feedback sheets enclosed with these reports. The Committee is keen to hear helpful views and opinions on the practical running of the Assembly. Please take a moment during Assembly Week to complete this survey, and return it to the Arrangements Desk at the Carrickfergus Window before you leave, or return by post no later than Friday 19 June.

Expenses

15. All members may claim a daily allowance but travel expenses cover the cost of only one return journey in the week. Claims should be made on the appropriate form obtainable from the Reception. Full details of rates are printed on the form.

Evacuation Procedures

16. Please listen carefully to all announcements regarding the evacuation of the building in the event of an emergency.

Thanks

17. Sincere thanks are expressed to Assembly Buildings 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 the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That a grant of £19,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent APPENDIX 1 of the Code

that in Appendix 1 (II) (1) of the Code the words “the opening of the second session of” be deleted.

that in Appendix 1 (III) of the Code the words “Thereafter the” be deleted and the word “The” substituted in their place.

that in Appendix 1 (XII) of the Code the word “Synod,” be deleted.

DONALD J WATTS

REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev SJ Castles is their Moderator; that the Rev NJ Linkens, minister emeritus of Cloughey and Portavogie, died on 21 November 2013; that the Rev AS Cromie, minister emeritus of Lisnabreen, died on 5 February 2014; that the Rev Dr MJ Welsh, minister of Greyabbey, resigned his charge on 31 March 2013; that the Rev AM Bates, minister of Scrabo, Newtownards, resigned his charge on 28 June 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev WG Cameron was installed to the charge of Kircubbin on 21 March 2013; that the Rev Mairisine Stanfield presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed to the charge of First Bangor on 30 August 2013; that the Rev TJ McConaghie presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was ordained and inducted to the charge of Conlig on 13 September 2013; that Mr JS McCrea was licensed on 2 June 2013; that Mr Gary McDowell was licensed on 9 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that Mr KJ Ward was licensed on 16 June 2013; that the Rev MWJ McKeown was given credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal; that under their care are: as minister without charge the Revs David McKee (retired), Dr SI Dennis, CD Mawhinney, DM Spratt, Graeme McConville and Dr MJ Welsh; as licentiates Mr DP Burke, Mr JW Frazer, Mr AJ Galbraith, Mr Edward Kirwan, Mr JS McCrea, Mr JB Mullan and Mr KJ Ward; as students for the ministry Mr Robert Hamilton, Mr Steven Lowry, Mr Jeffrey McWatters, Mr Craig Lynn and Mr Alan Marsh; that they held Consultations at Shore Street Donaghadee, First Newtownards and Hamilton Road, Bangor; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DS Henry is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Dr JS Carson, minister of First Portadown, resigned his charge on 3 September 2013 and was installed Principal of Union Theological College and Professor of Ministry on 4 September 2013; that the Rev AJ Dunlop was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that Mr PG Cleland was licensed on 9 June 2013; that Mr RJ Edgar was licensed on 16 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr TT Boyd, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that they have under their care: as a minister without charge the Rev JWP McConnell; as licentiates Mr Ben Preston and Mr PG Cleland; as students for the ministry Mr Edwin Frazer and Mr Craig Jackson; that they held Consultations at Redrock, Tassagh and Clare; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JG Johnston is their Moderator; that the Rev WJ Lamont, minister emeritus of Killymurriss, died on 31 December 2013; that the Rev SW Dickinson was loosed from his charge of Cairnalbana and Glenarm by the Judicial Commission on 29 March 2013 and resigned his status as a minister without charge on 28 February 2014; that the Rev AM Bates presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was installed to the charge of Wellington, Ballymena on 28 June 2013; that Mr RH Houston, a

licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was ordained to the Office of the Christian Ministry and inducted to the work of associate minister in High Kirk, Ballymena on 24 March 2013; that Mr BA Smyth, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry and installed to the charge of Trinity, Ahoghill on 12 April 2013; that Mr AR Adger was licensed as a probationer for the Christian Ministry on 26 May 2013 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr PWA McClelland was licensed as a probationer for the Christian Ministry on 19 June 2013 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr SW Orr was licensed as a probationer for the Christian Ministry on 16 June 2013 and remains under the care of Presbytery; that Mr SW Hibbert, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received and accepted a call to Gilford and Tullylish, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh on 5 March 2013; that Mr TJ McConaghie, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received and accepted a call to Conlig, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards on 19 June 2013; that they have under their care: as a minister without charge the Rev JD McGaughey; as licentiates Mr MJO Currie, Mr PA Kerr, Mr SW Orr, Mr RMP Simpson and Mr NDH Stewart; as students for the ministry Mr JJ Boyd, Mr M Boyd, Mr WN Kennedy, Mr JR Kernohan, Mr DA McMillan and Mr RC Patton; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JR Dickinson is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr JB Moore, minister emeritus of West Kirk, died on 14 January 2014; that the Rev JN Seawright, minister of Abbey, resigned his charge on 31 October 2013 and was placed as a minister without charge under the care of Presbytery; that Mr MPR Fryer was licensed as a probationer for the Christian Ministry on 16 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr DR Cromie, Mr SD Currie, Mr MW Dodds, Mr MA Johnston and Mr RJ Watt presented credentials from the Presbyteries of South Belfast, East Belfast, Carrickfergus, Templepatrick and Tyrone respectively and were received as licentiates; that upon receiving a call to the Congregations of Cardonagh, Malin, Greenbank and Merville, Mr SWK Glendinning, licentiate without charge under the care of Presbytery, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal; that upon receiving a call to the Congregation of First Islandmagee, Mr PA Bovill, licentiate assistant in Whiteabbey, demitted his charge on 4 July 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that they have under their care: as ministers without charge the Revs LH Eagleson, CI McKnight (retired), JN Seawright, WA Shaw, WM Smyth (retired) and FW Vincent; as licentiates Mr DR Cromie, Mr SD Currie, Mr MW Dodds, Mr MA Johnston, Mr RJ Watt, Mr David McCarthy (without charge); as a student for the ministry Mr Jonathan Newell; that Consultations were held with the Congregations of Glengormley and New Mossley; that Congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

The **SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr Ian Hart is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr GA Grindle, MBE, minister emeritus of the Kingan Church, died 17 December 2013; that the Rev Dr DJ McKelvey retired as minister of Fisherwick on 31 July 2013; that the Rev AT Wimberly resigned

as minister of McCracken Memorial on 31 July 2013; that the Rev RJ Greer was released as minister of Richview on 6 November 2013; that the Rev AE Tolland presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was installed as minister of Newtownbreda on 26 April 2013; that Mr CMS Barron was licensed and on 16 June 2013 was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr DR Cromie was licensed on 16 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that Mr Gary McDowell presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was received as a licentiate under the care of Presbytery; that they have under their care: as ministers without charge the Revs KA Drury, RJ Greer and JD Maxwell; as licentiates Mr J Abernethy-Barkley, Mr SD Conkey, Mrs FMA Forbes, Mr Gary McDowell, Mrs CE Heron and Mrs KH Viner; as students for the ministry Miss S Moore, Mr Brent van der Linde and Mr J Martin; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev SP Moore is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr Elizabeth Jamison, minister without charge, died on 13 September 2013; that the Rev PG McDowell, minister of Garnerville, resigned his charge on 31 July 2013 and became minister without charge under the care of Presbytery; that the Rev WG Hamilton presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone and was installed to the charge of Tullycarnet on 27 June 2013; that the Rev Dr DJ Montgomery presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster and was received as a minister without charge; that Mr WDS McCullagh, a licentiate, was ordained and inducted to missionary service under the Board of Mission Overseas on 25 October 2013; that Mr Jonathan Boyd, a licentiate, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr DT McNeill was licensed on 2 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Down, Mr SD Currie was licensed on 16 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that Mr GJ Ball presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was received as licentiate under the care of Presbytery; that under their care are: as ministers without charge the Revs DR Baker, WJ Harshaw, PG McDowell and Dr DJ Montgomery; as licentiates Mr Stephen Cowan, Mr Aaron Ditty, Mr Gareth Simpson, Mr GJ Ball and Mr Paul Orr; as students Mr Alan Dickey, Mr Alan McQuade, Mr Alastair McCracken, Mr Ben Johnston, Mr David Gray, Mr David Kelly and Mr Mark McMaw; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev TN Bingham is their Moderator; that the Rev AE Tolland, minister of Cairncastle, resigned her charge on 25 April 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of South Belfast; that the Rev JH Robinson, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed to the charge of Downshire on 19 June 2013; that Mr PA Bovill presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Islandmagee on 5 July 2013; that Mr AR Adger presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and Mr CMS Barron presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast and were received as licentiates; that Mr NL Smyth was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh, Ms LM Keys was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh, Mr MW Dodds was given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that under

their care are: as licentiates Mr RJ Collins, Mr LW Webster, Mr Alan Moore, Mr RE McCormick, Mr AR Adger and Mr CMS Barron; as students Mr James Warburton, Mr Bobby Orr, Mr Ian Cahoon and Mr Stuart Hawthorne; that they held Consultations at Ballylinney and Magheramorne; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed individually.

The **COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev ME Donald is their Moderator; that the Rev Ernest Morrow, minister emeritus of First Dunboe, died on 19 November 2013; that the Rev AE Armstrong, minister emeritus of Moneydig, died on 10 January 2014; that the Rev WI Hunter, minister of Ballywatt, retired on 31 August 2013; that Mr Alan Buick, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that they have under their care: as a minister without charge the Rev JD Mark; as licentiates Mr Ivan Linton and Mr GA McCracken; as students for the ministry Mr Alan Burke, Mr Robert McClure and Mr John Torrens; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DERRY AND DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev KA Jones is their Moderator; that the Rev GP Young, minister of Merville and Greenbank, retired on 19 August 2013; that the Rev David Hillen, minister of Magheramason, retired on 31 August 2013; that the Rev SJ Richmond was inducted to the charge of Stranorlar on 2 June 2013; that Mr MWJ McKeown presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was ordained and inducted as assistant minister at Kilfennan, on 19 May 2013; that Mr SWK Glendinning presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was ordained and inducted to the charge of Carndonagh, Greenbank, Malin and Merville on 20 September 2013; that Mr Jonathan Cowan was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that Mr BA Smyth was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev Stanley Stewart was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that under their care are: as ministers without charge the Revs JC Teeney and KG Patterson; that they held Consultations at Ballyarnett and Knowhead and Carnone, Convoy and Donoughmore; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev AS Smyth is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr WD Bailie, minister emeritus of Kilmore, died on 9 May 2013; that the Rev JH Robinson, minister of Ardglass and Downpatrick, resigned his charge on 19 June 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that the Rev Mairisine Stanfield, minister of First Ballynahinch, resigned her charge on 30 August 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that Mr GJ Ball was licensed on 9 June 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr DT McNeill presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was received as a licentiate; that Mr GJ MacLean was given credentials to the Presbytery of Route, Mr DTR Edwards was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that under their care are: as ministers without charge the Revs Samuel Armstrong, JM Casement, RN Stewart and GR Stockdale; as licentiates Mr SW Moore, Mr DT McNeill Mr Edward McKenzie and Mr Owen Patterson; as licentiate without charge Mr MC Cowan; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Paul Jamieson is their Moderator; that the Rev TAN Parker, minister emeritus of Maze, died on 5 April 2013; that the Rev JS Martin, minister emeritus of Drumlough and Anahilt, died on 12 June 2013; that the Rev Dr RS Tosh, BBC, retired on 31 March 2013; that the Rev GBS Gibson, minister of Railway Street, Lisburn, retired on 31 October 2013; that the Rev KY Wimberly, minister without charge, resigned on 31 July 2013; that the Rev BJ McCroskery, missionary, resigned on 5 November 2013; that Mr NW Duddy was licensed on 26 May 2013; that Mr Mark Proctor and Mrs HM Freeburn were given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that under their care are: as a minister without charge the Rev BJ McCroskery; as licentiates Mr TA Conway, Mr TAS Graham, Mr SM Hamilton and Mr NW Duddy; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie is their Moderator; that the Rev GD Campbell, minister of Blackrock, retired on 30 October 2013; that the Rev Dr DJ Montgomery, minister of Greystones, resigned his charge on 2 September 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that the Rev AJ Dunlop presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh and was installed to the charge of Howth and Malahide on 1 June 2013; that the Rev HM Freeburn presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charge of Galway on 28 June 2013; that the Rev Mark Proctor presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charge of Naas on 29 June 2013; that the Rev Daniel Reyes Martin presented credentials from the Monaghan Presbytery and was installed to the charge of Kilkenny on 16 November 2013; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev WB Martin is their Moderator; that the Very Rev Dr IJ Patterson retired on 15 July 2013; that the Rev DJM Boyle resigned his charge on 31 January 2014 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that Mr Seamus Burke, a licentiate, was ordained and installed as minister of Second and Third Rathfriland on 19 April 2013; that Mr SW Hibbert presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was ordained and installed in Tullylish and Gilford on 2 May 2013; that Mr TT Boyd presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh and was ordained and installed as minister of First Rathfriland on 10 May 2013; that under their care are: as ministers without charge the Revs EG McAuley (retired) and WA Watson; as a licentiate Mr Andrew Boreland; as students Mr G Mullan and Mr M Rutledge; that they held Consultations with the Congregations of Glascar, Donaghmore, Drumgooland and Kilkinamurry; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev RS Agnew is their Moderator; that the Rev NS Millen retired as minister of Dundalk, Castlebellingham and Carlingford on 30 September 2013; that the Rev Daniel Reyes Martin, minister of Ballyalbany and Glennan, resigned his charge on 16 November 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that Mr DTR Edwards presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was ordained and inducted to the charge of Cootehill, Drum and

Kilmount on 17 May 2013; that the Rev Stanley Stewart presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was inducted to the charge of Stonebridge, Clones, Newbliss and Ballyhobridge on 5 October 2013; that the Rev DJM Boyle presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh and was installed to the charge of First Castleblaney, Frankford, Corvalley and Ervey on 1 February 2014; that they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr Jonathan Porter; that a Consultation is being held with the Congregations of First Monaghan and Smithborough; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately.

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev MB Wilson is their Moderator; that the Rev DJ Temple, minister of Warrenpoint and Rostrevor, retired on 30 April 2013; that under their care are: as students Mr JT Blue and Mr SD Kennedy; that they held Consultations at Markethill and Tyrone's Ditches; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev JH Hanson is their Moderator; that the Rev Joseph Davison, minister emeritus of Drumquin, died on 30 August 2013; that the Rev CI Dickson resigned from the charge of Cavanaleck and Aughentaine on 31 December 2013; that Mr Jonathan Cowan presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was ordained and installed to the charge of Mountjoy and Drumlegagh on 26 April 2013; that Mr RSG Beacom was ordained and inducted to the charge of Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge and Newtownbutler on 31 May 2013; that Mr NL Smyth presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and installed to the charge of Clogherney and Sixmilecross on 14 June 2013; that Ms LM Keys presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and installed to the charge of Seskinore and Edenderry on 21 June 2013; that they have under their care as a minister without charge the Rev CI Dickson; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Peter Turton is their Moderator; that the Rev HB Wallace, minister emeritus of Bushmills, died on 21 September 2013; that the Rev WER Barton, minister emeritus of Mosside, died on 5 December 2013; that the Rev George Cunningham, minister emeritus of Armooy and Ramoan, died on 29 December 2013; that the Rev Dr PB Wilson, minister of Bushmills, resigned his charge on 2 January 2014 and was inducted as a chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces, (RAF); that Mr Alan Buick presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady and was ordained and installed to the charge of Dunluce on 12 April 2013; that Mr GJ MacLean presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Ballymoney on 30 April 2013; that under their care are: as ministers without charge the Revs Dr Victor Dobbin (retired) and William Brown (retired); that they held Visitations at Ballyweaney and Croaghmore; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr WJM Parker is their Moderator; that the Rev John Holmes, minister of First Randalstown and Duneane, retired on 29 December 2013; that Mr Jonathan Boyd presented

credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of Hydepark and Lylehill on 7 June 2013; that Mr MA Johnston was licensed on 26 May 2013 and given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that Mr RJ Edgar presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh, Mr MPR Fryer from the Presbytery of North Belfast and Mr PWA McClelland from the Presbytery of Ballymena and were received as licentiates; that under their care are: as licentiates Mr RJ Edgar, Mr MPR Fryer, Mr PWA McClelland, Mr Stephen McNie and Mr SA Morrow; that they held a Consultation at Second Ballyeaston; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev DH Brown is their Moderator; that the Rev JC Lee, minister emeritus of Culnady and Swatragh, died on 10 January 2014; that the Rev Dr KO Patterson, minister of Castledawson and Curran, retired on 20 October 2013; that the Rev WG Hamilton resigned his charge in Claggan and Orritor on 26 June 2013 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr RJ Watt was licensed on 31 May 2013 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that under their care are: as licentiates Mr JA Dunn, Mr NJ Kane and Mr Graeme Orr; as a licentiate without charge Mr KH Hibbert; as students for the ministry Mr David Clarke, Mr Bryan Kee and Mr Philip Leonard; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

GENERAL BOARD

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The General Board covers a wide range of work which is set out as follows:

- (a) The **Memorial Record** to recognise the life and service of those ministers who have died since the last Assembly;
- (b) The **retirement** of the Clerk and **appointment** of a Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly;
- (c) The **General Work of the Board** which refers to work which will not be reported in the other Committee and Panel reports;
- (d) The **Assembly Committee Reports** – Priorities, Planned Giving; Doctrine; Moderator’s Advisory; Church and Society; Global Concerns; Church Relations; Reception of Ministers and Licentiates; and Elders’ Terms. The Structures Review Panel and the Presbytery Engagement Panel will report alongside the Priorities Committee and the Pastoral Care of Manse Families Panel with the Moderator’s Advisory Committee;
- (e) The **Presbyterian Historical Society**, while not accountable to the General Assembly, reports for information only.

MEMORIAL RECORD

The Very Rev Dr Donald Patton reports:

The Rev John Scott Martin, BA, minister emeritus of Drumlough and Annahilt Congregations in the Presbytery of Dromore, died on 12 June 2013 in the 82nd year of his age and the 45th year of his ministry. One of two children he was born on 19 February 1932 to Joseph Martin and his wife Martha, who farmed at Stonebridge in County Monaghan. He was raised in the Congregation of Stonebridge, Monaghan, and educated at Smithborough National School (1936-1944) and then Clones High School (1944-1948). On leaving school he worked on the family farm for some years. He joined the Congregation of First Portadown in 1962. Converted to Christ in his teenage years, he later heard the call of God to the ordained ministry. He studied at Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin (1962-1966), graduating BA and took his theological course at the Assembly’s College, Belfast, (1966-1968). He was licensed by the Presbytery of Armagh on 23 June 1968. He served his assistantship (1967-1970) in Richview Congregation, Donegall Road, Belfast, and was ordained there by the Presbytery of Belfast South on 18 December 1968. He was called to the Congregations of Knowhead, Fahan, and Inch, where he was installed by the Presbytery of Foyle on 19 March 1970. A few years later, he was called to Drumlough and installed there by the Presbytery of Dromore on 27 September 1972. Annahilt was united with Drumlough in 1974 and Mr Martin was installed as minister on 12 September of that year. Mr Martin exercised an evangelical ministry, calling his hearers to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour

and conscientiously pastoring his people. During the 1970s he was active in the Campaign for Complete Withdrawal from the World Council of Churches, a grouping internal to the Presbyterian Church which spearheaded a movement to persuade the Church to withdraw from membership of the World Council, which the Assembly decided to do in 1980. He married Margaret Eleanor Wallace on 15 September 1964 in Clontibret. They had four children, Josephine Elaine, Martha Eleanor Elizabeth (Libby), Ruth Caroline, and Sharon Rebecca. 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 comforts of Almighty God.

The Rev Henry Brian Murphy, BA, BD, DD, DipEd, died on 24 June 2013 in the 90th year of his age and the 58th year of his ministry. He was born on 26 July 1923 to Thomas Henry Murphy, a Rate Collector with the Belfast Corporation, and his wife Martha, née Smiley. His sister, Irene, was born two years later. The family worshipped in Fisherwick Presbyterian Church where the Rev John Waddell was minister in Dr Murphy's developing years. Dr Murphy's father was an elder and Captain of the Boys' Brigade Company. He was educated at Rosetta Primary School and Methodist College, Belfast, and, upon leaving school, he worked with The Trustee Savings Bank from 1940 to 1942. The Second World War broke out in 1939 and, as with so many young men of the time, he entered the British Army in 1942 and served with the Royal Engineers as a Sergeant. On D-Day, June 1944, he took part in the Normandy Landings as a skipper of a landing craft, carrying ashore men, tanks and armoured cars. In 1945, it was his responsibility to re-open the Brussels Canal Port to ensure a continuing supply of food and coal to a cold and starving people. He was demobbed in 1947 and returned home to rejoin the staff of The Trustee Savings Bank. Settling again in Fisherwick Congregation he became Captain of the Boys' Brigade and Organist and Choirmaster at Ballylinney Congregation near Ballyclare. With the encouragement of the Rev Dr John Withers, minister of Fisherwick, he left the bank in 1949 to study Philosophy, Greek and European History at the Queen's University, Belfast, graduating BA in 1952. While at Queen's he became President of the Student Christian Movement. Convinced of the call of God to the ordained ministry he trained at the Assembly's College, Belfast, completing his studies in 1955 with a BD. He served as assistant in Newington Congregation and was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 2 June 1955. The following year he was installed as minister in Clogher by the Presbytery of Clogher on 15 March 1956. Tempo was added in 1959. These were busy years with the building of a new hall, the WH Bailey Memorial Hall, and the planning of a new manse, taking up a lot of his time. Mr Murphy took an active interest in the youth work, acting for a few years as the Scout Master. He published a history of the Presbytery, *Three Hundred years of Presbyterianism in Clogher*, in 1958. In 1963 he was called to the historic Congregation of First Derry being installed there on 13 March. As well as attending to his work in the Congregation, he served as Dean of Residences at the Magee University College in the city of Derry, was Chaplain to the Waterside Hospital, was a member of the Board of Governors of Foyle College and administered several city charitable trusts. The BBC on several occasions invited him to conduct Sunday morning radio service broadcasts. The 'Troubles' broke out in 1968 making congregational life very difficult, the Church building being sited just within the ancient walls of the city, and as people were displaced to the Waterside the Church suffered the

loss of many families. Mr Murphy involved himself deeply in peace-making and reconciliation work, taking part in cross-community efforts and was often found on the streets at night seeking to calm tempers in riotous situations. Tragically, five members of the Congregation lost their lives in the violence of the time and Mr Murphy had the sad task of conducting their funerals and comforting their families. In 1971 the General Assembly approved the creation of two full-time posts to promote Christian Education and to be responsible also for Sunday school work. Mr Murphy and Miss Caroline (Carrie) Barnett, now Mrs Carrie Barkley, were appointed Joint Conveners of the Church Education Committee. He resigned from First Derry in March 1972 and was formally installed as Associate Secretary for Christian Education and Senior Sunday School Organiser on 3 October of that year. He became responsible for producing study courses for use in the senior Sunday School classes of the Church and in the Bible classes, and also for the teachers' guides in these areas, so helping to inform the minds, character and faith of a whole generation of children and young people. He travelled thousands of miles conducting training classes and networking with other Churches in this important ministry. In this capacity he lectured in Christian Education at the Assembly's College, was editor and contributor to Towards Communicant Membership, a course for new communicants commissioned by the Tripartite Conversations. He acted as Secretary of 'The Child in the Church' group of the Irish Council of Churches and also contributed to the International Bible Reading Association's Notes for Adult Bible Reading in 1976. He found time to study part-time at the Queen's University for a Diploma in Education which he gained in 1975. During these years Mr Murphy, with his family, had returned to Fisherwick Church where he now served as an elder and Sunday School superintendent. Mr Murphy retired on 31 July 1988. His service to the Church, especially to Christian education, was recognised in May 1987 when the Presbyterian Theological Faculty Ireland conferred on him the degree of DD. Throughout the years of his service Dr Murphy was supported by his wife Mary Agnes Brown, née Hunter, whom he married on 31 July 1954 in Cliftonville Presbyterian Church, Belfast. They had two children, Gillian and Jonathan, whom, along with Mrs Murphy, we commend to the comforts of Almighty God as, together, we give thanks for Dr Murphy's life and ministry.

The Rev Joseph Davison, BA, BD, MA, died on 30 August 2013 in the 100th year of his age and the 75th year of his ministry. He was born at Ballyclose near Cullybackey, on 25 November 1913, the son of James Davison and his wife Mary, née McIlroy. Raised in the Congregation of Cuningham Memorial, Cullybackey, under the ministry of the Rev S McIlveen, he was educated at Ballymena Academy. Becoming convinced of the call of God to full-time ordained ministry he went to Magee University College, Londonderry, followed by Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA in 1936. He followed this with training for the ministry at the Assembly's College, Belfast. He served as assistant in the Congregation of Woodvale, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Ballymena on 5 June 1938. He was called by the Congregation of Drumquin and ordained there by the Presbytery of Omagh at his installation Service on 17 February 1939. He spent his whole ministry there, retiring on 30 June 1977 to Dumfries, Scotland. He married Margaret (Peggy) McMullan from Dungannon on 3 January 1940 and they were blessed in the birth of two daughters, Faith and Honor. Mr Davison was a model of the country minister. He visited his people at least once every

year sharing in their joys and sorrows. He preached the gospel to his people consistently every Sunday. He farmed the manse glebe and understood well the vagaries of how the weather affected this farming community in general. He continued his interest in study, gaining an MA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1949. Mrs Davison was fully involved with her husband in the life and work of the Congregation. Together they ran the Sunday School for many years and Mrs Davison acted as organist from her second Sunday in Drumquin until their retirement on 30 June 1977. Mrs Davison pre-deceased her husband in 2010. Mr Davison was able to turn his hand to many a task. He made the communion table out of old pews and an old organ casing, and during his ministry the Church was divided by a wall to create a hall with kitchen and toilet facilities. We give thanks to God for the faithful ministry of our friend and colleague and extend our sympathy to Mr Davison's family.

The Rev Elizabeth Jamison, BA, DipEd, MEd, DipTh, MTh, PhD, died on 11 September 2013 in the 83rd year of her age and the 24th of her ministry. Born at Belfast on 19 March 1931 she was the only child of Henry Cooke Jamison, a Mechanical Engineer, and his wife Matilda. The family were members of Knock Congregation where she received her early Christian education. She attended Mountpottinger Primary School, and the Belfast Royal Academy. She took her BA degree at the Queen's University, Belfast, and proceeded to IBC. On completion of teacher training she taught in Elmgrove School, later moving to Orangefield Secondary School when it first opened. Her love for, and interest in, children led her to train as an Educational Psychologist and she practised for some years in this capacity in Co Down and the greater Belfast area, advising teachers who had responsibility for children with learning difficulties. Throughout the years she continued her interest in academic study as the list of her degrees bears witness. She was also involved in the life of Orangefield Congregation and in Scripture Union, enthusiastically sharing the Gospel and her own personal faith. She was accepted as a student for the ministry of the Church and trained at Union Theological College, Belfast. She was awarded a PhD for her thesis on 'Religious Understanding in Children aged seven to eleven.' She was licensed on 14 June 1989 by the Presbytery of East Belfast and served as assistant minister to the Rev John McVeigh in the Congregation of Gilnahirk, 1988-1991, where she was ordained on 11 February 1990. In the ensuing years she served in a variety of posts, lecturing in Union Theological College and ministering in Garnerville, Whitehead, Kircubbin and in the border counties of Cavan and Monaghan. Her later years were dogged by ill health and severely restricted her mobility. Together with her circle of friends we give thanks to God for her life and witness.

The Rev Hugh Barkley Wallace, BA, MA, Minister Emeritus of Bushmills Congregation, in the Presbytery of Route, died on 21 September 2013 in the 80th year of his age and the 54th year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 18 November 1933 to the Rev JB Wallace, Minister of Drumbo Congregation in the Presbytery of Dromore, and his wife Anne, née Hume. He received his secondary education at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, followed by Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, graduating in 1956. He then attended the Assembly's College, Belfast, for theological training, completing his studies in 1958. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Dromore on 20 October 1958 and served as assistant minister to the Rev Alfred

Martin, minister of Lowe Memorial, Finaghy, Belfast. On receiving a call to the Congregations of Drumhillery and Middletown he was ordained and installed in these Congregations on 20 April 1960. This was followed by another notable milestone when in August of that year he and Margaret Wilma Wallace were married and settled down to manse life being blessed some time later with the birth of a son, John Barkley. Mr Wallace was noted for his love of literature and facility with the English language. He always had the right word for every occasion. He was a convinced Presbyterian and liturgical in his conduct of worship. These gifts were well employed in his capacity as Convener of the Public Worship Committee of the General Assembly 1982-1989 and of the Memorial Record 1991-1997. He was deeply involved in the preparation of the *Church Hymnary, Third Edition* and of the *Irish Presbyterian Hymnbook* and served as a member of the Church Hymnary Trust. He was closely associated with the production of several of the various experimental revisions to *The Book of Public Worship* and work on the *Glory to God* hymnbook. After ten happy years in his first charges he moved to Bushmills Congregation on 19 February 1970, where he remained until his retirement on 30 June 2000 becoming the longest serving minister there of the twentieth century. Over these years he moved in and out among the people showing compassion and care to all in need. During his ministry the Hamill Hall, its ancillary services, and the manse, were renovated. Later a new minor hall was erected. In 1996 the Congregation celebrated 350 years of life and witness and Mr Wallace authored a short history, *Bushmills Presbyterian Church 1646 – 1996*. A man of broad sympathies he fostered and maintained good relations with counterparts in other traditions. In his ministry he was loyally supported by his wife who played an active part in the life and work of the Congregation. In the wider community he served as Chairman of the Board of Governors of Dunluce School and also of Bushmills Primary School and for a time was President of the TCD Association. As Clerk of the Presbytery of Route, 1986-2007 he came to know its Congregations well. Conversant with the laws of the Church he proved a wise counsellor to the Presbytery and a true friend to all of his colleagues, often giving quiet encouragement when needed. We give thanks for the life and service of our colleague, mourning his passing with his loved ones but assured of the hope of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rev Ernest Morrow, BA, minister emeritus of First Dunboe in the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady, died on 19 November 2013 in the 96th year of his age and the 64th year of his ministry. He was born at Ballyworkan, Portadown, on 24 November 1916 to Hugh Morrow, a farmer, and his wife Abbey. Brought up in the Congregation of First Portadown he received his early education at Ballyworkan Primary School, Edenderry Primary School, and Portadown Technical College. For some years he worked in business, and later, responding to the call of God to the ordained ministry, he proceeded to the Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, graduating in 1948. While at Magee he was President of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Students. He took his theological course at New College, Edinburgh, and the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Armagh on 28 May 1950 and served his assistantship in the Congregation of Oldpark, Belfast. A short time later, on 27 July 1950, he was ordained and installed in the Congregation of First Dunboe by the Presbytery of Coleraine. He was known to the Congregation

through some assistantship work in the summers of 1948 and 1949 when he had evidently proved his worth. He remained as minister until his retirement on 31 December 1981. During these years Mr Morrow was instrumental in extending the life and work of the Congregation through establishing organisations such as the Boys Brigade, a Youth Fellowship, a Women's Missionary Society (the precursor of the Presbyterian Women's Association) and a Bowling Club. The new minister brought dynamism and vision to the life of the Congregation. At the same time he faithfully proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ, and pastored his people diligently through the vicissitudes of their everyday lives. In all of this he was readily assisted by his wife, Martha, née Campbell, from Strabane. They were blessed with two children, Allison Joseph and Hugh Arthur Charles. Mr Morrow found relaxation in bee-keeping, horses, ornithology and farming life, reflecting his rural roots. On retirement he and his wife moved to Scotland to be near his wife's sister. It is a tribute to the affection in which his memory was held that in the year 2000, twenty years after his retirement, a delegation from First Dunboe travelled to Scotland to mark the 50th anniversary of Mr Morrow's ordination and to present gifts to him and Mrs Morrow. To his family we extend our sympathy in their loss and with them give thanks for the life and service of the Rev Ernest Morrow.

The Rev Norman John Linkens, BD, died on 21 November 2013 in the 82nd year of his age and the 48th year of his ministry. The eldest of two brothers he was born at Deal, Kent, on 2 October 1932 the son of AJ and WM Linkens. His early years were spent in Walmer, Kent, and in his teens he was educated at Birkenhead School 1943-1950. The family attended Trinity Presbyterian Church, Birkenhead. He was won to personal faith in Christ in his teens, and attendance at a Christian Camp one summer set him on the pathway to maturing faith. Finishing school at age eighteen he became an apprentice engineer at Crewe railway yard. He was called up for National Service with the Royal Engineers from 1953 to 1955. In association with the Forces he took on the role of Forces Welfare Officer in Germany with the YMCA. This period confirmed for him the call of God to full-time Christian ministry. He attended London Bible College/ University of London graduating BD in 1956. He came over to Northern Ireland and worked with the CSSM movement, a ministry to children and a focus he would maintain over the course of the years together with ministry to families. In 1960 he was installed as the minister of Crosscollyer Street Evangelical Presbyterian Church, North Belfast. In 1960 he married Ruth Patricia Smith. They moved to Scotland in 1963 where Mr Linkens acted for a time as Scripture Union Children's Evangelist and Camps Organiser, until, following ordination by the Presbytery of Ayr on 16 December 1964, he became a minister of the Church of Scotland and was installed in Muir Kirk Parish Church. This was followed by service in two further parishes – Old Port Glasgow Parish Church 1969-1971 and Holytown Parish Church, Lanarkshire, 1973-1978. The family returned to Northern Ireland in 1978 and Mr Linkens was accepted into the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and installed in Westbourne Congregation by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 1 September 1978 where he remained until September 1987 when he was installed in Dunlop Memorial on 3 September of that year. He resigned on 29 February 1996 and served as Stated Supply in Cloughey and Portavogie until his retirement on 30 August 1998. He was Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1993. Throughout his ministry he was supported by his wife, Ruth, and they had

four children, Fiona, Paul (Minister of Ebrington Congregation, Londonderry), Rachel and Timothy. To his immediate family we extend our gratitude to God for the faithful ministry of their loved one and our sympathy in their loss.

The Rev William Ernest Ronald Barton, MA, minister emeritus of Mosside in the Presbytery of Route, died on 5 December 2013 in the 79th year of his age and the 46th year of his ministry. One of three brothers, he was born at Belfast on 3 July 1935 to James Benson Barton, who was a Methodist Minister, and his wife Ivy Gwendaline, née Allen. His father died suddenly when they lived in Bangor and Mr Barton joined Trinity Presbyterian Church in the town. He attended Shaftesbury House Tutorial College and followed the well-worn tertiary educational path to Magee University College, Londonderry, then Trinity College, Dublin, and the Assembly's College, Belfast, in preparation for the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Ards on 1 May 1965 and served as assistant minister in the Congregations of St Andrew's; Joymount, Carrickfergus; Trinity, Omagh and Cooke Centenary, Belfast where he was ordained on 15 January 1967 by the Presbytery of East Belfast. He was installed in his first charge of Trinity, Bailieborough, Bellasis and Seafin on 14 February 1968 and a year later, 17 September 1969, he moved to Clogher and Tempo. In the interim, on 8 March 1969, he married Maud Esther Elliott, whom he met while a patient in Newtownards Hospital where she was a nurse. They had one son, James. In 1973 he moved to Mosside being installed on 18 September, and remained there until his retirement on 9 July 2000. He moved among his people regularly, a welcome visitor to their homes, pastoring their needs and sharing the joys and sorrows of their lives. He involved himself in the local community, supporting and playing with the local football team and being active in the Orange and Black Institutions. He prepared thoroughly for the pulpit and took the Senior Young People's Bible Class and assisted the Youth fellowship. His wife became likewise involved in the life of the Church and the community, leading the Girls' Brigade work for many years as Captain. Her death in 1995 was a severe blow to Mr Barton which undermined his health. Mr Barton was for a time a member of the Board of Studies and Church Extension Agent for the Presbytery. Mr Barton was a model of the traditional minister, preacher and pastor, for whose service we give thanks to God and extend our sympathy to his son James and the wider family circle.

The Rev George Cunningham, BA, died on 29 December 2013 in the 78th year of his age and the 47th year of his ministry. He was born on 16 November 1936 to Thomas Cunningham, a chauffeur, and his wife Mary Agnes, née Shaw. The family worshipped in Whitehouse Presbyterian Church where the Rev James Nutt was minister. He was educated at Whiteabbey Primary school and then Carrickfergus Technical College. He worked as a joiner until, hearing the call of God to missionary service, following his conversion at a Jack Shuler evangelistic campaign in the King's Hall, Belfast, he enrolled as a student at Belfast Bible College. Two years later, 1959, he was appointed a missionary with the Londonderry City Mission. At that time, the Rev EA Russell, later Professor of New Testament at the Assembly's College, Belfast and who had lectured at the Belfast Bible College, recognising his gifts encouraged Mr Cunningham to study for the Presbyterian ministry. So he enrolled at Magee College, then Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA in 1965 and completed his studies at the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast

on 11 June 1967 and served his assistantship in Bethany Congregation, Shankill Road, Belfast, with the Rev John Girvan, where he was ordained on 14 December 1967. Two years later he received a call to the Congregations of Knappagh and Lislooney and was installed there on 25 June 1969 by the Presbytery of Armagh. These years saw considerable movement of population from various parts of the Province to towns such as Craigavon, Carrickfergus and Antrim. The Church Extension Committee of the Presbyterian Church planned new Churches to cater for Presbyterians settling in these new developments. So it was that the Committee asked Mr Cunningham to consider Church Extension work believing he had the requisite gifts. He responded by moving to the fledgling Congregation of Greystone Road, Antrim, which had been established in 1969 with the Rev Derek Weir of Killead as Stated Supply. Following his induction there, on 2 April 1971, he threw himself into the work. His friendly personality and community involvement was rewarded with rapid growth and a Church building was opened on 9 September 1972. Within five years the Congregation had grown to over 400 families leading to full congregational status in 1977 and the installation of Mr Cunningham as the minister on March 6 of that year. A few years later, in 1983, he took up a new Church Extension challenge when he was installed in Burnside, Portstewart, on 20 January that year. Once again he gave himself enthusiastically to the work, building up the membership, steering the fund-raising, and augmenting contributions through the sale of tapes in which he sang, accompanying himself on the guitar. He also served as a Chaplain to the Coleraine site of the University of Ulster for some years. In 1996 he took up what would be his final full-time position in the united charges of Armoyn and Ramoan, being installed on 28 May of that year and serving until his retirement on 31 December 2001. In this busy life he relaxed by playing golf, utilising his joinery skills, and painting, all of which he continued in retirement until, in latter years, ill health restricted his activities. Throughout these years Mr Cunningham was fully supported by his wife, Marion Ann Smith, née Mulholland, whom he married on 26 September 1959. They had three children, Diane, David George, and Alison. We commend them and their families to the prayers of the Church, as, with them, we give thanks to God for the faithful service of our brother and their loved one.

The Rev George Alfred Grindle, MBE, DD, Minister Emeritus of the Kinghan Church, Belfast, died on 17 December 2013 in the 76th year of his age and the 42nd year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 26 April 1938, the eldest of three sons, to Charles John Grindle, a teacher to the deaf community, and his wife, Anna Mary, née McIntyre, from Malin. Brought up in the Parish Church of St Nicholas, he was educated at Malone Primary School followed by Methodist College, Belfast (1949-1956) and followed a course of teacher training at Stranmillis College, Belfast (1956 to 1959). From 1961 to 1962 he attended Manchester University to qualify as a teacher to the deaf. He gained a teaching position in the Jordanstown School for the Deaf. It was there he met Isabella Margaret Jack who was a housemother in the school. Love blossomed and they were married in October 1963. He was approached by the wife of the Rev Dr Robert Allen who persuaded him to succeed her husband in ministry to the Kinghan Mission community, now the Kinghan Church. He worked in the Kinghan Church from 1967 at the same time pursuing theological study at the Assembly's College, Belfast. He learned to sign and became fluent in the

language, helping to gain public recognition of the language in the United Kingdom. On completion of his course he was licensed by the Presbytery of South Belfast on 24 October 1971 in Malone Presbyterian Church where he had become a member, and was ordained and installed as minister of the Kinghan Church by the Presbytery of South Belfast on 26 April 1972. He remained there until his retirement on 26 April 2003. He not only conducted Sunday Worship but travelled widely, visiting people in their homes and acting as interpreter in hospitals, courtrooms, police stations and with social workers. His warm heart and reassuring smile opened many a door for ministry in the name of Christ and lives were spiritually changed and strengthened. In 1990 he saw the realisation of his hard work to remodel the Church building. The interior was redesigned to provide a modern worship centre downstairs and a recreation hall upstairs which was named in his honour. He travelled widely to make the ministry of the Church known and raised a lot of the funding for the building work. He was a friend to many and extended his ministry by acting as administrator of the clergy conferences run by the Kairos Trust. His steady commitment to, and tireless work for, the deaf community over the years, was doubly recognised when, firstly, in 1987 he was awarded the MBE, and then in 1998 the Presbyterian Theological Faculty Ireland conferred on him the Degree of DD. Mrs Grindle, son Richard, and daughter Elizabeth, are joined by many in the Church and beyond, who have cause to give thanks to God for the life and ministry of George Grindle and who mourn his passing with them.

The Rev William James Lamont, BA, minister emeritus of Killymurriss Congregation in the Presbytery of Ballymena, died on 31 December 2013 in the 89th year of his age and the 59th year of his ministry. He was born at Ballymenagh, Garvagh, on 10 June 1925 to John Lamont, a farmer, and his wife Margaret. His home Congregation was First Garvagh. He received his early education at Carhill Primary School. He left school aged fourteen and worked on his father's farm with his younger brother, Samuel, until hearing the call of God to the ordained ministry. He prepared for service by studying at the Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, from where he graduated BA in 1952. He took his theological course at New College, Edinburgh and the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Coleraine on 4 June 1954 and was assistant to the Rev James McFarland of Sinclair Seamen's Congregation in Belfast. He was called to the Congregation of Killymurriss and ordained and installed there on 6 October 1955 by the Presbytery of Ballymena. He was to remain there until his retirement on 31 December 1994. He shepherded the people over these years nurturing them in the faith that is in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, sharing with them the highs and lows of their lives, moving among his people as friend and guide. The young were challenged to vital faith and discipleship through coffee bars he and others arranged on the Church premises. He prepared well for the pulpit bringing only a few notes with him to the Sunday preaching. He exercised an expository ministry opening the Scriptures chapter by chapter. He was also kept busy with duties and responsibilities out-with his Congregation. Within the wider Presbyterian Church he served on the General Assembly's Business Committee, the Committee on Temperance and Gambling and was a member of the Board of Education. He acted as Clerk to the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine from 1972 to 2003 and was Moderator of that Synod in 1992. He also served as a member of the Irish Council of Christian Endeavour and

National and Young People's Convenor and Young Adults Convenor, evidencing his strong interest in nurturing the spiritual life of the young. He found relaxation in gardening and bee-keeping and was Chairman of the Mid-Antrim Beekeepers Association. He married Eileen May McConaghy soon after his installation in Killymurry and they had five children – Helen Maxine, Isobel Margaret, John Victor, Samuel David, and William James Alistair. To them, Mrs Lamont, and their wider family circle, we extend our sympathy finding victory in loss through the assurance of the Lord Jesus Christ who said 'I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there you may be also.'

The Rev Robert (Bertie) Alexander Crooks, BA, MA, died on 4 January 2014 in the 87th year of his age and the 60th year of his ministry. One of four children, two brothers and sisters, he was born at Broughshane on 9 July 1927 to James Crooks and his wife Lavinia. The family worshipped in High Kirk Congregation, Ballymena, where the Rev James Nutt was minister. He received his secondary education at Ballymena Academy and continued his studies at the Queen's University, Belfast, (1946); Trinity College, Dublin; Magee College, Londonderry, (1949) and New College, Edinburgh (1950). Responding to the call of God to the ordained Christian ministry he studied at the Assembly' College, Belfast. He was licensed on 13 July 1952 by the Presbytery of Ballymena, and served as an assistant to the Rev David Porter in the Congregation of Richview, Donegall Road, Belfast. During this period he met Elizabeth (Betty) Florence McKee, a Canadian, who was visiting two aunts in Belfast. Romance blossomed and following ordination on 10 January 1954, he moved to Canada where, a few weeks later, he and Betty married on the thirtieth of that month. In February he was installed as minister of St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Parry Sound, Ontario. He ministered there for twenty-three years exercising a biblical and evangelical ministry. He was in demand as a preacher and conducted many Gospel Missions and spoke at Conventions. In 1976, following the retirement of the Rev Dr JW Orr from Bloomfield Presbyterian Church, Belfast, he was invited to preach as sole nominee. After a lengthy period he accepted the call and was installed in Bloomfield on 2 September 1977 by the Presbytery of East Belfast. For eleven years he served the Congregation as a much loved pastor and preacher where his gifts were again deployed fruitfully and throughout Northern Ireland. He retired to London, Ontario, on 15 June 1993. His wife predeceased him. We express our sympathy to their children, Colleen, Carolyn, Brian, and to the extended family, joining them in thanksgiving for the service of one who knows fulfilment of a favourite text 'And I -in righteousness - I shall see your face; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with seeing your likeness.' Psalm 17:15.

The Rev Aylmer Ernest Armstrong, DipArt, minister emeritus of Moneydig, died on 10 January 2014 in the 90th year of his age and the 54th year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 7 April 1924 to Aylmer William Armstrong, who worked in Belfast docks, and his wife Kathleen, née Vint. Mr Armstrong was educated at the Belfast Technical High School and Belfast College of Art (1940-1945) qualifying with a Diploma in Art and in Art teaching. A gifted artist, he continued to paint throughout his life, exhibiting in private and public art galleries in Ireland and in the Royal Ulster Academy, selling many of his etchings and landscapes. He taught Art in Coleraine Technical College and Coleraine High from 1945 to 1955. During these years he was an active member

of the Congregation of New Row, Coleraine, and was elected a ruling elder there. His life took a new direction when, hearing the call of God to full-time ordained ministry, he entered the Assembly's College, Belfast, in 1956 and completed his theology course in 1959. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 26 May 1959 and assigned as assistant to the Rev Dr Thomas Fitch, Minister of Ravenhill Congregation, Belfast. A few years later, on receiving a call to the Congregation of Dungiven, he was ordained and installed there by the Presbytery of Limavady on 2 November 1961. A couple of years later Mr Armstrong was joined in the manse by Anne Margaret Holly of Portstewart upon their marriage on 7 August 1963. Mrs Armstrong supported him in his ministry and predeceased him in their retirement years. The 'Troubles' in the early 1970s brought disruption to the town and the Church building suffered bomb damage on several occasions, the memorial windows being shattered during one of these incidents in June 1972. In the mid 1970's Mr Armstrong moved to Moneydig where he was installed on 28 July 1976 and ministered there until his retirement on 30 September 1984. Mr Armstrong exercised a faithful and caring pastoral ministry among his people, also serving on the Social Witness Board and the Committee on Church Architecture of the General Assembly. For relaxation he enjoyed painting, gardening and writing. He often wrote reports of the Portstewart Convention, as it was then known, for the Presbyterian Herald, and also other articles on a variety of subjects. His good work is recorded in the hearts of those whom he served as also in the annals of heaven and we give thanks to God for the life and witness of our colleague.

The Rev John Carson Lee, Minister Emeritus of Cullnady and Swatragh Congregations in the Presbytery of Tyrone, died on 10 January 2014 in the 94th year of his age and the 49th year of his ministry. He was born at Monkstown on 19 June 1920 to William Lee and his wife, Margaret, née Carson, who were members of Whiteabbey Congregation. He attended Whiteabbey Primary School, followed by Carrickfergus Model School, and took a distance learning course with Wolsey Hall Tutorial College, Oxford. On leaving school he qualified as a cabinet maker and French polisher and worked for the Belfast firm of Lees, Hyman and Lees. He came to personal faith in Christ at the age of sixteen and served as Sunday School Superintendent in his home Congregation and was elected an elder at a young age. He married Pat Gibson in June 1944. He became convinced that God was calling him to full-time service and was accepted into the Belfast City Mission, leading the work for ten years on the Shore Road. During this time Mr Lee prepared for the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church and attended the Queen's University, Belfast, followed by the Assembly's College, Belfast. At the same time, though technically the assistant in Megain Memorial, he was, effectively, minister in Mersey Street Congregation. Sadly, his wife Pat took ill and died. On completion of his studies, Mr Lee was licensed by the Presbytery of North Belfast on 30 May 1965 and ordained in Mersey Street on 5 December 1965 by the Presbytery of East Belfast. He received a call to the Congregations of First Bailieborough, Glasleck and Corranearny and was installed there as minister on 15 November 1967. He and his new wife, Anne Gamble, of Whiteabbey, whom he married in April 1966, and sons Ivan and Kenneth by his first marriage, settled down to happy family life and pastoral ministry in the County Cavan. Six years later Mr Lee accepted a call to minister in the Congregations of Cullnady

and Swatragh and he was installed in these two charges on 14 December 1987. He preached the Gospel faithfully to his hearers and ministered the challenges and comforts of the Word of God in the ups and downs of life. He and Mrs Lee started a Girls' Brigade Company which still prospers. Mr Lee retired in 1987 but continued in active ministry as stated supply in Largy, 1988 to 1994. We give thanks to God for the witness of our brother to the grace of the Gospel and assure Mrs Lee and Mr Lee's sons, Ivan and Kenneth, by his first marriage, of our sympathy and prayers in their loss.

The Rev John Brian Moore, BA, MA, DD, died on 14 January 2014 in the 82nd year of his age and the 56th year of his ministry. He was born at Bangor, Co Down, on 20 January 1933 to John Moore, a parcels Manager with LMS, and his wife Evelyn, née Jackson. His home Congregation was First Bangor and he came to personal faith in Christ through a CSSM mission at Ballyholme. He was educated at Bangor Grammar School and in 1950 started further study at the Magee University College, Londonderry, continuing at Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated BA in 1953. He pursued his theological studies at New College, Edinburgh, and the Assembly's College, Belfast, in preparation for the ordained ministry. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Ards on 27 May 1956 and served his assistantship with the Rev James Dunlop in the Congregation of Oldpark, Belfast, until he was ordained and installed in First Portglenone on 5 November 1958 by the Presbytery of Ballymena. It was during these years that he developed his conviction of, and skill in, expository preaching and its application to daily life. Then on 16 December 1965 he was installed as minister of Albert Street Congregation, Belfast. Some months later he married Jean Stewart Lowry from Portglenone and they settled down to manse life in Belfast. They had two children, Christine and Iain. Four years later the 'Troubles' broke out and had a devastating impact on the Congregations' worship, work and witness. Security gates were erected nearby and were closed in the evenings, and part of the Church halls was occupied by the British Army. This gave impetus to a radical rethink of the future of the Congregation which led to the union of Albert Street and Argyle Place in February 1971, the new Congregation meeting in the Argyle Street premises on the front of the Shankill Road and renamed West Kirk. The civil unrest of the following years took Mr Moore into riotous situations and into many homes severely affected by violence and intimidation. His preaching focus on the Lordship of Christ during these years gave hope and inspiration to many in the Congregation living through the social upheaval of the times. He gave himself unsparingly in ministry to the needs around him which took their toll and led to a life-threatening illness of many months duration in 1976. He took a keen interest in the Boys' Brigade often joining in Five-Aside football games, perhaps seeking to emulate some of the players of Liverpool Football Club which he supported. Within the wider Presbyterian Church he served as Convener of the Home Board 1996-2000 and Co-Convener of the Board of Mission in Ireland 2000-2003. He was a delegate to the Nineteenth General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1964 and a member of the Foreign Mission Committee. Himself a life-long student of theology he encouraged Christian witness in university and college life through his membership of UCCF committees and sharing his convictions and insights with students for the ministry. The Church recognised his work when the Presbyterian Theological Faculty Ireland, awarded him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1997. Dr Moore retired to his birthplace

of Bangor on 30 June 2001. To Mrs Moore, Christine and Iain, we extend our prayers and assure them of our gratitude to God for the life and work of their loved one, our brother and colleague.

The Rev Alexander Stuart Cromie, MA, LLB, the father of the General Assembly, and minister emeritus of Lisnabreen, Bangor, in the Presbytery of Ards, died on 5 February 2014 in the 103rd year of his age and the 80th year of his ministry. The younger of two brothers (Dr Robert Cromie was killed during the Second World War) he was born at Ballymoney on 13 March 1911 to Samuel James Cromie, a draper, and his wife Sarah Morton Cromie, née Killough, from Carnageeragh, Kilraghts. The family worshipped in First Ballymoney Congregation and Mr Cromie was educated at Ballymoney Model School (1916-1922) and Ballymoney High School, now Dalriada, (1922-1927). He then went to Magee University College, Londonderry, at age 16, the youngest ever student to be admitted, and graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, BA, in 1931. He continued with academic study in the ensuing years, gaining an MA in 1933 and LLB in 1947. On leaving Trinity he studied theology at Princeton, New Jersey, USA, and at the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Route on 2 May 1933 and served as assistant to the Rev Dr James Paton in the Congregation of Malone, Belfast. He received a call to the Congregation of Gilford, County Down, and was ordained and installed there as minister on 29 November 1934, remaining in this village charge until moving to Limerick and Ennis on 10 October 1946. In 1950 he moved to Trinity, Cork, and was installed there on 13 December. He was active in promoting friendship and co-operation among the Churches, organising monthly meetings for local clergy from all the denominations. He returned to the north in 1955 and was installed in Clifton Street United, Belfast, on 12 December 1955. The later 1960's saw movement of population to new urban and economic centres in Northern Ireland. The Church Extension Committee planned and built new Churches to cater for the spiritual needs in these new developments. Mr Cromie felt called to this work and spearheaded church planting first of all at Abbey, Monkstown, from 15 April 1966 to June 1971 and then Bloomfield Road, Bangor, now Lisnabreen, from 1 July 1971 until his retirement on 26 September 1973. Mr Cromie was involved in the work of the wider Church, acting as Clerk to the Presbytery of Belfast from 1960 to 1962; as Clerk to the Synod of Belfast, 1963 to 1971; Convener of the Parish Boundaries Committee of the General Assembly, 1976 to 1981; Secretary and Treasurer to the Widow's Fund of the Southern Association. When the Rev Dr Tom Simpson, Deputy Clerk to the General Assembly, was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1983, Mr Cromie acted as Deputy Clerk during that year. He played an active part in the founding of the Rural Settlement Trust and in the running of the Presbyterian Mutual Society in its early years. Throughout his ministry Mr Cromie was encouraged and supported by his wife, Mabel, née Seawright, of Lurgan, whom he married in 1939. Her death in March 1995 was a great loss to him and to their son Stuart and his family. We assure the family circle of our sympathy and prayers as we give thanks to God for, and pay tribute to, the long life and service of our brother and colleague.

The Rev William Eoin Davison, BA, MA, PhD, DipEd, died on 14 March 2014 in the 91st year of his age and the 65th year of his ministry. He was born at Dromore, Co Down, on 8 March 1924, the youngest of five children, to William John Hill Davison, a Manager in the Ulster Bank, and his wife, Amy, née

Cosbie, of Ballymena. The family worshipped in the Congregation of Banbridge Road, Dromore, but, due to Mr Davison's senior's career, they moved to Newtownhamilton, and later, Stewartstown, becoming associated with the local Presbyterian Congregations in those communities. Mr Davison was educated at the Royal School, Armagh (1935-1941). As a teenager of fifteen he heard the call of God to the ministry of our Church while attending a Service of worship led by the Rev Alfred Neill in First Armagh Presbyterian Church. On leaving school he proceeded to Magee University College, Londonderry (1941-1945) and the Assembly's College, Belfast (1945-1948) graduating with BA and MA degrees. He served his assistantship in Townsend Street Congregation, Belfast, under the ministry of the Rev JW Johnston, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Tyrone on 9 December 1947. In 1949 he was called to the Congregations of Carrowdore and Ballyfrenis being ordained in Carrowdore on 25 August 1949. Soon after, he married Elsie Graham whom he had met in Townsend Street. A son, Peter, was later born to them. Some years later, with the encouragement of the Rev Dr Joseph Gibson, Clerk of the General Assembly, Mr Davison moved to minister in the Church Extension charge of Rathcoole and was installed there on 15 April 1955. The fledgling Congregation had been meeting in temporary premises, but, under Mr Davison's enthusiastic leadership, a Church building was opened on 27 April 1957. These were busy years gathering and establishing the Congregation and developing various ministries which placed the Church at the heart of the community. Mr Davison's warm heart and friendly disposition, together with his ability to communicate in the pulpit, commended the Christian Gospel to many around. Throughout these years Mr Davison showed a particular interest in ministry to, and the education of, children. During this time he continued his own academic study attaining his DipEd from Queen's and completing a PhD thesis on the Presbyterian Church's involvement in social issues. He did some part-time teaching at Belfast Royal Academy, leading to his appointment in 1967 as an RE teacher in Ballyclare High School. This led to his full-time appointment as Religious Education Adviser to the North Eastern Education and Library Board in 1972, which post he held until his retirement in 1989. In this capacity he shaped the religious education policy of schools within the catchment area, ensured a good focus on the value and importance of RE in the curriculum, encouraged teachers of the subject and influenced the spiritual development and understanding of young lives. Many ministers have been glad of the series of children's addresses which Dr Davison collected and made available for use. A keen advocate of temperance, he was a supporter, and, for a short time, a Director of the Irish Temperance League and gave the 1990 Robert Allen Memorial Lecture to the Presbyterian Historical Society, Ireland, on 'Presbyterianism and Social issues'. For a time he served on the Council of the Society. Throughout these busy years he was supported and encouraged by his wife Elsie, who also gave good service to the world of education as Vice Principal of Abbott's Cross Primary School. We join with Mrs Davison, son Peter, his wife Gillian and their children, in giving thanks to Almighty God for the ministry and fellowship of our brother, assuring them of our sympathy and prayers in their loss.

ASSEMBLY APPOINTMENTS

1. As previously reported the Clerk of the General Assembly, Rev Dr DJ Watts, will retire on 31 August, 2014. At the last Assembly the Rev TD Gribben was appointed Clerk-Designate. Resolutions are attached to accept the retirement of the present Clerk and appoint a new Clerk.

2. The last Assembly authorised the General Board to bring, if appropriate, a nomination for Deputy Clerk. In consultation with the Structures Review Panel a Job Description and Personnel Specification was agreed and the position advertised. A panel to interview was appointed with authority to bring a nomination directly to the General Assembly. At the time of writing five applications have been received and interviews are planned. The name of the nominee will be reported in the Supplementary Reports.

3. The Job Description and Personnel Specification agreed by the General Board are outlined below.

The Rev Dr Donald J Watts

The Very Rev Dr RA Patton writes:

1. The General Board wishes to submit this tribute to the outstanding work of the Rev Dr Donald as Clerk of Assembly and General Secretary from 2003 to 2014.

2. Dr Watts was born at Newcastle in 1948 and brought up in connection with Newcastle Presbyterian Church. He studied at Queen's University, Belfast, where he graduated a BSc and having felt the call of God to the ministry he proceeded to New College, Edinburgh. There he gained a BD with First Class honours in New Testament before returning to do a final year at Assembly's College, Belfast.

3. He was assistant minister in Malone Congregation and in 1980 was installed in Ballyholme Congregation. During his early years in this charge, he completed a PhD in New Testament from the University of Edinburgh. After a faithful and fruitful ministry there he was appointed Clerk Designate in 2001. On the retirement of the Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson in 2003, Dr Watts was appointed as Clerk of Assembly, a post in which he served the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, along with the wider Church and community, with great faithfulness.

4. Added to this he was Convener of the University Education Committee from 1982-1989, the Presbyterian Residential Trust from 1985-1989, the Peace and Peacemaking Committee from 1996-1999, and various other committees. As Clerk of the Ards Presbytery from 1990-2001, he had an enviable reputation for his great wisdom in handling the often difficult matters that such an appointment frequently involves.

5. Dr Watts is a person of many gifts and breadth of vision which has been recognised beyond the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. He has played a significant and influential role in inter-church bodies at local, national and international level. It is a tribute to the esteem in which he is held in the wider family of Churches, that he was appointed an Ecumenical Canon in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, and has recently been appointed President of the Irish Council of Churches. He

also was a joint secretary to the Four Church Leaders. Following an interest close to his heart he has also served as Chairperson of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board.

6. Dr Watts has served the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with much wisdom and great understanding. The eleven years of service which Dr Watts has given to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as its Clerk have been years when the issues he and the Church have had to face have been far from either straightforward or predictable. Much of the work of the Clerk is carried on behind the scenes and his confidential support, advice and guidance have often been sought. Many complex, challenging and often sensitive issues have often ended up on Dr Watts's desk and on his mind and heart. The often associated heavy work load of the Judicial Commission has increased, involving more responsibility. His knowledge of the Church and his balanced and careful approach to difficult situations has in many instances, helped to steer the Church through choppy waters to a calmer place. Few people understand the pressures that the General Secretary of the denomination has had to endure, and the Church recognises the maturity, patience and composure which Donald has shown in handling tense and challenging circumstances. Many Congregations and individuals are indebted to Dr Watts for his steady, difficult and careful work often behind the scenes. He has been fair minded and always has had the welfare of the Church at heart.

7. The whole Church owes him a debt of gratitude for the selfless service given over the years. His diligence and courage especially in difficult personal circumstances has been an example to others. Throughout these years he has been supported at all times by his wife Fiona. Thanks are due to her for her faithful support to Donald as well her personal warmth and enthusiastic service in the Church. The whole General Assembly will want to wish both Dr and Mrs Watts many years of happy, healthy and busy retirement in the years ahead.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly and Deputy General Secretary

Salary Scale: E6 (£38,374 – £46,350)

Responsible to: The Clerk of the General Assembly

Main functions of job:

The Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly & Deputy General Secretary is appointed by the General Assembly to assist and, where appropriate, deputise for the Clerk and General Secretary in the performance of his duties and to carry out designated Executive Secretarial functions.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

To assist and deputise for the Clerk across the range of his duties as required from time to time, and specifically as follows:

1. To assist the Clerk in his support of Clerks of Presbytery, Ministers and others in leadership positions within the Church.
2. To assist with the proofing and indexing of Assembly Reports.
3. To prepare draft Minutes of Assembly, to act as Recording Secretary during the Assembly and to Proof and Index Assembly Minutes.
4. To minute Boards and Committees as required.
5. To deputise for the Clerk during holidays, illness and other absences.
6. To act in place of the Clerk under Par 269(2) (a) (ii) of the Code.
7. To assist the Clerk in representing the Church, as necessary.
8. To carry out any other duties as delegated by the Clerk as appropriate and reasonable within this function of the post.

To assist and deputise for the General Secretary across the range of his duties as required from time to time, and specifically as follows:

1. To oversee the work of two areas in the support services provided within Assembly Buildings. This will involve line-managing two heads of department and reporting to the General Secretary as necessary. (Initially it is envisaged that this will involve the Creative Production and IT Departments.)
2. To act as Authorising Officer for PCI's registration with the UK Border Agency with regard to visas etc.
3. To deputise for the General Secretary during holidays, illness and other absences.
4. To carry out any other duties as delegated by the General Secretary as appropriate and reasonable within this function of the post.

To carry out Executive Secretarial functions as follows:

1. To act as Executive Secretary to the Board of Christian Training (or its successor), supporting its Convener, as appropriate.
2. To line-manage staff within the Board of Christian Training (or its successor), as required.
3. To oversee and coordinate the work of the Conciliation Service.
4. To act as Authorising Officer for UTC's registration with the UK Border Agency with regard to visas etc.
5. To act in a representative role for the Board of Christian Training (or its successor) at meetings and groups, both internal and external to PCI, as appropriate.
6. To carry out deputation work within PCI on behalf of the Board of Christian Training (or its successor) and in a general role, as appropriate.
7. To carry out any other requested duties appropriate and reasonable within this function of the post.

The responsibilities and duties of the post may be revised or developed over time to meet changing needs of PCI and in particular in relation to any structural changes.

PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION**CRITERIA****1. Qualifications and knowledge:-****Essential**

1. An ordained Minister or Elder of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (or eligible to transfer from another denomination with a reformed theology - the essential nature of this post requires that the successful candidate meet this criterion as provided for under excepted occupations in the Fair Employment Treatment (NI) Order 1998)
2. A degree level qualification
3. Knowledge and understanding of the Code of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
4. Knowledge of the ethos, practice, structure and governance of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
5. Knowledge of the work and programmes of the Boards of the Church
6. A knowledge of the ecumenical, governmental, political and statutory structures in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
7. Good computer skills

Desirable

1. A degree in Theology
2. A broad understanding of all relevant legislation (e.g. Child Protection)
3. Knowledge of the current challenges to the Christian church in Ireland
4. Knowledge of issues relevant to the areas covered by IT
5. Knowledge of issues relevant to the areas covered by Creative Production

2. Relevant Experience**Essential**

1. Experience of leading and managing others
2. Experience of servicing committees and writing reports
3. Experience of change management

Desirable

1. At least 5 years post-ordination experience of congregational ministry
2. Experience of contributing to policy development
3. Experience of strategic development
4. Experience of setting and managing budgets
5. Experience of representing an organisation in the media e.g. TV and radio
6. Experience of interacting with politicians and government bodies
7. Experience of acting within a deputising role.

3. Personal Attributes:-

Essential

1. Demonstrable ability to lead and motivate others through the use of engagement, shared vision and values
2. Demonstrate an ability to understand and empathise with those working in parish ministry.
3. Good written and oral communication skills including public speaking
4. The ability to foster good working relationships at all levels both within and outside of the Church
5. The ability to influence and persuade
6. Strong organisational skills
7. Good conflict resolution and problem solving skills
8. Good team working skills
9. Ability to take initiative and manage own time effectively
10. The ability to manage change effectively
11. Personal resilience in challenging situations

4. Physical Requirements:-

Essential

1. Health – such as to allow for attendance reliability and work proficiency (reasonable adjustments will be made for those with a disability)
2. Appearance – must be acceptable within the working environment

5. Special Circumstances:-

Essential

1. Willing to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith in terms of the General Assembly's formula;
“I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as described in the Code (Chapter 1, Pars 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”
2. In full sympathy with the doctrinal position and ethos of the PCI and willing “loyally to implement” all decisions of the Courts of the Church
3. Available for irregular working hours, travel throughout Ireland and on occasions in the UK and beyond
4. Access to a car for work purposes

Desirable

1. Full driving licence

GENERAL WORK OF THE BOARD

1. The General Board met on five occasions to carry out its wide remit on behalf of the General Assembly. This includes responsibility for topics which have not been specifically assigned to any other Board or Commission, as well

as a co-ordinating role for all aspects of the Assembly's work. While most of the Board's work will be reported through the Assembly Committees, some more time-limited tasks are carried out by Panels which report to the Board.

2. Since 2009 there has been a **Financial Crisis Panel** to guide the Church through the difficult issues arising from the situation of the Presbyterian Mutual Society and to give guidance for the future. The General Board did not consider it necessary to ask the Panel to meet this year.

3. A Panel to consider the **Commercial Aspects of the Mall** has met and clarified some issues for the Property Management Committee. At the fore front of its thinking is a desire to ensure that Assembly Buildings continues to be used in a manner that sits comfortably with the ethos of the Church, minimises the overall running cost to PCI, maximises potential income and keeps to the fore ministry and missional opportunities. The Panel continues to consider the best arrangements for the ground floor of Assembly Buildings and will report with recommendations to the next Assembly.

4. At the request of the Youth and Children's Ministry Board, the General Board appointed a Panel to consider the **Future Use of Guysmere**. It is in the early stages of its work and will report next year.

5. The Board was also requested by the Board of Finance and Personnel to set up a Panel to consider the implications for the Church of the **Charities Act** and the new Charities Commission. It is clear that Congregations, Presbyteries and the General Assembly, together with some other Church bodies, will all have to register with the Charities Commission, but the Commission has accepted that other issues should be resolved before any registration takes place. This mainly concerns who should act as charity trustees. Discussions continue and specific legal advice is being sought before a definitive report is brought to the General Assembly in 2015. In the meantime the Charities Commission will not be asking the Church for registrations at any level. Presbyteries and Congregations will be informed when action is needed.

6. The **Inter-Church Peacemaking Project**, which was set up by the larger Churches and the Irish Council of Churches, has been running for over a year and is beginning to show results. The six Good Relations Officers are mainly focussed in the North West; Fermanagh and the Border Counties; Tyrone; Craigavon; Newry and Mourne and North Belfast. A report to mark the end of the first year is available and outlines interesting and encouraging projects.

7. The General Board was also asked by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry to consider what action may be appropriate in the light of the new promise being introduced by **Girl Guiding UK**. The Board recorded its appreciation of the committed work of Guide leaders over many years, but the wording of the new promise, replacing to "love my God" with "to be true to myself and develop my beliefs" has caused deep concern. The General Board in October recommended to ministers and Kirk Sessions that this should not be used until further discussion took place.

8. The Presbyterian Church joined with the Church of Ireland and Methodist Church in Ireland to make strong representation expressing its concerns to Girl Guiding Ulster. The General Board was represented by the Moderator, Clerk and Acting Director of the Youth and Children's Ministry Board. All three Churches had individually been invited to a meeting with the Chief Guide, UK where the reasons for change had been articulated, but there was little evidence

of any sympathy for the concerns of the Churches. Even an alternative promise, which was accepted as a way forward by the Scout Association, was not considered acceptable to Guiding UK.

9. In several meetings the Churches pressed hard for an alternative, explaining their theological opposition to the new promise which is strongly shared by all the Churches. While the compromise of an alternative seemed to be well understood by Girl Guiding Ulster it was adamantly rejected by Girl Guiding UK. However, the alternative of a preface to the promise, acceptable to the girls making the promise and, in the Church context, to the Church, was put forward as an alternative.

10. It should be emphasised that the Presbyterian Church has had a long and valued association with the Girl Guiding movement and many girls have been influenced for good and developed in their faith by it. Many Guide leaders are committed in their own Christian faith and to the Church. Hopefully that will not change. Some leaders explained clearly how they would seek to use the new promise to introduce girls to Christian faith and help them develop their understanding of it. These leaders are to be encouraged and should not think in any way that the Church is opposed to them. Their stance on this issue is to be respected.

11. It is clear that an alternative promise is not going to be offered by Girl Guiding UK. It is for Kirk Sessions to decide whether the organisation, which has so often served the Church in the past, is now suitable for the Christian nurture of girls in their Congregation. An acceptable preface to the promise may satisfy the concerns. While this is intended to be agreed locally, advice on appropriate wording is available from the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

12. The General Board is now responsible for the Creative Production Unit – James McCormick (Head); Sarah Harding (Herald Editor); Lisa Skinner and Ed Connolly. During the year Anne McCully retired after many years service. This unit is making a real impact on the ability of the Church to communicate effectively and further initiatives are being planned. The good news of what the Church is doing needs to be heard by Congregations and individuals. The hard work and creativity of the staff is appreciated.

13. Reception is also an important interaction between the Church as represented in Assembly Buildings, and those outside. Thanks are expressed to Julie-Ann Hall, Joan Cubitt, Sonya McKnight and Barbara McMillan for their work.

14. The work of the General Board and much other work of the Church could not be carried out without the loyal and dedicated work of those in the General Secretary's Office – Joyce Anderson, Jenny McClure, Michelle James and Alicia Cotter. The thanks of the Assembly is due to them and all others who work cheerfully for the Church.

PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

1. The Priorities Committee met four times during the year. It's main work was to review and promote the Fit for Purpose programme.

ASSEMBLY THEMES – FIT FOR PURPOSE

2. A Prophetic Voice (2012-13): It has been difficult to assess the impact of the first year of the “Fit for Purpose” strategy in any quantitative way, but perhaps that is in the nature of the project. Some Presbyteries responded to a request for information as to how the material was used. The theme became the theme of worship at some Presbytery meetings. Congregations used it at mid-weeks, bible studies or home groups. Some ministers used the theme in preaching, perhaps a series of sermons. However it is impossible to put numbers on any of this. BMI reported that 30,000 “God Speaks” packs were distributed. Interestingly, some did not seem to connect “A Prophetic Voice” and “God Speaks”. Perhaps in the first year it is important to note a growing awareness of this work to enable the Church to talk together around central themes of Christian witness and a greater anticipation at the launch of the second theme.

3. A Place of Transformation (2013-14): The Committee considered the launch of this theme at the General Assembly in June to have been very worthwhile. It was integrated into the life of the Assembly and the Wednesday evening, “Christ Transforms Culture”, was innovative and inspiring. The video produced for that evening was not only well received on the night but had many hits on social media sites. The “Threshold” material was also well received in Congregations, with imaginative use being made of the DVDs.

Thanks are due to the Rev David Thompson for managing the “Threshold” production and the Creative Production Team led by James McCormick.

4. A People of Service and Outreach (2014-15): While BMI had again agreed to be the lead Board it was noted that in future themes should be clearly recognised as Assembly themes, with the Priorities Committee taking a central role. A “Think Tank” was appointed, chaired by a Committee member, the Rev Jane Nelson, to consider how best to promote the next year’s theme “A People of Service and Outreach”. The Rev David Thompson again agreed to facilitate the production of resources. They will be sub-titled, “All the difference in the world”. Congregations are encouraged to make good use of this material throughout the year. Again thanks are due to the working group members and Creative Production Unit.

5. A Caring Fellowship (2015-16): A working group has been set up to prepare material for the 2015-16 theme and has begun its initial thinking. It is intended that there should be a focus on caring in a congregational setting, while recognising that some initiatives have to be taken at a denominational level.

6. Residential Conference (Summer 2017): The Priorities Committee was previously asked to consider whether and when another Assembly Residential Conference may be appropriate. It is recommended that this should take place at the end of the five-year Fit for Purpose cycle, i.e. summer 2017, under the title, “A Church Fit for Purpose”. This would review the impact of the programme and reinforce what has been learnt from it. It should emphasise our identity as a Church but also encourage learning from the global Church scene. A resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly. Possible names for members of a planning Committee will be printed in the booklet on Board and Committee Membership.

SPONSORSHIP OF STUDENTS

7. The Committee encouraged the Board of Christian Training and Mission Overseas in their thinking of ways in which Congregations may sponsor overseas students to study at Union Theological College.

CENTRAL MINISTRY FUND (CMF) ISSUES

8. The Committee considered a helpful paper drawn up by the Financial Secretary on issues related to CMF. It is content that these issues are being dealt with by the Board of Finance and Personnel and will appear in its report.

9. Out of the work of the Priorities Committee two Panels have been appointed. The one on Structures Review has been working for almost four years and brings its substantial report, having consulted with Presbyteries as required last year. The other on Presbytery Consultations, which was expanded to include Presbytery engagement more generally, having given precedence to the Structures review is now moving forward. The two have always been seen by the Priorities Committee as related elements of an on-going programme of reform. This also includes consideration of the way the General Assembly receives reports and the general communication of the work of Assembly Boards and Committees.

10. The Priorities Committee, as the result of a Board Conference, also encouraged the General Assembly to appoint an ad-hoc Committee on Planned Giving, now with the title “Grace of Giving”. The Committee is appreciative of its important work.

DONALD J WATTS, Convener

STRUCTURES REVIEW PANEL

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. Last year’s Assembly received a detailed report and recommendations from the Structures Review Panel, but passed the resolution:

“That the General Assembly does not adopt the proposed Council structure from 2014 and authorises the General Board to work out the details of legislative change and staffing implications and send this material together with the report of the Structures Panel to Presbyteries for comment by 31st March 2014.”

The work of the Panel this year has been to consider the details of legislative change and staffing implications, on the basis of the proposed changes, and consult with Presbyteries.

2. The Panel recognises that this has caused considerable anxiety among members of staff and hurt to some. It has tried at each stage to keep staff fully informed of the material as it has been developed over the year. Detailed consultation with staff must follow-on from an Assembly decision on the proposals for future structures.

3. Because of the nature of the Panel’s report, some of which is presented in diagrammatic form, it has been decided to publish it in a separate booklet enclosed with these reports.

PRESBYTERY ENGAGEMENT PANEL

The Rev Dr Donald Watts reports:

1. At last year's General Assembly the remit of the Presbytery Consultation Panel was reviewed to include Presbyteries' wider engagement with Congregations and the General Assembly's structures. Some of this will be dealt with if the Assembly accepts the new proposals for a nominee to the Councils with direct responsibility for linking into Presbytery and keeping the Presbytery informed of developments within the Assembly structures. The Structures Review has included consideration as to how that two-way reporting may be effective.

2. The Presbytery Engagement Panel is beginning to work, particularly in the area of how Presbytery may creatively and effectively interact with the Congregations under its care. Its membership has been reviewed and it would hope to have a substantial report next year.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON PLANNED GIVING

THE GRACE OF GIVING

1. *"Thank you for all the faith, service and generosity which you have shown over many years as together we have faced many challenges and opportunities in the name of our Lord ... I warmly commend this initiative to the whole church and to you personally."* With these words the Moderator, Dr Rob Craig, began and concluded his letter 'To all who are members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland'.

2. Jesus has high expectations of His followers. He said "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much more has been entrusted, even more will be required" (Luke 12.48) and he warned us that we cannot serve God and money (Matthew 6.24). Paul encouraged the Church at Corinth to "excel in this grace of giving" (2 Corinthians 8.7-8).

3. **Money is frequently mentioned in the Bible.** Money is dangerous because we can fall in love with it, be seduced by it and wander away from the faith. Love of it is the root of all evil. (1 Timothy 6.10). Money is nevertheless a great resource, for used properly it meets needs, produces an outpouring of thanks, gives proof of our loyalty to the gospel and brings glory to God. (2 Corinthians 9.12-13). Christian Giving is our generous and joyful response to the generosity of God.

4. **The main initiative for 2013-14 was the Grace of Giving leaflet "Be Joyful – Be Generous"** which was completed, printed, circulated for Congregations through the November Presbyteries and placed on the PCI Website. Thanks are expressed to James McCormick, the General Assembly's Head of Creative Production, for the substantial amount of work involved in the design, printing and distribution of this leaflet. The leaflet has been well received and additional copies have been requested by some Congregations.

5. The difficulty faced by the Church on this touchy issue is getting this initiative off the pages of the 'Blue Book' of Assembly Reports and the subsequent Assembly resolutions, into minds, hearts and wallets as part of normal Christian discipleship.

6. The responses to a survey at the General Board in March indicated some reasons to be encouraged but also showed there is some way to go. Many Presbyteries have not addressed the issue. Some ministers have preached on the subject and the responses have been positive. 22 out of 27 who responded have personally determined the level of their Christian generosity as a percentage of their incomes.

7. Presbyteries have a crucial leadership role to play in implementing the following resolutions of the 2013 Assembly. "That the General Assembly direct Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and Congregational Committees to address the challenge contained within the "Grace of Giving" initiative. That the General Assembly recommend the Diocese of Liverpool's "Giving in Grace" programme as a comprehensive resource and requests Congregations to consider making use of it or some similar programme. Without the leadership of Presbyteries it is unlikely that this initiative will reach many of the leaders in our Congregations. The Committee is available to assist in organising and resourcing any Presbytery conference anywhere.

8. Constructive Presbytery conferences have been held, developed and modified for leaders in Congregations by the Presbyteries of Dromore, North Belfast and South Belfast. In two of the Presbyteries each minister was given special invitations to distribute to six carefully chosen leaders, which resulted in an almost 100% representation from Congregations. It has been beneficial and stimulating for ministers, elders and key leaders from different Congregations to address this issue openly with one another. It remains important to empower and release leaders to address the issue of giving.

9. Communication with younger Presbyterians. It was decided that it would be most effective for the Planned Giving Committee to work through existing Assembly youth structures. To that end, the Committee has been in contact with the Board of Youth and Children and SPUD (Speaking, Participating, Understanding and Deciding) to develop a creative and effective relationship through which the Assembly's Grace of Giving initiative can be incorporated and harmonised within their projects. *"Children, young people and families need to be encouraged to get into the 'giving' habit, however young they are. Younger children are no less open to the material world and draw of consumerism than teenagers and adults, and can easily develop an unhealthy relationship with money and the need for more. But given the right vision and motivation children and young people have great skills and energy in fundraising, and can learn to be great givers!"* (www.givinginrace.org)

10. The Board of Christian Training's revised edition of 'What should a church member be?' has a succinct but significant section on giving.

11. Ruling Elders' Fellowships. Members of the Committee are willing to speak about the Grace of Giving to Ruling Elders' Fellowships.

12. Instead of posters, which often clutter notice boards, a limited number of self-explanatory Power Point slides will be made available.

13. Information. It is important that people know what is accomplished through their Christian generosity deployed through their local Church and nationally and internationally through the General Assembly and the Assembly's Mission Boards.

14. During 2014-15 the Committee will continue to encourage Presbytery Conferences; seek an input into post-ordination training and encourage articles in the denominational and congregational magazines.

15. The attention of the General Assembly is drawn to the expertise of 'Christians against Poverty' in assisting people to escape from debt and additionally to their material on legacies.

JOHN DUNLOP, Convener

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

THE QUESTION OF BAPTISM

Introduction

1. The Committee was directed by the General Assembly to consider the increasing practice of baptism by immersion within our denomination and the implications for the faith and practice of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI). The Committee reviewed both the subordinate standards of the Church and previous reports of the Doctrine Committee (Reports, 1958; 1959; 1972; 1973; 1974; 1985). It is evident that the position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is that '[d]ipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but Baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person.'¹

2. In 2013, the General Assembly requested the Doctrine Committee to re-write the report on baptism which was the basis of a resolution of the General Board instructing the Church Architecture Committee not to grant permission for the installation of baptisteries in Presbyterian Churches. The connection between our resolution and our remit was clear: the question of whether Presbyterian churches should install baptisteries was the context in which the question of baptism by immersion was put to the Doctrine Committee.

3. The Doctrine Committee recognizes that baptism by immersion is permissible within PCI. However, there appear to be at least two interpretations of what 'permission' means. One interpretation is that baptism by immersion is on a par with baptism by pouring, sprinkling or dipping in the sense that no one form of baptism (for adults) is more acceptable than another. Another interpretation is that 'permission' means acknowledging that baptism by immersion is a valid form of baptism, not that immersion is as acceptable as other modes in a church standing in a Reformed tradition which has consistently favoured non-immersionist modes of baptism.

4. Our belief is that, whichever interpretation of the meaning of 'permission' is adopted, baptisteries should not be installed in Presbyterian Church buildings. Their installation would encourage a credo-baptist theology

1 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, iii.

of baptism which would undermine infant baptism. The Committee believes this against the background of widespread uncertainty amongst members of the PCI about the basis of infant baptism. It agrees that, if asked to explain ‘why Presbyterians baptize infants ... many Presbyterians would stumble and blunder the explanation.’² It is against this background that both the question of baptism and baptisteries must be considered. In this context, we need to be clear on our answer to two fundamental questions:

1. Is baptism fundamentally a testimony to conversion?
2. Do the children of believers belong to the people of God?

1. Is baptism fundamentally a testimony to conversion?

5. There are three steps in the credobaptist argument, as it is widely advanced. First, it is held that the word *baptizo* means only full immersion. Secondly, it is argued that the mode of baptism is the essence of the symbolism and meaning of baptism, that is, personal conversion to Christ. The credobaptist exegesis of such passages as Romans 6 and Colossians 2 is taken to establish that baptism involves immersion in water (‘being buried with Christ’) and resurrection (‘being raised with Christ’) out of the water of death. If these first two points are granted then the third follows – that baptism may only be administered to those who demonstrate the necessary signs of conversion, viz., personal repentance and faith.

6. The Reformed paedobaptist response has always been that *baptizo* need not mean immersion and that the meaning of baptism is not found primarily in the symbolism of dying and rising, but in the symbolism of cleansing from sin. Baptism is a covenantal washing.³ This covenantal washing belongs to all whom God calls into his covenant people. The washing points not to what has happened to the individual (the subjective reality) but to what God has done through Jesus Christ (the objective reality). The covenantal backdrop to the paedobaptist position nullifies attempts to lessen the objective meaning of baptism by equating it with individual conversion. Baptism is a covenantal washing for all the people of God (Acts 22:16).

7. This covenantal understanding of baptism is reflected both in the mode of baptism and in the traditional architecture of Irish Presbyterian church buildings. The mode of covenantal washing most frequently spoken of in Scripture is pouring or sprinkling and in Christian baptism sprinkling is ‘lawful ... sufficient, and most expedient.’⁴ The frequency of sprinkling in covenantal washings is clear from Hebrew 9:10 where the author writes of the ‘various baptisms’ (*baptismois*) of the Mosaic covenant. The writer then makes reference to three sprinklings (Heb 9:13 cf. Num 19:17-18; Heb 9:19 cf. Ex 24: 6,8; Heb 9:21 cf. Lev 8:19; 16:14)⁵

8. It is certainly true that conversion may be the occasion of baptism. Inasmuch as this is the case, the baptism of a convert is indirectly or in a

2 Frank A. James III, in his Introduction to Lewis B. Schenck, *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant* (2003), p.xvi. The reference is to American Presbyterians.

3 That Baptism is not by immersion and is a covenantal washing may be seen, for example, in Hebrews 9. See Jay E. Adams, *The Meaning and Mode of Baptism* (1975), pp.1-15. Baptism does not involve any change in the status of the child, a passage from unbelief to belief.

4 *Directory for the Public Worship of God*, ‘Of the Administration of the Sacraments.’

5 Adams, *Baptism*, pp.9-11.

secondary respect a sign of conversion, since it is the occasion of the baptism of the particular individual in question. However, baptism is not in its nature a sign of conversion, but a sign of entry into the covenant community of the people of God, the privilege of infants and converts alike. We have to be aware that baptism by immersion can suggest the necessity of conversion prior to baptism and this, in turn, seems inevitably to undermine the position ‘that the Church consists of all professing believers together with their children.’ (Reports, 1972, p.13)

9. The Committee is concerned that any change to the traditional baptismal practice of the church as reflected in the architecture of our meeting houses must inevitably reflect theological shifts in the denomination in the direction of a credobaptist theology.

2. Do the children of believers belong to the people of God?

10. It is hard to overstate the robustness with which this foundational question has been answered in the Reformed tradition. Calvin writes that ‘immediately from birth God takes and acknowledges them as his children ... for he gives them a place among those of his family and household, that is, the members of the church.’ Bavinck notes that ‘the children of believers are not pagans or children of the devil who still ... have to be exorcized at their baptism, but children of the covenant, for whom the promise is meant as much as for adults. They are included in the covenant and are holy, not by nature but by virtue of the covenant.’⁶

11. The basis of this claim in Reformed theology is the doctrine of the covenant: ‘The basic premise of the argument for infant baptism is that the New Testament economy is the unfolding and fulfilment of the covenant made with Abraham and that the necessary implication is the unity and continuity of the church.’⁷ The church of Jews and Gentiles stands in continuity with the people of Israel, Gentile believers having been grafted into the people of God in terms of the covenant of grace. As children were part of the covenant community of Israel, so they are part of the new covenant community. Baptism is initiation into the covenant community of God’s people; therefore, children are the proper subjects of baptism.

12. Baptism functions in the life of the church as a picture, not primarily of the experience or commitment of the individual, but of the covenant salvation of God. This means that the sacrament of baptism points us to God and what he has done for us in the Lord Jesus Christ – as the Westminster Confession states the matter, ‘a sign and seal of the covenant of grace.’⁸

13. This focus in Reformed teaching means that the subjects of baptism are not simply those who can give testimony to a work of grace in their lives. It is too simplistic a reading of Scripture to say that baptism only follows repentance.

6 Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics Volume Four: Holy Spirit, Church, And the New Creation* (2008) p.530. See John Calvin’s plea at the close of his discussion of infant baptism, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV. xvi. 32. For a full historical treatment see Schenck, *Children in the Covenant*, pp.3-52, who cites (p.46) the Westminster Assembly’s *Directory for the Public Worship of God* which states that children of believers are ‘Christians, and federally holy before Baptism and therefore are they Baptized.’ The issue is not the actual spiritual state of any individual, whether adult or infant, but the fact that membership in the visible Church of God is determined by the covenant declaration of God.

7 John Murray, *Christian Baptism* (1980), p.45.

8 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, i.

Rather, this covenantal washing is rightly administered to those who belong to the covenant. The conviction of the Reformed tradition is that there is ample evidence in both Testaments to show that the children of believers belong to the people of God (Genesis 17:7; Matthew 19:14; Ephesians 6:1-3). The status of covenant children is not based on any presumed spiritual experience but on the divine covenantal constitution.⁹

14. The Committee affirms without reservation the confessional position that the visible Church consists of those who ‘profess the true religion together with their children.’¹⁰ The immersionist practices which would follow the installation of baptisteries would make it difficult for the Church to maintain unity in this fundamental area.

Conclusion

15. Firstly, the subordinate standards of the church are clear: ‘Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but Baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person.’¹¹ The Reformed tradition in which PCI stands is agreed that baptism by pouring or sprinkling is the most appropriate mode of administering the covenantal washing of which Scripture speaks.

16. Secondly, it is the responsibility of Kirk Sessions to ensure that baptisms are administered in the rich assurance of covenantal promises and not on credobaptist assumptions about the connection between the mode of baptism and personal testimony.

17. Thirdly, the covenantal backdrop to the theology of baptism underlines that ‘infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized.’¹² This is emphatic in both the Confession and in the traditional practice of the Church. The Code states that ‘A minister shall encourage baptism of the children of all such as may make a credible profession of faith’ (para 83,1). This means that the PCI cannot consider infant baptism as just one more option amongst others.¹³

18. Finally, in light of the fact that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepts the Trinitarian baptism of other communities, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Committee is concerned that the confessional position of the denomination should not be undermined and urges Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to ensure that there are no “rebaptisms” of those who received a covenantal washing in infancy: ‘The sacrament of Baptism is but once to be administered unto any person.’¹⁴

J STAFFORD CARSON, Convener

9 See Murray, *Christian Baptism*, pp.53-4: ‘It is this fact of the divine institution that constitutes the sufficient ground for administering and receiving this ordinance ... no further judgement respecting the secret purpose of God nor respecting God’s secret operations in the heart of those baptised is required as the proper *ground* upon which the ordinance is administered.’

10 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXV, ii.

11 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, iii.

12 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, iv.

13 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, v.

14 Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII, vii. Cf Code 83,3.

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee met on six occasions during the year. It appointed assessors to assist Presbyteries on matters of difficulty when invited to do so.

ISSUES OF HUMAN SEXUALITY

2. One major aspect of the Committee's work has been to consider how best to facilitate the denomination in its pastoral response to those who are homosexual. To this end a "Day of discussion" was arranged for 23 November 2013 in the Assembly Hall, with each Presbytery invited to send five people.

3. The round table discussions were introduced by the Rev Prof Stephen Williams (Assembly's Professor of Systematic Theology); the Rev Dr Wolter Rose (Theological University of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) and the Rev Mairisine Stanfield. All participants were provided with a booklet including a paper by Prof Williams on "The Question of Homosexuality", the 1979 General Assembly Report on "The Church and the Homosexual" and Pastoral Guidelines on Homosexuality, welcomed and authorised for publication by the General Assembly in 2007. These were later sent to all ministers and are available, with Prof Williams opening address, on the website at www.presbyterianireland.org/resources

4. The day was well received by those who participated and has initiated a useful, low-key discussion within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI). In his closing comments participants were encouraged by the Clerk to consider ways in which Presbyteries and Congregations might take up the discussion in a similarly open and accepting way. The Committee has been encouraged to hear reports of this happening.

5. The Committee has also been following up the discussion by considering whether and how support groups for those concerned by issues of sexuality, either personally or in their family or Congregation, may be encouraged. This has been particularly taken up by the Board of Social Witness and the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

6. Consideration was given as to whether the 1979 Report needed to be updated but nothing is being proposed at present.

7. A small group was appointed by the Committee to facilitate a meeting between some members of the PCI and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transexual (LGBT) Community, as noted by the General Assembly last year. This meeting has yet to take place.

CONCILIATION

8. The Moderator's Advisory Committee also considered further the Conciliation Report, received at the last Assembly and sent to Presbyteries for comment. It was agreed that the Committee should concentrate on providing an effective Conciliation Service, while recognising that at times an element of mediation may be involved.

9. Additional conciliators are needed and the Committee agreed that training should be reviewed. An updated leaflet is needed if the Conciliation

Service is to be more widely known and accessible. For all of this a realistic budget will have to be considered.

10. Conciliation is becoming more imbedded in the training of ministers and elders, but the Committee believes that this should be continually emphasised. Further thought should be given to the process of filling a vacancy so that there are not unrealistic expectations by any of the parties.

11. Presbytery responses to the conciliation report were largely positive. 16 Presbyteries responded; 12 commending a timely report. One Presbytery questioned the theological moorings of the report and its oversight; one felt that the report will not deliver a means to resolve problems. The Committee has carefully considered the responses.

12. The Committee recognises that conciliation needs to be a natural part of the governance of the Church and welcomes the decision of the last Assembly to seek overtures to change the Code. Suggested overtures are appended.

FREEDOM TO EXPRESS CONTRARY VIEWS

13. The Committee has begun its consideration as to the extent that people in leadership in the Church may express views which are contrary to those decided by the General Assembly. This is a complex area and more time is needed to formulate a considered position.

DONALD J WATTS, Convener

PANEL ON PASTORAL CARE OF MANSE FAMILIES

The Rev Gabrielle Farquhar reports:

1. The Panel issued and reviewed a survey to Presbytery Clerks. The responses recognised the importance and necessity for effective pastoral care of Ministers and their families within Presbyteries. Some already have a good system in place either with one person assigned to the role or a team comprised of active and retired ministers, elders, deaconesses. However it is clear that in many of the Presbyteries the role of Chaplain/Pastor Pastorum needs to be more defined and pro-active rather than reactive.

2. The Presbyterian Church has a duty to care spiritually, physically and mentally for those who minister in our Congregations and in other areas of the work. The structure of a Presbytery should enable the care to happen in a more personal and effective way:

- (a) one to one prayer support;
- (b) relationships, assured confidentiality and trust built up;
- (c) new ministers/their families welcomed and integrated into the area and supported by colleagues and friends, not just for the first month!

While all this takes up precious time it is necessary as a way to sustain the work of the gospel to which all ministers have been called.

3. In response to this need the Panel has drawn up Guidelines for Presbyteries which the Clerks will receive in May. It is hoped that each Presbytery will nominate their Chaplain/Pastor Pastorum or Team members to come to an area Forum in early Autumn. This will provide an opportunity to share resources, discuss issues that need addressing or training provided. This sort of Forum will happen at least twice a year.

4. All are part of one family, the Church of Christ. How ministers, relate to each other, behave and care for each other should reflect our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! It is a real challenge and opportunity to witness to those looking in, but a real heartbreak to the Church of Christ when it goes wrong.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMITTEE

1. Much of the work of the Church and Society Committee has been shaped in the past year both by the subject matter of the Haass talks (Dealing with the past/Parading/Flags and emblems) and the Haass processes themselves.

2. Members of the Committee, led by the Moderator, met Dr Hass and Prof O'Sullivan on 18 September 2013 for what was a wide ranging and very gracious conversation. At that meeting the Committee was invited to submit a paper on dealing with the past. The text of that paper is attached as Appendix A.

3. Following the publication of the draft agreement by Dr Haass (which was not corporately accepted by the parties) the Moderator, along with other church leaders, issued a statement on 8 January 2014 in which they said *'Significant work has been completed in recent months and we acknowledge the strenuous and sincere efforts put in by all involved in seeking to find solutions to some of the most contentious issues we face. This is an important time for our society; the momentum for building peace should not be lost. We are aware of the focus and effort that the forthcoming elections will require of our politicians but encourage all within the Executive to keep going with the work that has begun so that an acceptable process may be developed.'*

4. Since then, a considerable amount of work has been done in partnership with the Irish Inter Church Meeting to identify the key values which would find real acceptance in wider society. These include concepts such as working for the common good and a new generosity of spirit in public debate. Over coming months the Committee, with others, expect to be able to develop and articulate these key values in a consistent and coherent fashion, to try to help raise the often impoverished quality of public discussion.

5. The Committee has also identified some key issues on which it would wish to work in partnership with others and to give more focussed attention in the next few years:

- (i) Welfare Reform and Social Justice issues
- (ii) Equality and Human Rights issues
- (iii) Issues affecting loyalist areas
- (iv) Community Relations issues – Together: Building a United Community
- (v) End of life issues.

6. At the time of writing (April 2014) representatives have met with the Minister and DSD officials on Welfare Reform; have started work with a panel on issues affecting loyalist areas; are planning a major conference on Thursday 9 October 2104 in partnership with Union Theological College on Equality, Freedom and Religion, and a further conference with UTC in Jan 2015 on end of life issues.

7. The Committee has been greatly encouraged by the increasing partnership working within our Church, and is grateful for the opportunity to

work with UTC on the very successful Church In the Public Square Conference in January 2014, and with the Good Relations Panel on Dealing with the Past – Shaping the Future conference on 5 April 2014, both of which were held in Assembly Buildings.

8. Alongside this work, the Committee has had quite a heavy on-going workload and schedule of meetings as it seeks to respond to many and varied issues and build good relationships with various parties and groups within our whole community. These have included:

- (a) The two consultations on presumed organ donation;
- (b) The Human Trafficking and Exploitation Bill;
- (c) Meeting in Dublin with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement;
- (d) Meeting with representatives of the Innocent Victims' Charter;
- (e) Meeting with Representatives of the Orange Order;
- (f) Meeting with the senior command of the PSNI in Belfast, to assure them and the whole of the PSNI of our active support for a properly accountable police service;
- (g) Meeting with the Head of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and other prison management and officers to assure them of our active appreciation of, and support for their work;
- (h) Inviting representatives of all the parties represented in the Assembly to meet with the Committee with a view to expressing our ongoing support for the peace process both at political and civic level, and to encourage our elected representatives in that work.

9. There remains great pressure for a change in the law to permit same sex marriage. Already this year there have been changes in the law and its implementation in England, Scotland and Wales. In a speech in Belfast on 18 Feb to the Medico-Legal Society in Belfast, Lord Wilson of Culworth, a justice in the Supreme Court since 2011, gave his backing to same sex marriage because, in his view, it would strengthen, rather than weaken, the institution of marriage. The judge, who serves as a Privy Counsellor, said widespread divorce had created what he described as “blended families” made up of “the half-blood”.

He also said that as a “*committed member of the Church of England*” he envied the “*greater strength of traditional family values in Northern Ireland*”.

‘I wonder whether Northern Ireland will for long be able to hold back the tide in favour of same sex marriages which laps against all Western shores.’

10. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland remains fully committed to upholding the historic understanding of marriage as exclusively being between one man and one woman, and the Committee is increasingly concerned at the diminishing lack of understanding of the benefits of this historic view of marriage. The Committee has asked our MLAs to consider what support they and the Executive can give to actively support and encourage family life in this context.

11. The work of the Committee is constantly ‘work in progress’, and it is increasingly challenging to articulate what we are *for* in a society where lobby groups and increasingly secularised thinking dominate public debate and the political arena. Yet this very challenge is a welcome stimulus for the whole church, and indeed the whole of the Christian constituency, to handle Biblical

principles and teaching in a way that honours the Lord and commends the whole Gospel in the realities of the modern world, rather than merely reacting to the agenda of others. The Committee greatly covets your interest, active support and involvement in this work.

NORMAN HAMILTON, Co-Convener

GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The Global Concerns Committee deals with what are essentially overarching and inherently practical issues facing both the church and wider society and seeks to find ways to demonstrate our love for God by our concern for our neighbour.

2. In serving the wider church, the Committee seeks to raise awareness and encourage engagement with issues. Where appropriate it will act as a spokesperson for the Church.

3. The Committee's constituent Panels are Environment, Good Relations and Race Relations. The bulk of this report reflects that.

4. However, there is also a demand for the Committee to engage with other Global issues; particularly relating to justice. At our November meeting Anne Deighan, a member of Fitzroy Congregation, reported on her experiences as an Ecumenical Observer in Palestine. Approaches were also made to the Committee about the situation in Syria and injustice in other parts of the world.

5. As a result it was agreed to recommend the creation of an additional ad-hoc Panel to explore issues relating to the Near East. The General Board approved this request at its March meeting.

ENVIRONMENT PANEL

The Rev Dr Robert Buick reports:

6. The Environmental Panel attempts to highlight issues of environmental concern which have implications for members of our Presbyterian Church as they seek to serve Jesus Christ in a fallen world.

7. The members of the Panel do not claim to be experts in the many fields of science related to the environment but seek to provide a Christian comment on the current issues, encouraging the members of Congregations to have a responsible attitude to the use of the earthly resources God has made available (stewardship of Creation - Gen.2,v15) and to see how the use of these resources has an impact upon others (at home and abroad) for whom they must demonstrate a concern as our neighbours (the second great commandment, cf.Lk.10,v27).

8. Surely one of the main motives behind an interest in environmental matters is expressed in the opening of Psalm 24, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

9. Although there are some who would dispute the impact of mankind's activities upon climate, it is almost universally accepted that the earth's climate has changed in the past and is continuing to undergo change today.

10. These changes may be linked to some of the extreme weather events seen in various parts of the world in recent years, not least the storms and flooding experienced by southern areas of the British Isles last winter, though no single climatic event, no matter how severe, is in itself an indicator of climatic change. However, the body of evidence for global warming and the associated increase in extreme climatic events is growing and many well researched and accepted scientific reports warn that man's activities have and are contributing to the factors influencing that change.

11. It is surely an appropriate response for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as part of the worldwide Christian church, to express concern over our society's excessive use of the earth's limited resources, often associated with pollution of the environment and destruction of natural habitat, frequently driven by greed and the desire for a quick profit, without concern for those who must live with the aftermath. In doing so, the Church speaks out of concern not only for our own people, but for the peoples of all nations, for this is indeed an issue with global dimensions.

12. Ireland, though only a small island on the western fringe of the continent of Europe, with few natural mineral resources, is not immune from the effects of pollution and environmental destruction and the threat of development of those resources we do possess.

13. Fracking in the South West border regions, open cast mining of lignite in North Antrim, offshore gas fields in the South and West of Ireland, widespread growth throughout the island of "wind farms" are only the most recent instances of such developments. It is important that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is seen to stand up for often small, rural communities against the might of usually multi-national interests.

14. Excessive over-production from both natural and farmed animal and fish stocks, while leading to lower prices for consumers in the short term, has often led to destruction of environment, communities and livelihoods dependent upon smaller scale sustainable production and ultimately leads to higher prices, reduced quality and choice and growing "food miles".

15. The destruction of the local fishing industry around our coasts, though blamed upon the actions of "Eurocrats" in reducing fish quotas, actually has its genesis in the overfishing of the multi-national fishing industry. The horse meat scandal of last year demonstrates the danger of allowing the food industry to be driven by the need to combine lower prices and higher profits, without regard to quality of source and supply.

16. Presbyterian consumers must be more demanding of those who provide the food for our families – supplier, processor and retailer – while encouraging our politicians to see that it is in their interests to have a concern for wider environmental issues that affect the local people who are their electorate.

17. The Panel will continue to encourage individual members and local congregations to take small steps to reduce our impact upon the environment and use of resources, which has a cumulative effect, while at the same time seeking to provide informed comment upon wider environmental issues of importance.

GOOD RELATIONS PANEL

The Rev Stephen Johnston reports:

18. Our society is fractured in all sorts of ways. The last few months have once again revealed the depth of these fractures. In the midst of this disheartening picture, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland continues to believe that Building Good Relations is a Biblical and Gospel thing to do. It is a key aspect of our discipleship in a divided society. The Panel encourages Churches and individuals to be intentionally involved in this important Kingdom work.

19. At the time of writing plans are well underway for the annual Good Relations Conference on 5 April in Assembly Buildings, Belfast. Jointly sponsored by Good Relations and the Church and Society Committee, this Conference seeks to explore from a Biblical and Theological perspective issues surrounding the past, how to face the future; and how the other issues raised in the Haass discussion affect our ability to reach a solution. The Panel is grateful to the Rev David Cupples and the Very Rev Dr Norman Hamilton (along with others) for their contributions.

20. Good Relations continues to commend the work of the Irish Churches Peace Project and sees it as a project which is to complement the work of Good Relations within our Church and society.

21. It has become increasingly apparent in recent years of the **GREAT NEED FOR PRAYER** in this whole matter of peacebuilding. Two quotations about prayer are striking and pertinent. Firstly, the words of the Wesleyan Methodist Samuel Chadwick -- *“The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.”* The same thing could be said for prayerless peacemaking! Secondly, the words of Professor Richard F. Lovelace – *“Most American Christians would probably assume that prayer, ... has little to do with social action. This is because most of those who are praying are not praying about social issues, and most of those who are active in social issues are not praying very much. No wonder little social or cultural impact is made either by “liberals” or “evangelicals”!*” (Dynamics of spiritual Life – An Evangelical Theology of Renewal p392).

22. Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions are urged to follow the example of the denomination in prayerfully mainstreaming this matter of Building Good Relations. In particular, ministers and elders are encouraged to give a lead within their congregations about the strategic importance of this Gospel and discipleship work.

23. If anyone has a particular query about the work of Building Good Relations within PCI, they are encouraged to contact the Convener, the Rev Stephen Johnston via email sjohnston@presbyterianireland.org or phone 028 4176 2321.

RACE RELATIONS PANEL

The Rev Richard Kerr reports:

24. The Race Relations Panel believes that every person created in the image of God is entitled to dignity and respect, to welcome and acceptance. As once “aliens and strangers” from Christ, so those who are accepted and established in Christ should reach out in Jesus’ name to those who are excluded and vulnerable.

25. The aim of the Panel is to encourage and resource our congregations across this Island to be havens of sanctuary which reflect the Biblical ideal as described by the Apostle John; “from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9). Its vision is to see people from every background worshipping the Saviour together.

26. To do this the Panel works with organisations locally and further afield. It continues our long-standing relationship with those working for Racial Justice in South Africa; Diakonia Council of Churches and Vuleka Trust. The inspirational and embracing actions of Nelson Mandela following his release from prison, his role as President and his relinquishing of power are a challenge to all. The Committee prays for stability, cohesion and a commitment to the same values from the New South African government elected on 7 May.

27. It also works closely with the Churches Asylum Network in ROI and Embrace in NI. Both organisations bring together expertise and resources which the Panel seeks to make available.

28. The DVD and accompanying resource “**and you welcomed Me**” has been well received. Congregations are reporting that they have found it useful in fostering discussion around creating a culture of welcome in Presbyterian Churches. Sadly, anecdotal evidence suggests that Congregations are frequently reticent about welcoming people who don’t readily fit into our mould. Difference need not be a negative but PCI has much to learn from those who have diverse cultural and social backgrounds.

29. The DVD resource dovetails well with the “a place of transformation” theme. Copies of the DVD are available from the Convener, the Rev Richard Kerr rkerr@presbyterianireland.org or for download on the PCI website Good Relations resources section.

30. The Panel has been inspired by Congregations who are grappling with the challenge of facilitating multi-ethnic centres of worship while remaining true to our reformed heritage. Members of the Panel have had the privilege of coming alongside ministers and elders to explore how that might be best done. They have found this to be a deeply enriching experience.

31. In conjunction with the Church and Society Committee the Panel made written and oral submissions regarding **Lord Morrow’s Private Member’s Bill on Human Trafficking**. While very supportive of the Bill’s emphasis on the protection of the victims of trafficking and on addressing the ‘demand’ for trafficking, the Panel is concerned that the criminalising of payment for sexual services has become the primary focus of the Bill. It has suggested that there should be a separate Bill dealing more comprehensively with prostitution.

32. The Panel is deeply concerned about the **Direct Provision System** for those seeking asylum in the ROI. The indefinite duration of time that people spend in direct provision awaiting their decision – 15% of applicants have been in the system for more than seven years – is extremely damaging to their mental health. This is compounded by the fact that they are not allowed to work and earn money, cook for themselves or make basic decisions about their future. Some of those members of the Panel have met are totally ‘broken’ by their experience. The Panel is particularly concerned about children growing up in this system. It is exploring how to best highlight this issue and persuade the Minister for Justice to reform the asylum system in the ROI as a matter of urgency.

33. The Convener continues to coordinate chaplaincy services for Larne House Immigration Detention Unit. The Rev George Lane, Chaplain to Pennine House, a similar short-term holding unit in Manchester, provided training for the team in March.

RICHARD KERR, Acting Convener

CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The Church Relations Committee continues to review the work of various inter-church bodies of which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a member.

IRISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

2. The Irish Council of Churches (ICC) was founded in 1923, in the aftermath of the Civil War, and is the formal national body through which the member Churches formally engage, dialogue and act on a wide variety of issues. It was established by the member Churches and funded by them.

3. The ICC Executive meets four times a year and is made up of nominated representatives from across the range of Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed and Independent traditions. The Presbyterian Church sends three representatives. The Presidency rotates every two years. From 2012 it has been the Rev Fr Godfrey O’Donnell, chair of the Orthodox Network of Churches. From the AGM, held in Arklow on 10 April 2014, it is the Rev Dr Donald Watts, Clerk of the General Assembly. The Vice-President is the Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher.

4. At the AGM a report was received from the Executive Officer, Mervyn McCullagh, outlining a transition to new ways of working. He writes:

“Over the past year our boards, forums and working groups have engaged in a wide variety of activities. As part of our efforts to ensure appropriate and relevant ways of working in our present context, the work of these standing bodies has consistently pointed towards the real value of appointing working groups to perform specific tasks and liaison groups which bring together key personnel across the churches with responsibility for particular issues. This transition reached its culmination at the end of this year, with both the Inter-Church Committee and the ICC Executive taking on a greater role in policy and strategic direction to enable these dynamic groups to work more productively. The report shows some of the highlights of the standing groups and the new work that the dynamic groups have begun.”

The full report is available on-line at www.irishchurches.org

5. The AGM also noted with pleasure a small surplus on the operating budget of the Council, following some years in deficit. It was pleased to receive into full membership the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

IRISH INTER-CHURCH MEETING

6. The Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM) arose out of the Ballymascanlon talks which began in 1973, at the height of the “Troubles”. The meeting is made up of the Irish Council of Churches and the Catholic Church, with a 50/50 membership from the Irish Episcopal Conference and the Irish Council of Churches. It is co-chaired by the two Presidents.

7. The Inter-Church Meeting happens about once a year, the latest against the backdrop of the recent fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council reflected on the effect it has had on the Irish Church scene. The main speakers were the Rev James Corkery, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Milltown Institute of Theology and Philosophy and Dr Patrick Mitchel, a Presbyterian and Director of Studies at the Irish Bible Institute. Those who participated found it an interesting and engaging day.

8. An Irish Inter-Church Committee (IICC) meets between the Meetings to plan ahead and co-ordinate some of the Churches work. To mark the fifteenth anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement a working group was established to reflect on ways to advance an agreed basis for an inter-church discussion which would promote an agenda of renewal and positive change. It suggested that any inter-Church engagement on this issue should be embedded in a framework of Christian principles and respond to current questions with voices, concepts and proposals that give practical life to mutual respect. The principles should have application throughout the island of Ireland, with specific recommendations for positive application both North and South. That report is also available on the web-site above.

9. The IICM also provides the context for two useful Liaison Groups of the Churches Finance Officers and Communications Officers to meet.

WORLD COMMUNITY OF REFORMED CHURCHES

10. The Rev Cheryl Meban serves on the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). She has reported on:

11. **Consultation to Assess the State of the Communion:** A Consultation on Communion, drawing together fifty church leaders from around the world met in wintry West Michigan, from 4-7 February, 2014. It produced the first draft of a report on the state of the communion that will be presented to the World Communion of Reformed Churches’ (WCRC) Executive Committee at its annual meeting in May. Bridget Ben-Naimah summed up the consultation’s work in her message at the event’s closing worship service: “Sisters and brothers in Christ, halfway through the first phase of the life journey of the WCRC, we have gathered here in Grand Rapids trying to identify the various dimensions of our understanding of communion and assessing how we have fared on this journey both collectively and as individual churches. As we engaged in discussions together, quite a number of revelations were received.” she continued. “I believe that these findings are not to discourage us or to divide us; but rather to remind

us that in spite of the fact that communion is a gift from God to us, we who are called to participate in the communion have a responsibility to work at it.”

Setri Nyomi, WCRC general secretary, emphasized that the “communion is more than the leadership and staff of the institution of the WCRC; it is you, the churches that are spread in the countries where we find ourselves. Our evaluation of how we are doing as a communion should include whether or not the action of churches in each context demonstrates our understanding that communion and justice go hand in hand.”

12. Consultation on “Faith Declarations” Opens Future Possibilities:

A consultation on “Ecumenical Faith Declarations”, which took place in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from 2-4 February, 2014 demonstrated a desire for continuing dialogue and action on issues that pertain to the role, purpose, and function of statements of faith, including creeds and confessions, in the context of the church’s life and witness. The consultation arose after the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) decided to adopt the Belhar Confession and designate it as a document in a new category called “Ecumenical Faith Declaration.” The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee of the CRCNA, in conjunction with the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), invited approximately 50 representatives from WCRC member churches to consider whether this new category could serve a broader purpose within the Reformed family. In the course of the discussions, it became evident that the majority of the participants did not embrace the concept of a new category entitled “Ecumenical Faith Declarations.” However, additional dialogue explored alternative ways to address the identified complexities, challenges and opportunities regarding creeds, confessions, declarations, and other statements of faith. Despite the shift or perhaps because of it, participants expressed confidence that the present consultation fulfilled a significant role in highlighting the need to seek further clarity and creative engagement on confessional issues.

13. Human Trafficking Focus of Workshop in Argentina: “Broken for You,” a campaign against human trafficking which is being developed by the World Communion of Reformed Churches’ Justice Network took another step forward at a meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, January 29-31, 2014. A small group of Justice Network members met with CAREF (Comisión de Apoyo a Refugiados y Migrantes), an ecumenical organization that works with migrants, refugees, and exiles. Officials of CAREF shared their 15 years of experience on diverse aspects of human trafficking (including sensitizing, prevention, and victim assistance) and its links with international migration, and sexual and labour exploitation.

14. WCRC Supports V-Day’s One Billion Rising: On 14 February 2013, one billion people in 207 countries rose and danced to demand an end to violence against women and girls. On 14 February 2014, the efforts are escalating, with the V-Day movement calling on women and men everywhere to rise, release, dance, and demand justice. The World Communion of Reformed Churches is calling on its members to join in this movement. “To speak out against gender violence is a matter of justice, and justice is at the heart of Jesus’s Gospel,” says Dora Arce-Valentin, the WCRC’s executive secretary for justice and partnership. “So, raising up our voices together with millions around the world is a way to witness our faith and proclaim good news to the ones God loves the most, the victims of injustice.”

15. The headquarters of the work has moved, largely for financial reasons, from Geneva to Hanover. More detailed reports are available at <http://wrcr.ch/news>

16. **The European Area of WCRC** also meets annually and the PCI has been represented by the Clerk, the Rev Dr Donald Watts. The Rev Cheryl Meban also attends as an Executive member. This year the meeting was in Warsaw. It was an opportunity not only to discuss the business of the Council but to encourage a small but active minority reformed Church. The legacy of the Second World War was clearly evident, most of the city and especially the Jewish ghetto having been destroyed. The European Council will next meet in Belfast.

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES

17. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) met last July in Budapest. The PCI was representative by the Clerk, the Rev Dr Donald Watts; the Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie and Mervyn McCullagh. The main work was to agree a new Constitution. The Rev Alison McDonald, from the Church of Scotland, was elected to the Governing Board with the Rev Dr Donald Watts as a proxy member. She reports:

18. The first meeting of the new Governing Board (GB) of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) took place in Geneva at the Ecumenical Centre from 25-29 November 2013. The smaller size GB worked well in a constructive, positive, harmonious manner, setting an encouraging working model for the future. The business focussed on beginning the work of transition, putting procedures with timetables in place and starting to implement the new Constitution.

19. Included in the transition will be the closer integration of **the Church and Society Commission (CSC)** into the main structures as the headquarters of CEC moves to Brussels. There are also on-going discussions with the **Churches Commission on Migrants in Europe (CCME)**. Both these bodies have proved useful contacts for PCI's work in the past.

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

20. The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) has been encouraged by events last year to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Leuenberg Agreement. It is involved in a study into the "Plurality of Religions" and a consultation on "Diversity of Worship and Christian Unity".

CPCE is also involved in planning for the Jubilee of the Reformation including a project to link cities of Europe with a significant reformation history.

Other Business

21. Members of the Church Relations Committee met with the Methodist Inter-Church Relations Committee when subjects of mutual interest were openly and freely discussed. The Rev Donald Ker chaired conversations on our joint work, including common chaplaincy work and areas of mission.

LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE, Convener

COMMITTEE FOR THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. The Committee met once during the year.
2. Various queries were received but most were not pursued by formal application.

3. The Committee revisited the “55 year rule” (Minutes 2013) which **stated** that no candidate from outside of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland would be received as a minister or licentiate unless they would be eligible to receive a call by the age of 55. In practice this meant that, as a two year assistantship was mandatory, candidates would have to be received by their 53 birthday at the latest. However, for candidates who had been initially licensed or ordained within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, it was agreed that they would be eligible to be received up to the age of 55, if it was deemed that no assistantship was necessary.

On further consideration of the “55 year rule” it was agreed to delete from the above paragraph the words ‘*would be eligible to be received up to the age of 55 if it was deemed that no assistantship was necessary*’ and add the words ‘*would be considered on their own merit if it was deemed that no assistantship was necessary*’.

4 Two initial inquiries were processed and after interviews were held the Committee agreed that both candidates could make formal application to the Committee if they so desired. One formal application could not be furthered as the candidate would be over 55 years by the time of eligibility for receiving a call.

<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 Graeme McConville	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev DM Spratt	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Dr MJ Welsh	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
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 (retired).
	Rev JN Seawright	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.
	Mr David McCarthy	To be retained as Licentiate without Charge.
South Belfast	Rev KA Drury	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev RJ Greer	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 WJ Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev PG McDowell	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Dr DJ Montgomery	To be retained as Minister Without Charge.
Coleraine and Limavady	Rev JD Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Derry/Donegal	Rev KG Patterson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev JC Teeney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev S Armstrong	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	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.
	Mr MC Cowan	To be retained as Licentiate without Charge.
Dromore	Rev BJ McCroskery	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev EG McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev WA Watson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Omagh	Rev CI Dickson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Route	Rev William Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

	Rev Dr Victor Dobbin	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Tyrone	Mr KH Hibbert	To be retained as Licentiate without Charge.

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

The Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:

1. Restoration Ministries continues to work quietly and largely in the background for peace, healing and reconciliation, all needed perhaps even more in the present moment than when the conflict was at its height. Spiritual Direction, prayer ministry and reflection days are part of our daily rhythm. We have been encouraged greatly by the increasing interest in contemplative prayer, especially centering prayer, a huge gift to today's busy, anxious, fearful world. We are blessed to have an enthusiastic and supportive Board of Directors. The requests for me to facilitate and speak at conferences and retreats in Ireland and other countries continue to occupy a large part of my time. I am now one of four church representatives for L'Arche International. I am also an Ecumenical Canon in St Anne's Cathedral. In July/August 1914 I will be teaching some on-line sessions for Richard Rohr's Living School.

The Rev Dr Paul Bailie reports:

1. Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) is one of Ireland's oldest mission agencies. We look forward with humble yet confident expectation to the years ahead, praying that God might continue to be pleased to use the mission for His sovereign purposes.

2. The mission concentrates on four areas of ministry: evangelism and church planting; the strengthening of existing church bodies through theological education; medical mission, with particular emphasis upon HIV/ AIDS work; and compassionate ministry amongst disadvantaged and abused children. These ministries are carried out in partnership with various evangelical African denominations, and often with like-minded western mission agencies.

3. We give thanks that there has been a slow but steady rise in missionary personnel over the past number of years, many of whom are from Presbyterian congregations. We continue to operate a successful short-term programme of teams and medium term placements. We also continue to operate branches in Scotland and England. Mission Africa is a member of Global Connections (Evangelical Missionary Alliance) and Mission Agencies Partnership. I am particularly pleased to report a close working relationship with the Board of Mission Overseas.

4. As Chief Executive I have responsibility for strategic planning, pastoral care and administration of personnel, finance and partner relations. I am particularly involved in promoting theological education in Africa through colleges and conferences.

5. 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 (Ards) and the Boards/Committees of the Board of Mission Overseas and Christian Training. I am particularly glad to serve the Church through part-time teaching

at Union Theological College and participation in the Accredited Preacher and Auxiliary Ministry Schemes.

IVAN J PATTERSON, Convener

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON ELDERS' TERMS

1. The General Assembly of 2010 decided to “appoint an ad-hoc Committee to consider the possibility of ruling elders serving on a Kirk Session for a set period of time” (Minutes 2010, p44, resolution 8). When the Committee began its work it soon became clear that having all ruling elders serving on Kirk Session for a set period across the whole Church was not a practical possibility but the Committee did believe that there were some Congregations where such a scheme would enhance the leadership which Kirk Sessions give and so it set about devising a scheme to permit this to happen. It was envisaged that this would run alongside the present system of appointing ruling elders. It was the Committee’s intention that Congregations might opt to adopt the principle of appointing ruling elders to Kirk Session for a set term (while remaining free to opt out again if it proved not to be useful to them). It designed its proposals believing that having elders who serve on Kirk Session for a fixed term is consistent with a form of Church government which is founded on and agreeable to the Word of God and that its proposals would make a helpful contribution to enhance this government. The Committee’s view was that, even if only a few Congregations adopted set term eldership initially, they would act as a pilot and provide useful practical lessons which could be used to improve and widen the practice.

2. The Committee has reported regularly to the General Board but has failed to win the support of the Board. Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions have been consulted, and while there were criticisms of some of the details of the proposals it was also clear that the majority were not only not prepared to consider such proposals for themselves but were opposed to giving other congregations permission to appoint ruling elders for a set term. In the light of this the Committee has ceased to work on the details of the proposals and believes that the General Assembly should go no further with the idea for the present.

R BRIAN SAVAGE, Convener

FOR INFORMATION

PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Presbyterian Historical Society is not under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. This report is for information only.

The Very Rev Dr Godfrey Brown reports:

1. The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland reports that it has had a full and busy year, with a steady number of people using the facilities at 26 College Green for reading and research. The programme of lectures included two given in Londonderry to mark the Year of Culture in that city. The Society hopes

to include a further lecture there in this year's programme. The Annual Field Trip for 2013 also took place in Derry, and this year's trip is planned for Belfast. Full details of all its activities are available on its Programme Card which can be obtained from our Librarian, Valerie Adams, at 26 College Green.

2. Last year a substantial grant from the Ministerial Advisory Group – Ulster-Scots Academy (Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure) (MAGUS) enabled the Society, in conjunction with Union Theological College and the Assembly buildings to have a professional survey undertaken of its Archive holdings. A number of important issues were highlighted, some of which will require action sooner rather than later. During this year a further MAGUS grant was obtained to enable some preliminary work to be done scanning some of the earlier Presbyterian magazines held by the Society.

3. The decision of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland to conduct a major programme of digitising Church records raises again important issues regarding access. It is the Society's intention to circulate revised guidelines on this to Presbyteries and Congregations.

4. The Society is most anxious to encourage Presbyteries to entrust their historic records which are no longer in current use to its custody. It is also grateful to a number of generous donors who have given books, papers and other artefacts for its collection. One item of particular interest was a medal, awarded to the Very Rev Dr FWS O'Neill by the Chinese Government in recognition of his work with Chinese labourers in France during the First World War. The medal was generously donated by his grandson, Mark O'Neill, who has recently completed a life of his grandfather in Chinese and English.

5. The Society is most grateful to all those who do voluntary work for the society, those who deliver lectures and write booklets, articles and reviews, and most of all to our Librarian and Archivist, Valerie Adams, whose work on its behalf is indefatigable.

6. The Society would appeal for new members, and for the steady personal support of all members in attending lectures and events, in buying publications, and in introducing the Society to others. It would encourage every Presbytery to appoint a Historical Agent, and to promote events and publications whenever and however they can.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

General

2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of the Rev Dr Donald J Watts from the position of Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with effect from 31 August 2014, and that he be thanked for his services.

3. That the Rev Trevor D Gribben be appointed Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with effect from 1 September 2014.

4. That _____ be appointed Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly and Deputy General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

5. That an Assembly Residential Conference be held in the summer of 2017 with the theme “A Church Fit for Purpose” and the following planning Committee be appointed: Moderator, Clerk, Revs David Cupples, John Hanna, Daryl Edwards; Tom Finnegan, Graeme Thompson, James McCormick, Helen Kyle, Stephanie Windrum, Laura McGee, Kathryn Kirk, Muriel Cromie,

Priorities

6. That the General Assembly encourage the whole Church to promote the theme for 2014-15: A People of Service and Outreach.

7. That a budget for up to £12,000 be made available to the Priorities Committee from the Incidental Fund.

Structures Review

8. That the General Assembly approve the proposals of the Structures Review Panel for new Councils and their remits.

9. That the General Assembly approve the membership structure of the new Councils and the proposed method of nomination.

10. That the General Assembly appoint a Finance and Staffing Commission as outlined in the report, as follows: Moderator and Clerk Designate (Secretary); the Very Rev Drs Rob Craig (Convener), Roy Patton, Ivan Patterson; the Revs Colin Morrison, Tom Conway; John Hunter, Dr Rosemary Hamilton, Edgar Jardine, Mrs Sadie Somerville. (The Financial Secretary, Head of Personnel and Convener of the General Assembly’s Personnel Committee will sit and deliberate.)

11. That Presbyteries are instructed to send nominations for a Nominations Committee as agreed in resolution 7, to the Clerk of the General Assembly by 30 June 2014 and other nominations by 15 September, 2014.

12. That, for this year, the Nominations Committee be instructed to bring nominations for membership of the Assembly Councils and Committees for ratification by the Finance and Staffing Commission and to take effect from 1 January 2015.

Grace of Giving

13. That the General Assembly instruct Presbyteries to exercise leadership in facilitating and encouraging the implementation of the 2013 Assembly resolutions “That the General Assembly direct Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and Congregational Committees to address the challenge contained within the “Grace of Giving” initiative.; “That the General Assembly recommend the Diocese of Liverpool’s “Giving in Grace” programme as a comprehensive resource and request congregations to consider making use of it or some similar programme.”

14. That the “Grace of Giving” Committee be reappointed for a further year as follows: Moderator, Clerk, Deputy Clerk; Revs Dr John Dunlop, RIA Allely, NAL Cameron, David Stanfield, Gareth McFadden; Alan Ince, Colin Neill, Mrs D Marshall, Mrs Averil Heenan, Mrs Hilary Campbell.

Doctrine Committee

15. That the General Assembly instruct the Church Architecture Committee that baptisteries should not be installed in Presbyterian Church buildings.

16. That the General Assembly request the Board of Christian Training to consider implementing a programme of training on the doctrine of baptism.

Moderator's Advisory

17. That the General Assembly thank those who organised and took part in the "Day of discussion" and note the on-going conversations on human sexuality.

18. That the General Assembly welcome plans to make the Conciliation Service better known and more effective.

19. That a budget of £6,000 be made available for the Conciliation Service from the General Board.

20. That the General Assembly commend all efforts to bring support and pastoral care to ministers and their families.

Church and Society

21. That the General Assembly reaffirm their active support for a properly accountable police service through the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, and thank the outgoing Chief Constable and recently retired Deputy Chief Constable for their service.

22. That the General Assembly reaffirm active support for the Prison Service and other criminal justice agencies, given the difficult and demanding circumstances in which the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland operates.

23. That a budget of £2,000 be made available for the work of the Committee from the Incidental Fund.

Global Concerns

24. That the General Assembly encourage the General Board in setting up a Panel to consider issues of the Near-East.

25. That the General Assembly call upon the Minister for Justice in the Republic of Ireland to sign up to the European directive on reception conditions, expedite the resolution of asylum claims and allow those awaiting asylum decisions to work after twelve months in the jurisdiction.

26. That the General Assembly appoint the following to:

ICC Executive - Revs John Brackenridge, Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, Trevor Gribben.

Irish Inter-Church Committee - Revs Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, Trevor Gribben.

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

Vuleka Trust (South Africa)	£750
Diakonia Council of Churches (South Africa)	£750
Embrace (NI)	£1,000
Churches' Asylum Network (RoI)	£500
Eco-Congregation Ireland	£500
Environment Panel expenses	£1,300
Good Relations Panel expenses	£2,000

28. That the General Assembly recognise the Gospel imperative of working for a shared and better society and appeals to Presbyterian ministers and elders to give a greater lead in calling their congregations both to pray about these matters and to work for the welfare of our divided communities.

Church Relations

29. That the following grants (approx.) be made:	
Irish Council of Churches	£20,150
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£11,180
World Communion of Reformed Churches	£13,000
Conference of European Churches	£5,500
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe	£1,250

Reception of Ministers and Licentiates

30. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee regarding ministers and licentiates.

Elders' Term

31. That the report be received and the ad-hoc Committee on Term Eldership be thanked and discharged.

General

32. That a budget of £5,000 be made available from the Incidental Fund for the general work of the Board.

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 75(a) of the Code

that in Par 75(a) of the Code the words “in cases of difficulty;” be deleted and the words “in cases of difficulty and seek conciliation where it is appropriate;”

Anent Par 132 of the Code

that in Par 132 of the Code the following paragraph be added: “(4) A court shall always consider the possibility of conciliation before entering into a formal process of discipline.” and the subsequent paragraphs renumbered.

Anent Par 161(1)(b) of the Code

that in Par 161(1) of the Code the following sub-paragraph (b) be added: “invite conciliators appointed by the General Assembly’s Conciliation Service to seek a way forward” and the subsequent sub-paragraphs renumbered.

Anent Par 162(2) of the Code

that in Par 162(2) of the Code the words “thinks fit.” be deleted and the words “thinks fit and, if appropriate, invite conciliators to be appointed by the General Assembly’s Conciliation Service.”

DONALD J WATTS

Anent Par 128(1) and (2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that, from 1st January 2015, paragraphs 128(1) and 128(2) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in their place:

128. (1) **The Linkage Commission** shall consist of:
- (a) The Moderator, and Clerk of the General Assembly; Commission Convener and Secretary; the Deputy Clerk; three representatives of the Council for Mission in Ireland; Conveners of the Commission Panels;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery;
 - (c) Nine nominees of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) Ten members shall form a quorum for the Commission.

DONALD J WATTS

Anent Par 268 to 288 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that, from 1st January 2015, paragraphs 268 to 288 of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in their place:

268. (1) **Commissions, Councils and Committees** of the General Assembly may be either standing or occasional.
- (2) Councils, each having supervisory responsibilities over a broad field of work for which they are answerable to the General Assembly, may
- (a) include a number of official working Committees or specialist agents or directors appointed by the Assembly to promote particular aspects of work under the supervision of the Council, and
 - (b) from time to time appoint Panels, Task Groups, or agents, answerable to the Council for work remitted to them. A Panel will have on-going responsibility; a Task Group is appointed for a specific purpose and time.
- (3) Occasional Commissions and Committees may be appointed by the General Assembly for specific purposes, subject to annual renewal. Committees so appointed shall report to the General Assembly through the General Council.
269. (1) The **membership of an Assembly Council** shall be appointed, in accordance with a scheme approved by the General Assembly from time to time, from representatives of the Church, nominated by Presbyteries, together with ex-officio members and others on the nomination of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) (a) (i) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly shall be members of all Commissions, Councils, Committees, Panels and Task Groups, ex-officio.
- (ii) Where the Clerk of Assembly is ex-officio, the Deputy Clerk shall be permitted to attend in his place, if necessary.
- (b) The Convener and Secretary shall be a member ex-officio of their respective Commission, Council or Committee, and the Convener

- and Secretary of a Council shall similarly be a member of all its working Committees, Panels and Task Groups.
- (c) Any other members, ex-officio, not specified in rules, shall be appointed only after recommendation by the Nominations Committee.
 - (d) The Committees in connection with any Council shall be appointed after report and recommendation by the Nominations Committee.
 - (e) Full-time Council Secretaries shall be members of the General Assembly, where rules permit.
- (3) In addition to their ex-officio members, a working Committee shall normally consist of not more than twelve members, at least one half of whom shall be drawn from the Council and the others nominated by the Nominations Committee.
- (4) Presbyteries and the Nominations Committee should ensure that their nominations provide, so far as is reasonably practical, that
- (a) there is an equal number of ministers and other members of the Church;
 - (b) men, women and younger members are represented;
 - (c) no one is nominated a member of more than two Councils, unless specified above.
- (5) Presbyteries should make adequate arrangements for their representative to report back from Assembly Councils and Committees.
- (6) Annual nominations by Presbyteries shall be forwarded to the Clerk of Assembly before 31 March each year. The Presbytery should first confirm the willingness of individuals to serve.
- (7) In case any nominations are neglected, the retiring members shall be deemed re-nominated.
- (8) The Financial Secretary may act in an advisory capacity to all Councils and Committees.

270. (1)(a) **The Assembly shall appoint** its Commissions, Councils, and Committees, with their Conveners, after a report from the Nominations Committee.

- (b) In the appointment of Conveners of Commissions, Councils and Committees the Nominations Committee shall make the vacancy known on the Presbyterian Church in Ireland website before considering the appointment
- (2) In the event of an oversight in the appointment of an Assembly Commission, Council or Committee which has not been discharged, it shall be deemed reappointed with its previous membership.
- (3) The period of appointment:
- (a) for members shall generally be for four years, but for the Nominations Committee five years. No member shall serve for more than two terms, unless ex-officio. A member directly nominated to the Council by a Presbytery shall be a member of that Presbytery. Where a Presbytery nominee to a Council is not reappointed as a Congregation's representative elder to Presbytery they should be invited to sit and deliberate on Presbytery, enabling

them to complete the appointed term. A Minister shall only remain on a Council while a member of the Presbytery.

- (b) for Conveners of a Council, Committee or Panel shall normally be for five years. The Convener of a Council Task-Group shall serve for the life of the Task-Group, which shall normally be for not more than three years. No-one shall normally hold more than two consecutive Committee Convenerships on the same Council. A retiring Council Convener should not normally be appointed to another Council Convenership within three years.
- (4) Any member who, without giving due reason, has failed to attend any of the meetings of his Commission, Council etc., for a year or for three successive meetings, whichever be the longer period, shall be deemed to have retired from membership.
- (5) Where the quorum of any Commission, Council etc., has not been fixed by the Assembly it shall be one quarter of the total membership, or the number nearest one quarter, though in no case shall the quorum be less than three.

271. Expenses shall be paid to members attending the Assembly, Commissions, Councils etc. according to a scheme approved by the Assembly from time to time.

272. General Council of the Assembly

- (1) **The membership of the General Council** shall be:
- (a) The Moderator, Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly; Council Convener; Conveners of the Council Committees; Financial Secretary; preceding two Moderators; preceding Clerk of Assembly (for one year); Conveners of other Councils and Commissions.
 - (b) Clerks of Presbytery; one direct nominee from each Presbytery.
 - (c) Nine nominees of the Nominations Committee
- (2) The membership of the Council Committees shall be as agreed by the General Assembly from time to time.
- (3) The Council shall on behalf of the Assembly deal with such exceptional matters affecting public interest or the general work of the Church as may arise and require action between meetings of the General Assembly; and may either directly or through its authorised committees issue statements on such matters on behalf of the Church.
- (4) The Council shall co-ordinate the work of all Councils including:
- co-ordination of work not in the remit of other Councils;
 - co-ordination of work which overlaps two or more Councils and which is not the responsibility of another Council.
- (5) The Council shall provide for effective communication of the Assembly's views both within and beyond the Church.
- (6) The Council shall, through an appropriate Committee:
- (a) facilitate the process of nominations to Councils etc. by:
 - allocating the 'general nominations' from Presbyteries to Councils (i.e. allocating those people not nominated to specific Councils by Presbyteries);

- nominating Conveners of Assembly Councils (with appropriate co-operation with the Council involved);
 - the oversight of general matters relating to nomination of Councils and Committees to the General Assembly.
- (b) order the business of the General Assembly:
- dealing with and where appropriate licensing of all business to the Assembly;
 - recommending an order of business to the Assembly;
 - making all arrangements for the accommodation and discharge of the Assembly business;
 - nominating corresponding members and delegates to other Churches;
 - examining the records of all the Presbyteries and Assembly Councils.
- (c) draw up priorities for the work of the General Assembly:
- in discussion with the Presbyteries and other Councils, recommend priorities to the General Assembly.
 - through a suitable reference group independent of other Councils:
 - report that the work of the Councils is consistent with the priorities agreed by the Assembly;
 - report that the United Appeal allocations are consistent with the priorities agreed by the Assembly;
 - report whether each Council is focussed on the work allocated to it by the General Assembly.
- (d) recommend to the General Assembly each year a United Appeal for mission:
- allocating each year a proportion of that Appeal to each Presbytery;
 - setting budgets for each Council receiving support from the United Appeal;
 - approving payments to the Councils;
 - providing publicity materials for the United Appeal for mission.
- (e) prepare general Church policy or statements on Doctrine for submission to the General Assembly.
- (f) advise the Moderator and Clerk on matters of sensitivity for the Church:
- providing assessors to sit with a lower Court if it invites help in cases of difficulty;
- (g) develop relationships with other Churches:
- monitor those inter-church bodies of which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a member.
- (h) ensure that support services are being provided to the Councils efficiently and effectively and dealing with any related policy issues.
- (7) The Council itself, or through its appropriate Committee, is authorised

- (a) to be the recognised medium of communication between the Church and Governments;
 - (b) to submit nominations for the offices of Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Theological Professors and College Principal.
- (8) The Council shall provide representation of the Church's interest in the Presbyterian Historical Society according to the following provisions:
- (a) The custody of various manuscripts and published records of the past of the Church together with relics of historical value may be entrusted to this Society, in terms of its constitution.
 - (b) The Society is also charged with promoting historical study and appreciation and with compiling accounts of Church life and of those who have played any significant part in its work.

273. Linkage Commission - see Code Par 128.

The Commission shall operate in accordance with the following rules:

- (1) Upon knowledge of a vacancy arising in a congregation it shall be the responsibility of the Clerk of Presbytery forthwith to notify this in writing to the Convener of the Commission and to inform the congregation of the rules governing vacant pastorates and preliminaries to any call.
- (2) Where there is not a vacancy in a congregation, but a Presbytery following the visitation of a congregation, or a congregation of their own initiative, refer a case to the Commission, or the Commission itself deem it appropriate, the Commission shall have power to examine the circumstances and take appropriate action.
- (3) A candidate for a vacant pastorate shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves before accepting a call as to whether the Commission has dealt with the congregation under these rules (and is advised to confirm the matter with the Convener of the Commission).
- (4) Where a congregation or linkage of congregations which has become vacant should, in the opinion of the Commission, be continued and agreement has been reached on the terms for a new ministry and the Commission is satisfied that the Manse (if any) is being put into suitable condition for the use of the Minister:
 - (a) leave to call shall be issued by the Commission on behalf of the Assembly, but
 - (b) this leave shall be operative for 12 months only, after which, should the vacancy not have been filled, it shall be referred back to the Commission for the whole arrangement to be reconsidered.
- (5) Where it is not expedient formally to link a congregation, in the opinion of the Commission, and yet such congregation in itself does not provide sufficient work for a normal appointment, or where a linkage, either existing or new, does not provide sufficient work for a normal appointment, or where a congregation or linkage is otherwise in special circumstances, the Commission shall have power to:-
 - (a) classify such congregation or linkage as a Restricted List charge upon the following terms:

- (i) when a vacancy arises, the Commission shall have power to limit the list of candidates to those who, in its opinion, may reasonably be suited to such work, or may become available for service under subsequent rules;
 - (ii) where a congregation or linkage so designated receives no application from eligible candidates within twelve months of classification, the whole arrangement shall be reconsidered by the commission.
- (b) arrange for the appointment of a Stated Supply to provide for the work of the ministry in the congregation or linkage upon the following terms:
- (i) appointments shall be made by Presbytery on the nomination of, and on terms settled by, the Commission;
 - (ii) appointment shall not of itself qualify for membership in the courts of the Church;
 - (iii) the appointment shall be terminable on two months' notice given, after consultation among them, by the supply, the Presbytery or the Commission, or otherwise by mutual arrangement.
- (c) issue leave to call to Part-Time Ministry in the congregation or linkage, under the Commissions scheme for Part-Time Ministry.
- (d) arrange for a Reviewable Tenure appointment upon the following terms:
- (i) the form of Leave to Call shall provide for the appointment to be reviewed and/or terminated after a specified time or in specified circumstances;
 - (ii) If the congregation concerned is subsequently linked with another congregation, and the minister is accepted by that congregation also as its settled minister, the Reviewable Tenure provisions shall be deemed to have lapsed;
 - (iii) except as provided for in sub-paragraph (5)(c)(ii) above, the outgoing minister shall not be eligible to apply for the linked charge;
 - (iv) the appointment shall not be terminated without six months' notice in writing given by the Commission to the minister, the congregation and the Presbytery;
 - (v) after termination of the appointment the minister shall be eligible for salary and pension contributions at the rate of the appropriate ministerial minimum as a charge upon the Central Ministry Fund until the minister receives another Call, or for a period not exceeding twelve months, whichever is the sooner. During such period suitable work may be offered to the minister by the Commission. Should such minister at any time refuse to perform the duties thus assigned, without giving reasons deemed satisfactory by the Commission, this financial arrangement shall cease;
 - (vi) the provisions of Code Par. 274(8)(b)(ii) shall not apply;

- (vii) where a congregation granted a Reviewable Tenure appointment receives no application within twelve months the whole arrangement shall be reconsidered by the Commission.
- (6) (a) Where in the opinion of the Commission the pastorate of two or more congregations may be linked the Commission shall consult with the Kirk Sessions and Congregations involved (either directly or through the Presbytery), with the Presbytery itself and, in the case of Home Mission Congregations, with the Council for Mission in Ireland. The Commission shall endeavour to agree the terms with the Kirk Sessions involved. Where it proves impossible to obtain the agreement of one or more Kirk Sessions, but the Presbytery consents and in the case of Home Mission congregations the Council for Mission in Ireland consents, terms of linkage shall be fixed by the Commission, a date for its commencement set and such action reported in due course to the Assembly. These terms shall be binding on all the parties concerned. The same action may be taken to facilitate a porting. The Commission shall be the final authority as to the area of porting to be effected.
- (b) No congregation shall be dissolved or amalgamated, with loss of its identity, except by authorisation from the Assembly. Where the Commission has been instructed by the General Assembly to agree terms, where one or more congregations are being amalgamated or dissolved by resolution of the Assembly, the Commission shall endeavour to agree the terms with the Kirk Sessions involved. Where it proves impossible to obtain the agreement of one or more Kirk Sessions, but the Presbytery consents, and in the case of Home Mission congregations the Council for Mission in Ireland consents, the terms shall be set by the Commission and shall be binding on all the parties concerned.
- (c) When any congregation is considering a proposal for dissolution, amalgamation or linkage with another congregation, no arrangements regarding the sale of its properties and distribution of the proceeds or the income therefrom shall be made without first obtaining the agreement of the Commission.
- (d) Where it is decided that within five years from the date of the leave to call the vacant congregation or congregations shall be linked with another congregation or congregations where there is still a minister in active duty (hereafter referred to as “the other congregation or congregations”), the Commission may issue leave to call to the vacant congregation or congregations on deferred linkage terms.
- (i) The Commission will have power to direct that in the choice of a Minister the vacant congregation or congregations and the other congregation or congregations shall act as one congregation and the Kirk Session as one Kirk Session.

- (ii) The rights and entitlements of the active minister or ministers in the other congregation or congregations shall not be adversely affected by this arrangement.
 - (iii) When the minister or ministers in active duty retire or cease to be minister or ministers of the other congregation or congregations in the deferred linkage the Commission shall agree final terms of linkage and the Presbytery arrange a service of installation in the other congregation or congregations.
 - (iv) If the minister called to the original vacant congregation in the deferred linkage resigns their charge, the same procedure as above will be followed.
- (7) When congregations belonging to different Presbyteries are being linked or a congregation is ported to a new area the Commission shall have power to remove congregations and ministers from one Presbytery to another.
- (8) For the purpose of effecting a linkage of congregations, or a porting or dissolution, where there is still a minister in active duty involved and except when Par 274(5)(c)(v) or Par 318(3)(d) is applicable,
- (a) the minister may be retired by the Commission on such terms as may be agreed, or
 - (b) where prepared voluntarily to resign, the minister shall, notwithstanding, continue to remain a member of the Assembly and subject to its jurisdiction on the following terms.
 - (i) Suitable work shall be offered by the Commission, or by the Council for Mission in Ireland on application of the Commission, and if appointed as Stated Supply the minister shall be a member of the Presbytery concerned.
 - (ii) Provision shall be made, in conjunction with the Central Ministry Fund, that until eligible to retire official income (including any payment in lieu of manse) shall be at least equal to that which is surrendered, from and after which time the minister shall be in the same financial position as an ordinary retired minister of a congregation.
 - (iii) Should such minister at any time refuse to perform the duties thus assigned, without giving reasons which shall be deemed satisfactory by the Commission, the above financial arrangement shall become null and void.
- (9) When in the opinion of the Commission and of the Presbytery or the Council for Mission in Ireland, the work of a congregation whose minister receives a grant from the Home Mission, or from any other Assembly fund for the augmentation of ministerial income, can be adequately performed by the minister of a neighbouring congregation, or can be adequately arranged for otherwise:
- (a) the grant to such minister shall cease;
 - (b) the Commission is empowered to direct Presbytery to release them from their charge;

- (c) upon such release other work shall be offered and financial provision made as set out under sub-paragraph (8)(b) above.
- (10) When a congregation is opposed to dissolution, or linkage, or porting, on the terms fixed by the Commission, but a minister is nevertheless allowed to be appointed,
- (a) the minister shall not receive from the Central Ministry Fund in any year any sum greater than the amount paid into the Fund by the congregation for that year, and
 - (b) the minister shall not receive any grant from any other fund of the Assembly.
- (11) When any congregation which has been dealt with by the Commission shall make default in carrying out the terms and conditions which the Commission has fixed for it, the minister of such congregation, while such default continues,
- (a) shall not receive from the Central Ministry Fund in any year any sum greater than the amount paid into the Fund by the congregation for that year, and
 - (b) shall not receive any grant from any other fund of the Assembly, and the Assembly shall have the powers to determine the future status of the congregation.
- (12) The Commission shall have power to dissolve a linkage between two congregations where, in its opinion, it would be better to link each or either of the congregations with another congregation, or where other developments render such action desirable.
- (13) When the Minister of a congregation, which becomes linked with another congregation, is accepted by that congregation also as its settled minister, the Presbytery shall arrange for an installation service in this second congregation.
- (14) Any request to vary the application of the rules about the provision of a Manse and residence therein (as set out in Par. 195 (11)(c) and Appendix 5A of the Code) shall be referred to the Commission, which shall have power to issue after consultation with the Presbytery, congregation and minister (if any).

274. Council for Church in Society

- (1) The membership of the Council for Church in Society shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly; Public Affairs and Press Officers; Council Convener; Committee and Panel Conveners; preceding Moderator; Convener and Secretary of Council for Social Witness;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery;
 - (c) Six nominees of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) The membership of Council Committees shall be as the General Assembly may agree from time to time.
- (3) The remit of the Council shall be to:
 - (a) identify current issues which the Church needs to address; helping to develop the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's thinking in these areas and communicating the General Assembly's views in the

public square (for clarity this will include all aspects of public policy including education, youth, children's, social and ethical issues);

- (b) develop relationships with the Westminster and Dublin Governments and Parliaments and the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly, making representations to them on behalf of the Church and responding to consultations from them (for clarity this will include all aspects of public policy including education, youth, children's, social and ethical issues);
- (c) develop relationships with civic society;
- (d) provide nominations to education and other state bodies where the Church is a stakeholder;
- (e) work with the press and media office to ensure the Church's view is heard in the public square.

275. Council for Training in Ministry

- (1) **The membership of the Council for Training in Ministry** shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of the General Assembly; Council Convener and Secretary; Committee and Panel Conveners; Principal of Union Theological College; Director of Ministerial Studies;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery
 - (c) The membership of Council Committees shall be as agreed by the General Assembly from time to time.
- (3) The Council shall consider all aspects of leadership training for ministers including responsibility for:
 - (a) selection, training and on-going development of full-time ministers;
 - (b) pastoral care of ministers and manse families;
 - (c) selection, training and on-going development of auxiliary ministers and accredited preachers;
 - (d) selection and initial training of deaconesses, including probationary period;
 - (e) reception of ministers and licentiates from other Churches, subject to rules approved from time to time by the General Assembly;
 - (f) management of Union Theological College and the Magee Fund Scheme;
 - (g) provision of a conciliation service.

276. Council for Congregational Life and Witness

- (1) **The membership of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness** shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly; Council Convener and Secretary; Committee and Panel Conveners; Presbyterian Women President;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery;
 - (c) Fifteen nominees of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) The membership of Council Committees shall be as the General Assembly may agree from time to time.

- (3) The Council shall:
- (a) seek to support the on-going life, mission and witness of congregations in their work with all age-groups, through casting vision; assisting in development; offering training; providing and signposting models of good practice and resourcing in key areas including:
 - (i) worship;
 - (ii) discipleship, nurture and teaching;
 - (iii) pastoral care;
 - (iv) evangelism and outreach in the community, including social outreach;
 - (v) co-operative working with others;
 - (vi) involvement in global mission;
 - (vii) leadership, including elder training.
 - (b) take specific responsibility for ensuring the strategic development within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland of:
 - (i) youth and children's ministry;
 - (ii) Presbyterian Women and ministry among women generally;
 - (iii) young adults' ministry;
 - (iv) support for the family (including PCI Family Holiday);
 - (v) marriage and counselling services.
 - (c) have responsibility for encouraging and resourcing congregations in:
 - (i) building supportive links with local schools;
 - (ii) supporting Christians in the workplace;
 - (iii) being proactive in the work of good relations.
 - (d) be responsible, in co-operation with other Councils, for providing congregations with support and training in specific areas, such as:
 - (i) finance, health & safety and personnel issues;
 - (i) disability awareness;
 - (iii) Taking Care.

277. Council for Mission in Ireland:

- (1) **The membership of the Council for Mission in Ireland** shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly; Council Convener and Secretary; Linkage Commission representative; two Presbyterian Women representatives; Committee and Panel Conveners;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery;
 - (c) Ten nominees of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) The membership of Council Committees shall be as agreed by the General Assembly from time to time.
- (3) The Council shall:
 - (a) develop strategic priorities in all-age mission in Ireland, planning initiatives at a General Assembly level where appropriate;
 - (b) consider new church development and church planting;
 - (c) oversee all aspects of the work of the Home and Irish Mission, including the Irish Mission Fund;
 - (d) oversee the deployment and on-going support of deaconesses;

- (e) support a chaplaincy service in the Forces, Hospitals, Hospices and Prisons;
- (f) support mission and ministry in Universities and Colleges through chaplaincy services;
- (g) oversee the funds of the Presbyterian War Memorial, ensuring that its terms of trust are fulfilled.

278. Council for Global Mission

- (1) **The membership of the Council for Global Mission** shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly; Council Convener and Secretary; two Presbyterian Women representatives; Committee and Panel Conveners;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery.
 - (c) Ten nominees of the Nominations Committee.
- (2) The membership of Council Committees shall be as agreed by the General Assembly from time to time.
- (3) The Council shall:
 - (a) supervise the Overseas Mission of the General Assembly, including the interests of the individual missions listed in Par. 115 of the Code;
 - (b) develop a strategy on mission overseas, including partnership with overseas Churches and sending personnel;
 - (c) promote world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal;
 - (d) lead thinking on issues of global concern such as the environment, race relations, international relations.

279. Council for Social Witness

- (1) **The membership of the Council for Social Witness** shall be:
 - (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly; Council Convener and Secretary; one Presbyterian Women representative; Committee and Panel Conveners;
 - (b) One direct nominee from each Presbytery
 - (c) Nine nominees of the Nominations Committee
- (2) The membership of Council Committees shall be as agreed by the General Assembly from time to time.
- (3) The Council shall:
 - (a) deliver an effective social witness service on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to the wider community in partnership with appropriate organisations, in the areas of:
 - (i) older people services including residential care, nursing care, day care, respite care, supported housing and care in the community;
 - (ii) disability services; including residential care, day care, respite care, supported housing and care in the community;
 - (iii) criminal justice; including the management and professional oversight of Thompson House;

- substance abuse; including the management and professional oversight of Carlisle House and Gray's Court.
- (b) oversee policy development and administration of Taking Care.
- (c) support the ministry of the Kinghan Church;
- (d) relate the work of the Presbyterian Old Age Fund and similar funds to the witness of the Church.

DONALD J WATTS

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: Rev Dr DJ McKELVEY
Secretary: THE CLERK

1. The Judicial Commission met twelve times during the year and one further meeting is planned before the General Assembly. In June it appointed Mr Ken Duncan as its Chairman. The Commission received two references from Presbyteries; five appeals against Presbytery or Kirk Session decisions and conducted one inquiry under The Code, paragraph 224. These are reported in the Confidential Booklet available to members of the Assembly.

2. The Commission is grateful to the Very Rev Dr John Finlay who acted as adviser in a Congregation following an investigation by the Judicial Commission. It should be noted, however, that the work of the Judicial Commission normally ends when a Finding is delivered. The Commission does not have a continuing role of supervision or pastoral care. This responsibility rightly belongs to the Presbytery, who may refer specific points of difficulty to the Commission.

3. Following the change in legislation one Presbytery loosed a minister from his charge under The Code, paragraph 224(2)(b) and referred the matter of a temporary allowance to the Judicial Commission. A special arrangement was agreed.

4. The Judicial Commission is concerned that when a minister is loosed from a charge there is a tendency to ask that the family may continue to reside in the manse for a period. While any arrangement must be between the family and the Congregation who own the manse, with the approval of the Presbytery, the Commission advises that it be carefully considered. While not wishing to be unsympathetic, the reality is that the family's right of residence ends when the minister is loosed from the charge. An on-going presence in the manse can be unsettling for the minister, family and Congregation alike. The Commission recommend that if the family is to continue to reside in the manse beyond a reasonable period for removal a Caretaker's Agreement should be formalised.

5. The Judicial Commission considered its membership and concluded that it should be similar to other Assembly appointments and therefore for a fixed term. It suggests that members be appointed for five years with the possibility of one further five-year term. It also agreed that the Convener should be an ex-officio member. Appropriate overtures are appended. To avoid a major turn-over of membership every five years transitional arrangements are being considered.

6. The Commission received in March the resignation of Mr Ken Duncan from the Commission and therefore as Chairman. While it is pleased to record his appointment as a District Judge it is unfortunate this has meant he can no longer serve on the Judicial Commission. Ken has made an enormous contribution as a diligent member and more recently Chairman of the Commission. His keen intellect and passion for people has kept a wise balance between the judicial and the pastoral. While wishing him well the Commission recognises that it will miss him.

7. The Omagh Presbytery has been asked for a new nomination to the Commission. It was also agreed that on his retirement the Rev Dr Donald Watts should remain, taking the place of the Rev Trevor Gribben who, on appointment as Clerk, will be ex-officio. Appropriate resolutions are attached.

8. Overtures to the Assembly have been received and are considered in order.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That _____ be appointed to the Judicial Commission as a nominee of the Omagh Presbytery.

3. That from 1 September 2014 the Rev Dr DJ Watts shall be a member of the Judicial Commission in place of the Rev TD Gribben.

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 127(1) of the Code

that in Par 127(1) of the Code the words “the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly and” be deleted and the words “the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Convener of the Commission and” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 127(2)(a) of the Code

that in Par 127(2)(a) of the Code the words “for five years.” be deleted and the words “for five years and who may be reappointed for one further period of five years.” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 137 of the Code

That in Par 137 of the Code the words “or Synod” be deleted.

Anent Par 230(3)(a) of the Code

that in Par 230(3)(a) of the Code the words “Synod or” be deleted.

Anent Par 219(3)(b)(i) of the Code

that in Par 219(3)(b)(i) the words “the World Alliance of Reformed Churches” be deleted and the words “the World Communion of Reformed Churches” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 111(6) of the Code

that in Par 111(6) of the Code the words “1978 Ministers’ Pension Scheme Fund” be deleted and the words “Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension (2009) Fund” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 311(4)(a) of the Code

that Par 311(4)(a) of the Code be deleted and substituted by: “(a) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) (in these Rules referred to as the ‘2009 Pension Scheme’)”.

Anent Par 313(2) of the Code

that the words “1978 Pension Scheme” be deleted and the words “2009 Pension Scheme” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 317(a) of the Code

that the words “1978 Pension Scheme” be deleted and the words “2009 Pension Scheme” substituted in their place.

DEREK J McKELVEY

SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: Rev Dr DJ McKELVEY

Secretary: THE CLERK

It was not necessary for the Special Commission to meet.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

COMMISSION ON APPLICATIONS

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Commission appointed to consider any appeal from a Presbytery decision not to nominate an applicant to the Board of Christian Training for consideration as a candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland met once during the year. It will report in the Confidential Booklet containing the Judicial Commission Findings, available to members of the General Assembly.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

SPECIAL COMMISSION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL FACULTY, IRELAND

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Commission appointed by the General Assembly to consider how the Principal of the Union Theological College, appointed by the Assembly in June, may also become the Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland, met on 17 June and 5 August, 2013. The General Assembly's Solicitor was in attendance at each meeting.

2. The Commission considered the 1881 Charter "authorising the Faculty of the Colleges of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to grant degrees". It is clear that under the Charter the Faculty with authority to grant degrees consists of the named professors of the College/s. This is consistent with the Union Theological College of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Act, 1978.

3. The Commission consulted with the members of the UTC Management Committee and the Faculty of UTC. The Commission concluded that, without a change to the 1881 Charter and/or the 1978 Act, it is necessary to appoint the Very Rev. Dr. J.S. Carson a Professor of Union Theological College, in order to also appoint him as Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland. Following the consultation reported above it was agreed that the additional appointment should be as Professor of Ministry. This does not require a change to the Principal's Job Description or Personnel Specification, other than to the title which will now read "Principal of Union Theological College and Professor of Ministry". The Commission therefore, by the authority invested in it by the General Assembly, determined that in addition to his appointment as Principal of Union Theological College the Very Rev. Dr. J.S. Carson shall be Professor of Ministry at UTC and Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev WJ HENRY
Secretary: TJ LIVINGSTONE

1. This report summarises the work of the Union Commission from March 2013-March 2014. Matters dealt with include: the terms of leaves to call granted to 31 charges, the reviews of the financial terms in various leaves to call, the terms of linkage and amalgamation effected by the Commission, and reports on the work of the internal Committees of the Commission.

Creating sustainable ministry arrangements

2. Seeking the status quo or what existed in a Congregation prior to a vacancy is normally the default position of any charge or linkage. The Commission sees its task as having to look ahead and attempt to create what it believes to be sustainable ministry arrangement for the longer term future. The Commission endeavours to do this in a visionary manner but also in a way that has the wider support of the membership of the Church.

3. During the course of the last year there have been a number of wider scale discussions that have been very labour intensive for members of the Commission. Just one of these areas under discussion involved consulting with no less than eleven Kirk Sessions. The Commission does not jump to an immediate decision on any of these matters but reflects deeply, personally and prayerfully about the best way forward for the Kingdom of God. It is appropriate that tribute is paid to the Union Commission members who have given up much time to be involved in such deliberations and afterwards as determinations are thought through.

4. Individual Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries (and their Clerks) deserve thanks for the manner in which such occasions are facilitated. It is easy in such times to feel annoyed, frustrated or even let-down and so the Commission would seek the patience of all who are involved in reflecting through issues pertaining to new or changed ministry arrangements. Furthermore a great deal of prayer must be sought that the right way forward is found for the good of the Presbyterian Church and ultimately the Kingdom of God; and that is incumbent upon every Church member not just those whose Churches are in the “eye of the storm”.

5. There is a limit however, to how much can be provided in any situation, and new options for the future provision of ministry must be explored such as part time ministry arrangements or in a linkage or still larger linkage possibly with the help of Accredited Preachers.

Part-Time Ministry

6. One option when Leave to Call cannot be granted to a particular Congregation may well be Part-Time Leave to Call. It is encouraging that this relatively new ministry scenario has been growing in acceptance within the denomination and more so that the majority of these vacant Congregations have been successful in finding a minister relatively speedily.

Auxiliary Ministry

7. The Commission has been in discussion with representatives of the Board of Christian Training with a view to ensuring that when the first batch of those who have completed Auxiliary Ministry training are ready there are situations available, and a scheme is in place, to ensure that the prospective applicants have potential areas of service. A suitable overture is appended to these reports.

Reviewable Tenure

8. It is one thing to be granted Leave to Call with Reviewable Tenure; but there must be recognition that the day of reckoning draws near. The Commission has been dealing with an ever growing number of Tenure Reviews. Huge numbers of hours, not to mention the emotional angst, have been expended by the Commission and Presbyteries on these issues and it is appropriate that this is acknowledged. It is encouraging that these reviews have been treated with the seriousness they deserve. Increasingly it has become apparent that the Commission, Presbyteries and BMI need to work very closely together in working out a framework for future reviews that is specific, appropriate and measurable with a focus on the mission of the local Church. The specifics of review decisions made are listed later in these reports.

Augmentation and Financial Difficulties

9. Recommendations set down by the Board of Finance and Personnel about aiming to reduce the stress on CMF continues to be a factor the Commission addresses when it seeks to consider the case of an individual Congregation. In the majority of situations where Leave to Call has been granted there has been a reduction in the augmentation compared to what might have been paid prior to the present vacancy. When a Church-wide view is taken the Commission, though focused on its consideration of CMF spend, will consider it appropriate to grant leave to call in certain situations recognising that there will be a cost to CMF. However, this must not be taken to mean that the Commission will grant leave to call without due reference to mission and the potential workload for the new minister.

10. There is recognition of the financial difficulties that many Congregations are facing. Some are finding it difficult to meet their assessments and have fallen into default; such lack of payment cannot simply be cleared by the Church centrally. It then falls to the Commission, following guidelines, to discuss options for the future which are open to the Congregation concerned. The Commission is concerned that such scenarios will become more frequent due to declining numbers in many Churches. Presbyteries need to become involved with such Congregations and wisely and pastorally give leadership at as early a stage as possible before the situation becomes too grave.

Protracted Illness / Sick Supply Fund Rules / reduction in ministerial expenses during illness

11. Updated guidelines were issued to cover the practicalities of these issues and are appended to this report. (Appendices 1, 2 and 3)

Use of Manse as security for loans

12. An overture was presented to the 2013 General Assembly, and made an Interim Act, to make clear that if a Bank or lending institution sought the manse as security for a loan then the permission of the Union Commission would be needed (along with Congregation and Presbytery approval). It should be noted that Congregations should see this possibility as an act of last resort and should attempt to obtain their necessary funding without this option if at all possible, even if this should mean seeking another lender. Seeking this permission ought to be seen as irregular. The possibility of loss of ownership of the manse may be slight but is none the less real. Due to the increasing number of such applications the Commission will need to reflect much more deeply upon this matter.

CONGREGATIONS LINKED

13. During the year 1 linkage was agreed:

Donegal and Stranorlar

- (a) That the Congregations of Donegal and Stranorlar be linked as from 1 June 2013 or some other appropriate date.
- (b) Each Congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
- (c) Each Congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
- (d) In the choice of a minister the two Congregations shall act as one Congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
- (e) There shall be stated services each Sunday as follows: Donegal at 11.30 am and Stranorlar at 10.00 am, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
- (f) That the Stipends [2013] be Donegal €10,200 and Stranorlar €8,650 and initial ministerial expenses Donegal €6,150 and Stranorlar €4,000;
- (g) That Holiday Supplies, and other shared expenses not included in (f), be borne in the proportions 60% Donegal and 40% Stranorlar.
- (h) That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of the manse (or residence for the minister) be borne in the proportions 60% Donegal and 40% Stranorlar.
- (i) That the minister shall reside in Donegal manse.

LINKAGES BROKEN

14. On the recommendation of BMI and the Presbyteries involved the following linkages were dissolved:

Kells and Ervey on 28 May 2013. Ervey joined the Castleblayney Group and the Congregation of Kells became a temporary stand alone Stated Supply pending further discussions.

Craigavon and Vinecash on 17 June 2013. Vinecash became a stand-alone Stated Supply.

AMALGAMATIONS**Carlingford with Dundalk and Castlebellingham with Dundalk**

15. The Commission has had continued consultation with the Presbytery of Monaghan and brings to the General Assembly, by resolution, proposals for the amalgamation of the Congregation of Carlingford with Dundalk and the amalgamation of the Congregation of Castlebellingham, also with Dundalk.

LEAVE TO CALL A MINISTER

16. This is only a summary; there may well be conditions attached to the Leave to Call which are not recorded here. These might include Part-time, Reviewable tenure, Restricted List, additional income for the minister, etc. When a figure is set the date denotes when Leave to Call was granted. This figure will increase automatically under the Tyrone Memorial. 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
Clones	9½% €AMM	€1,140 with manse/€1,425 without
Stonebridge	9½% €AMM	€1,140 with manse/€1,425 without
Newbliss	26% €AMM	€3,120 with manse/€3,900 without
& Ballyhobridge	5% €AMM	€600 with manse/€750 without
Malone	£33,000 [2013]	£7,500
Castleblaney	£14,000 [2013]	£4,000
Frankford	£7,000 [2013]	£2,000
Corvally	£6,000 [2013]	£1,500
& Ervey	£4,500 [2013]	£1,500
Dunfanaghy	£12,000 [2013]	£2,000
& Carrigart	£6,000 [2013]	£2,000
Magherally	£AMM	£4,800
Churchtown	£AMM	£8,316
Trinity, Greyabbey	£25,000 [2013] or £AMM (whichever is the greater)	£7,500
Warrenpoint	55% £BMM	£3,800
& Rostrevor	45% £BMM	£3,200
First Portadown	£40,000 [2013]	£8,312
Craigavon	£17,500 [2013]	£5,000
Scrabo	£24,500 [2013]	£7,000
Banagher	£AMM	£8,000
Moneydig	£17,000 [2013]	£5,300
Cumber	£16,550 [2013]	£4,400
& Upper Cumber	£13,240 [2013]	£3,500
Downpatrick	£16,500 [2013]	£6,000
& Ardglass	£5,500 [2013]	£2,000
Ballywatt	£24,000 [2013] or £AMM (whichever is the greater)	£8,312

Garnerville	£23,538 [2013]	£7,500
Cairncastle	£25,000 [2013] or £AMM (whichever is the greater)	£8,300
Kilmore	50% £AMM	£4,156
Fisherwick	£37,000 [2014]	£8,312
Ballyalbany	€22,500 [2014]	€7,500
& Glennan	€7,500 [2014]	€2,500
First Ballynahinch	£27,000 [2014]	£8,000
Abbey Monkstown	£28,000 [2014]	£7,150
McCracken Memorial	£35,671 [2014]	£8,312
Castledawson	£22,500 [2014]	£6,234
& Curran	£7,500 [2014]	£2,078
High Street, Antrim	£30,500 [2014]	£8,312
Dervock	£AMM	£8,312
Orritor	£16,200 [2014]	£4,920
& Claggan	£11,800 [2014]	£3,280
Magheramason	£27,500 [2014]	£8,312
Cavanaleck	£15,610 [2014]	£5,552
& Aughtentaine	£ 8,717 [2014]	£2,760
3rd Portglenone	50% £ AMM	£4,156

(Note: BMM = Basic Ministerial Minimum; AMM = Appropriate Ministerial Minimum)

LEAVE TO CALL AN ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Ballywillan Associate	£AMM	£3,000 & £3,000 housing allowance
Bangor West Associate	£AMM	£6,000 & £6,000 housing allowance

PERMISSION TO EXTEND ASSOCIATE MINISTER TERM

1st Comber (one year)

EXTENSION OF REVIEWABLE TENURE MINISTRIES

17. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Ballygomartin was extended for 6 years until 31 October 2017; in Portavogie tenure was extended for 6 years commencing 28 May 2013; in the Church Plant at Donabate tenure was extended for 5 years from 1 January 2014 or until constitution as a full charge (whichever is sooner); and in the Living Room Church Plant (Cliftonville Road) tenure was extended for 3 years from 1 June 2014.

STATED SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS

18. During the past year the Commission has renewed a number of previous nominations for a further period in co-operation with the appropriate Presbytery. One new Stated Supply arrangement in Dervock was effected.

19. As part of the Leave to Call arrangements in two Congregations the new minister when appointed would be expected to perform the duties of Stated Supply as a neighbouring minister. The minister of Magherally would be Stated

Supply in Katesbridge; and the minister of Moneydig would be Stated Supply in 2nd Kilrea. The Commission will nominate to the Presbyteries concerned accordingly.

REVIEWS COMMITTEE

Mr James Livingstone reports:

20. In accordance with Par 236(2) of the Code and arising out of other circumstances the Reviews Committee reviewed the stipend of the following Congregations:

MAY, 2013

Congregation	Stipend
Kilcooley	Increase by £1,000/year for 2 years
Cladymore	Increase by £1,500. Review in 2014
Tassagh	Increase by £1,500. Review in 2014
Armagh Road, Portadown	No change
The Mall, Armagh	No change
Ahorey	No change
Clare	No change
Carnlough/Cushendall	No change
Newtowncrommelin	No change
Connor	No change
Cunningham Memorial	No change
1st Portglenone	No change
Glengormley	No change
Belmont	No change
Orangefield	£36,248
Joymount	No change
1st Coleraine	No change
Waterside	No change
Fahan	No change
2nd Dromara	Review in 2014
Magheragall	Increase by £2,000/year for 2 years. Review in 2015
Banbridge Road, Dromore	No change
Abbey, Dublin	Increase by €5,000/year for 3 years. Review in 2016
Maynooth	Decrease to €32,000. Review in 2014
Donacloney	No change
1st Newry	No change
Finvoy	£24,500
Trinity, Ballymoney	No change
Templepatrick	No change
Killead	No change
Loanends	No change
Castlecaulfield	No change
English	No change

Union Road, Magherafelt	No change
Lecumpher	No change
Pomeroy	No change
Sandholes	No change

SEPTEMBER, 2013**Congregation****Stipend**

Kilcooley	Review in 2015
Abbey, Dublin	
Increase by €5,000 for 2013. Increase by €2,500 for 2 years, 2014 and 2015.	
No further review.	
Mountmellick	Increase by €300/year for 2 years.
Tullamore	€1,762

MANSES COMMITTEE*Mr John Stange reports:*

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

22. Clarification was given regarding the Residential Property Tax in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) that the Irish Revenue have confirmed that the manses do not qualify for exemption from local Property Tax soon to be introduced in the RoI. In this regard it is the Congregation which is responsible for both the registration of the property and payment of the tax as the property belongs to the Congregation and not the minister.

23. The Congregation of Kircubbin was granted permission to use the capital in the Manse Fund for necessary graveyard maintenance and repairs.

24. The Congregation of Templepatrick was given permission to use a portion of glebe land to extend the existing Church car park and to reimburse the incumbent minister for any loss of income from the land for perpetuity.

25. The Congregation of Magheragall was given permission to sell a building plot which is part of the manse glebe in order to contribute the funds towards the construction of a new Church hall.

26. The Congregations of Mosside and Toberdoney were both directed that the replacement of a septic tank at the Toberdoney manse is deemed to be a maintenance issue and not alterations and improvements. The Congregations share maintenance costs in agreed proportions.

27. The Congregation of Dervock was given permission to extend the 12 month lease on the vacant manse for a further period.

28. The Congregations of Sinclair Seamens, Dundalk, 1st Portadown, Cloughy, McCracken, Hazelbank and Newcastle were given permission to rent their manses during the period of vacancy

29. The following Congregations were granted permission to use their manse as security against a loan for building works in the Congregation under Code Par 82(4): Union Road, Magherafelt; New Row, Coleraine; Abbots Cross and Abbey Monkstown.

30. Congregations are reminded that, before letting a manse in a vacancy, the permissions of both Presbytery and the Union Commission are required,

together with the drawing up of a proper legal tenancy agreement. It is also strongly recommended that the detailed professional survey of the vacant manse be carried out before any tenants move in so that the eventual Leave to Call is not delayed.

31. The Commission would also remind Presbyteries that when decisions are being taken with regard to the possible sale of a manse and the replacement of the same, or a major refurbishment of an existing manse when there is not a vacancy in the Congregation concerned, another minister of Presbytery should be appointed to chair all meetings relating to manse issues until the replacement or refurbished manse is ready for occupation.

EXPENSES AND FEES COMMITTEE

The Rev Robert Bell writes:

Travel Expenses

32. The Commission, through its Expenses and Fees Sub-Committee, gives guidance to Congregational Committees about Travel Expenses and bases its recommendations on information available from the motoring organisations in the UK and RoI.

33. For 2014 based on an average of 14,400 business miles per year the recommended figures were unchanged from 2013, and are as follows:

Northern Ireland: £6,650 Republic of Ireland: €10,000

34. Ministers recording a higher business mileage should be paid more, while a lower amount may be appropriate to those who do not record as many business miles.

35. The Committee is grateful to ministers who completed the 2013 questionnaire re Travel Expenses, although it was disappointed that not all ministers took the opportunity to do so. The Union Commission has given its encouragement to the Committee to continue with its overall review of Ministerial Expenses, and information gained from the questionnaire is being used as an important part of this review.

Supply Fee

36. The level of the Supply Fee is determined by the Code, Par 238, and for 2013 this is £94 (€150), and £63 (€100) where only a single service is supplied in one Congregation.

37. Travelling expenses should be paid in accordance with the rate set for attendance at Assembly Boards, currently 15p (22 cents) per mile.

ADDITIONAL PASTORAL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Rev Philip McCrea reports:

38. Since the last APP Report the Union Commission gave permission for fourteen new additional pastoral personnel posts and a further three extensions to existing posts. The role of the Commission, through the APP Committee, is

to ensure the protection of both employer and employee when an additional pastoral person is added to the staff team. The Committee ensures that each of these posts, before being created, have a draft advert, a job description, a personnel specification and terms and conditions which have all been agreed by Peninsula Business Services. Following Peninsula's advice will ensure that all legal requirements are met and indemnity cover is in place.

39. The Union Commission's Guidelines for the Employment of Additional Pastoral Personnel (March 2011 and Updated June 2012) contains all the information (including the relevant forms and salary scales) required in requesting permission to employ or to extend the employment of additional pastoral personnel. The order of approvals for new posts or extensions should be Peninsula, Presbytery and then Union Commission. All documentation and approvals should be with the convener of the APP Committee two weeks prior to the Union Commission meeting at which approval is sought. Kirk Sessions are reminded that permission must be sought to extend an existing post three months prior to the date of the end of the present contract.

40. When Union Commission approval is given for a new post please note the following;

- (i) Union Commission approval for a post is given in accordance with the terms and conditions placed before it, through the APP Committee
- (ii) Union Commission approval lasts for one year after which the Commission's permission lapses if the post has not been filled
- (iii) The post is for the time period specified and should the employer wish to extend the time period, a request must be made prior to the end of the contract on the appropriate form (Appendix D in the Commission's Guidelines). This extension must be applied for and permission received from the Commission before another contract begins.
- (iv) As pointed out in Section D (12) of the Union Commission guidelines regarding the Employment of Additional Pastoral Personnel (March 2011 and Updated June 2012), all contractual changes should be discussed and agreed with Peninsula before being implemented.
- (v) When approval is received employers should seek up to date advice from Peninsula on employment issues, such as redundancy

41. 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". Being under the authority of Presbytery it is essential that ministers receive permission from Presbytery in order to undertake this work if it exceeds six hours.

42. New Salary Scales were agreed by the Union Commission at its November 2013 meeting (see Appendix A). These became operative from 1 January 2014.

APPENDIX A – 2014 SALARY SCALES

	Sterling salary pt	Euro salary pt	Level of responsibility of post	Qualification attained by employee or level of experience
Band A	£17,176 £17,791 £18,412 £19,030 £19,817 £20,430	€26,877 €27,839 €28,811 €29,778 €31,009 €31,969	Mostly direct work with children, young people or adults under close regular supervision; low management responsibility for people or projects.	Obtained or working towards OCN level 2&3 qualifications, PCI Youth/Children's Ministry Course or similar qualification in the relevant field; Where this level of qualification is not held, demonstrated experience in this field of activity may be deemed equivalent.
Band B	£21,423 £22,395 £23,398 £24,434 £25,142	€33,522 €35,043 €36,613 €38,234 €39,342	General responsibility for specific areas of programme and ministry oversight; graduating and less closely supervised responsibility for programmes, strategy, volunteers or leaders.	Appropriate recognition of attainment or working towards undergraduate or postgraduate theological study or professional qualifications (including Youth & Community, teaching qualification or other related professional qualifications such as counselling or social work). Where this level of qualification is not held, demonstrated experience in this field of activity may be deemed equivalent.

Please note:

1. This salary scale was initially based on the JNC Youth and Community work scale (2009) for the UK and has since been updated annually. The RoI salary scale will be the appropriate salary point multiplied by the RoI Ministerial Minimum (€36,641) and divided by the NI Ministerial Minimum (£23,416) ie. uplifted by PCI's agreed percentage for RoI cost of living differential.
2. The above rates are deemed to apply to a minimum of 37.5 hours per week. For employees working less than 37.5 hours per week a pro-rata rate is applicable.
3. The APP Convener of the Union Commission should be contacted for the most up to date figures and for advice on their interpretation.

UNION COMMISSION PERSONNEL

43. The Commission recognises the service given by the Conveners of its internal Committees. During the year the Rev Peter Gamble retired from the position of Secretary of the Commission and the Commission appointed Mr James Livingstone to this role (temporarily in the first instance until 31 December 2014 pending the outcome of the Structures Review). Mr Alastair Giffen stepped down after having given many years service as Convener of the Manses Committee and Mr John Stanage was appointed in his stead.

APPENDIX 1

PROTRACTED ILLNESS GUIDELINES

- (A) As a result of protracted medically certified absence, a minister or associate minister (hereafter referred to as ‘ministers’) shall be paid as follows:
- Months 0-6 – 100% of salary paid
 - Months 7-9 – 75% of salary paid
 - Months 10-12 – 50% of salary paid
 - Months 12 onwards – all payments cease
- Notes:**
- The minister shall be informed prior to each of these changes being enacted, through an appropriate letter from the Clerk’s office being included with the previous month’s payroll.
 - No payments under the scheme shall be made to any minister for more than 12 months in any 24 month period and the above reductions shall also apply in a similar rolling ‘12 month in 24 month’ manner.
- (B) Medical evidence must be supplied to the Financial Secretary in all cases of illness of more than seven days duration. Failure to submit such evidence could mean loss of benefit.
- (C) Any invalidity or other state benefit reclaimed by a minister should be paid over to the Financial Secretary to be forwarded to the Congregation to be applied towards meeting expenses of the period of illness. (When a minister serves in a linked charge normally one Treasurer will be identified to whom payment is to be made.)
- (D) Application may be made for a grant to meet the cost of pulpit supplies in accordance with the rules for the time being of the Sick Supply Fund.
- (E) Presbytery shall make arrangements for a reduction in ministerial expenses during the period of illness (in accordance with the Union Commission Guidelines for the time being) to assist with pulpit supplies or other additional expenditure occasioned by a minister’s incapacity.
- (F) Normally, after 6 months of medically certified absence (and at any other point deemed necessary), a minister will be required to attend an independent occupational health consultation. (This consultation would also clarify whether a further independent ‘return to work’ consultation was necessary.)
- (G) Each case of protracted illness shall be reviewed so that a decision can be made at the end of twelve months absence from duties provided that (a) absence has been continuous, or (b) absence or absences have been of significant duration or recurring over the twelve-month period, as interpreted by the Union Commission, after consultation with Presbytery.
- (H) The Commission, in consultation with Presbytery and the Board of Finance and Personnel, shall have the authority to advise Presbytery to loose from his/her charge any minister on the grounds of medical

incapacity, after consultation with the Kirk Session and Congregational Committee.

- (I) Specifically, with regard to licentiates and ordained assistants, during medically certified absence:
- (i) Licentiates and ordained assistants shall be paid as outlined in section (A) above. Sections (B) and (C) shall also apply.
 - (ii) The costs shall be met as follows:
 - 1-3 months: no change in the arrangements in place.
 - 4-12 months: appropriate salary and employer's national insurance contributions, along with full housing allowance to be paid by C.M.F. Expenses, paid by C.M.F., may be reduced by the Union Commission.
 - (iii) The provisions of section (F) above shall apply.
 - (iv) Each case of protracted illness shall be reviewed in consultation with the Board of Christian Training, so that a decision can be made at the end of twelve months absence from duties, or at the date of eligibility for call, provided that (a) absence has been continuous, or (b) absence or absences have been of significant duration or recurring over the twelve-month period, as interpreted by the Union Commission, after consultation with Board of Christian Training.
 - (v) The Commission shall have authority to recommend to the Board of Christian Training and the Congregation concerned the termination of a licentiate or ordained assistantship on the grounds of medical incapacity.

**Adopted by the Union Commission on Tuesday 26 November 2013
Applicable from 1 January 2014**

APPENDIX 2

SICK SUPPLY FUND RULES

1. The fund covers the cost of Supply Fees paid by the Congregation up to the amount of the 2 services rate as set out in the Code for any one Sunday (£94/€150 in 2014). Special arrangements apply for joint Charges for Harvest Sundays and Children's Days and for all Charges for Christmas Day. Travelling expenses should be paid by the Congregation in accordance with Par 238 (4) of the Code.

2. Payment from the Sick Supply Fund is available from the **3rd Sunday of medically certified disability** and continues to be available for 11 months or until the Protracted Illness Guidelines are implemented or until recovery, if sooner, or other decision is made by the Union Commission. The cost of supplies during the 2 initial Sundays should be met by Congregations or from other local sources.

3. Payments may be applied for, using the appropriate Application Form, at the end of each calendar month or every 2 months or quarterly.

For Ministers returning to duties after medically certified disability

For ministers returning to active service after an extended period of absence due to illness the following is normally provided:

- (a) For up to (and including) two Sundays of eligibility for Sick Supply funding (as outlined above), reimbursement may be sought for a supply fee for one Sunday's service(s).
- (b) A further Supply Fee for one Sunday's service(s) for every additional four Sundays reimbursed by the Sick Supply Fund, up to a maximum of 12 such Supply Fees in any 12 month period.
- (c) Travelling expenses should be paid by the Congregation in accordance with Par 238(4) of the Code.
- (d) Reimbursement should be sought using the appropriate Application Form (available from the General Secretary's Office) at the conclusion of the arrangement.

WORKED EXAMPLE

- Eg (i) Date of 1st Sunday of medically certified disability – Sunday 21 April 2013
 Date of 3rd Sunday of medically certified disability – Sunday 5 May 2013
 Date of recommencement of Duties – Sunday 11 August 2013
 Therefore 14 Sundays eligible for Sick Supply Fund reimbursement
- (ii) As in (a) above, 1 Supply Fee for 1 Sunday's service(s) can be claimed.
PLUS
- (iii) As in (b) above, to calculate the remaining eligibility for claim deduct the two weeks from the 14 weeks to leave 12. Divide the 12 week period by 4 yielding 3 further Supply Fees.
 Therefore in this case, if desired, Supply Fees for 4 Sundays' Services(s) may be claimed.

Important Note:

Under the provisions of Sick Supply Fund, Congregations with a licensed assistant, ordained assistant or associate minister will normally be entitled to claim supply fees for a maximum of 50% of the Services during their minister's illness, with the remainder of the normal rules applying. Such Congregations are normally not entitled to claim supply fees under the 'return to duties' section of the scheme.

**Adopted by the Union Commission on Tuesday 26 November 2013
 Applicable from 1 January 2014**

APPENDIX 3**GUIDANCE NOTES REGARDING MINISTERIAL EXPENSES
 DURING THE ILLNESS OF A MINISTER**

1. The established practice approved by the Union Commission is that after three months of absence through illness the total expenses paid to a minister

should be reduced to the level of half the total expense allowance. This reduction should be automatically authorised by the Presbytery (who should contact both the Congregation and the minister to inform them of the reduction) unless the Congregation or the minister request otherwise.

2. Any request to vary from the established practice, as outlined in point 1 above, would only be considered in exceptional circumstances and requires the permission of the Union Commission, following advice from the Presbytery. This permission should be sought as follows:

- (a) The Congregation and/or the minister should make the request in writing to the Clerk of Presbytery. If this request is not made jointly by the Congregation and the minister, the Presbytery should ascertain the view of the other party.
- (b) The Presbytery, having considered the request, should forward it to the Union Commission (via the Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly) indicating its recommendation.
- (c) The Union Commission, having considered the request and the Presbytery's recommendation, will communicate its decision to the Presbytery for transmission to the Congregation and the minister.
- (d) During the period that any request is being considered, the reduction in paragraph 1 above should be made, with any necessary balancing payments being made at a later date if the request is granted by the Union Commission.

3. It should be clearly noted that the Congregation pay a global sum in expenses; this is reported by the Treasurer to the Financial Secretary's Office in an annual return, who in turn reports it to the tax authorities. It is then the responsibility of the minister to justify these expenses to the Inland Revenue, through his or her individual tax return.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES – 2014**

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

<i>Church</i>	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 2014 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income* £</i>
Movilla	2001	210 (179)	268	72,707	143,350
New Mossley	2005	117 (108)	162	34,040	111,153
Ballysally	2007	150 (87)	130	47,321	158,858

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

* As from 2012 Income includes all Organisational Income

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES – 2014

<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>
	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>
Taughmonagh	–	14,181	4,254	2,127	1,418	851	8,650

LICENTIATES – 2014

Licentiates are paid 75% of the Ministerial Minimum = £17,562 plus House Allowance pa (single - £702; married - £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and CMF

FIRST YEAR – From 1 January, 2014

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Minister's Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregation's Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Ballyclare	† A Adger	26.05.13	34,700 (30%)	10,761	7,503
Christ Church	† G Ball	09.06.13	28,512 (25%)	7,479	10,785
Raloo	† C Barron	06.06.13	19,316 (25%)	5,051	6,517
Magheramorne	† C Barron	06.06.13	11,183 (25%)	2,924	3,772
First Armagh	* P Cleland	09.06.13	32,739 (s/a)	10,172	8,392
Eglinton	* D Cromie	09.06.13	26,900 (s/a)	2,500	16,064
Ballysillan	* D Currie	16.06.13	27,066 (30%)	8,621	9,943
Legacurry	† N Duddy	26.05.13	34,572 (30%)	10,723	7,541
O C Randalstown	* R Edgar	16.06.13	31,534 (30%)	8,385	10,179
Kilbride	† M Fryer	16.06.13	34,500 (30%)	10,701	7,563
Abbot's Cross	* M Johnston	26.05.13	29,952 (s/a)	8,001	10,563
First Antrim	† P McClelland	09.06.13	39,038 (25%)	10,111	8,153
First Bangor	* S McCrea	02.06.13	38,100 (30%)	11,931	6,633
Fisherwick	* G McDowell	09.06.13	38,999 (30%)	12,201	6,363
Ballygowan	* T McNeill	02.06.13	37,250 (30%)	11,676	6,888
High Kirk	* S Orr	16.06.13	40,161 (30%)	12,549	6,015
Ballywalter	* K Ward	16.06.13	26,282 (s/a)	6,501	12,063
Immanuel	† R Watt	31.05.13	30,500 (25%)	7,976	10,288

* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

No House Allowance - House provided by Congregation

s/a Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES – 2014

Licentiates are paid 80% of the Ministerial Minimum = £18,732.80 plus House Allowance pa (single - £702; married - £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and CMP

SECOND YEAR – From 1 January, 2014

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Minister's Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregation's Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Fitzroy	† J Abernethy	27.05.12	33,075 (27%)	9,281	10,154
Newmills	† A Boreland	10.06.12	29,147 (27%)	8,221	11,214
Hamilton Road	* D Burke	02.06.12	43,200 (32%)	14,325	5,410
Dundonald	* S Cowan	27.05.12	39,900 (32%)	13,269	6,466
Connor	* M Currie	17.06.12	34,975 (27%)	9,944	9,791
Ballyhenry	* M Dodds	17.06.12	31,500 (s/a)	0	19,735
McCracken Memorial	* F Forbes	24.06.12	35,171 (s/a)	8,000	11,735
Moirra	* S Hamilton	10.06.12	30,500 (32%)	10,261	9,474
Cooke Centenary	± C Heron	17.06.12	28,500 (s/a)	0	19,735
Culnady	* N Kane	24.06.12	18,401 (32%)	6,313	10,443
Swatragh	* N Kane	24.06.12	3,271 (32%)	1,122	1,857
1st Newtownards	* E Kirwan	10.06.12	31,670 (32%)	10,635	9,100
Drumachose	* I Linton	03.06.12	24,477 (s/a)	4,250	5,618
Derramore	* I Linton	03.06.12	12,498 (s/a)	4,250	5,617
1st Carrickfergus	* R McCormick	10.06.12	40,448 (32%)	13,444	6,291
Ballywillan	* G McCracken	27.05.12	34,500 (32%)	11,541	8,194
1st Larne	* A Moore	10.06.12	36,984 (32%)	12,336	7,399
Richhill	* B Preston	10.06.12	36,617 (32%)	12,218	7,517
McQuiston Memorial	* G Simpson	24.06.12	32,500 (32%)	10,901	8,834
2 nd Broughshane	* M Simpson	03.06.12	32,504 (27%)	9,277	10,458
West Church, Ballymena	* P Kerr	10.06.12	40,400 (32%)	10,429	9,306

* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

No House Allowance - House provided by Congregation

s/a Special Arrangement

± Currently on SMP – no charge to Congregation

LICENTIATES – 2014

Licentiates are paid 85% of the Ministerial Minimum = £19,903.60 plus House Allowance pa (single - £702; married - £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and CMP

THIRD YEAR – From 1 January, 2014

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Minister's Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregation's Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Joymount	† R Collins	05.06.11	36,808 (32%)	12,130	8,476
Malone	† D Conkey	12.06.11	37,150 (32%)	12,239	8,367
Hillsborough	* A Conway	26.06.11	38,579 (32%)	12,846	8,060
1 st Holywood	* A Ditty	29.05.11	37,000 (32%)	12,341	8,565
Dungannon	* J Dunn	17.06.11	36,122 (32%)	12,060	8,846
Regent Street	* J Frazer	12.06.11	36,657 (32%)	12,231	8,675
West Church Bangor	* A Galbraith	06.06.11	41,000 (32%)	13,621	7,285
Maze	* A Graham	29.05.11	29,740 (32%)	10,018	10,888
1 st Magherafelt	* K Hibbert	(to 31.01.14) 29.05.11	32,359 (s/a)	550	1,192
Killinchy	* E McKenzie	26.06.11	36,637 (27%)	10,393	10,513
Killad	† S McNie	29.05.11	17,211 (27%)	4,822	5,481
Loanends	† S McNie	29.05.11	17,211 (27%)	4,822	5,481
Carryduff	* S Moore	12.06.11	33,500 (32%)	11,221	9,685
Templepatrick	* S Morrow	05.06.11	37,255 (27%)	10,560	10,346
Greenwell Street	* J Mullan	26.06.11	36,751 (32%)	12,261	8,645
Molesworth	* G Orr	12.06.11	30,024 (s/a)	6,600	14,306
St Andrew's	* P Orr	(to 31.01.14) 05.06.11	29,698 (s/a)	550	1,192
1 st Saintfield	* O Patterson	19.06.11	35,105 (32%)	11,735	9,171
Wellington	* N Stewart	24.06.11	39,000 (32%)	12,981	7,925
Gardenmore	* L Webster	03.07.11	36,500 (32%)	12,181	8,725
Fisherwick	* K Viner	(to 06.03.14) 21.06.09	38,999 (32%)	2,377	1,451

* Married House Allowance

† Single House Allowance

No House Allowance - House provided by Congregation

s/a Special Arrangement

± Currently on SMP – no charge to Congregation

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS – 2014

<i>Name</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Salary Paid</i> £	<i>Salary Recovery</i> £	<i>House Allowance Paid</i> £	<i>Annual Assessment Recovery</i> £
BJ Walker	Knock	26,500.00	26,500.00	n/a	9,025.00
DW Leach	Hamilton Road	23,416.00	23,416.00	3,000.00	7,850.00
R Houston	High Kirk	23,416.00	23,416.00	2,000.00	7,850.00
AD Mullan	Mourne	25,500.00	25,500.00	n/a	8,835.00
LA Wilson	First Comber	23,416.00	21,325.00	1,000.00	7,850.00

Following the change in Basis of Assessment for Congregations, there are no longer assessments on associate salaries for CMF, RMF, WMF and PDF. Congregations are however now charged full Pension costs for their associate, although during the first four years of the implementation of the new Basis of Assessment, rebates are paid for all existing arrangements to ensure that the additional cost does not exceed 10% in the first year and this initial rebate is tapered for a further three years.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly, continuing to recognise that for historical reasons there are more Church buildings, Congregations and Charges than are required in the present circumstances and that the worship and mission of the Church are hindered by this, instruct the Union Commission to continue in consultation with Presbyteries and the Board of Mission in Ireland, actively to address this issue.
3. That CMF be authorized to pay inadequate expenses grants towards expenses incurred by ministers, up to a limit of NI £6,650 or RI €10,000, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70 General Assembly Minutes, 1988.
4. That updated guidance on (i) Notes regarding Ministerial Expenses during the illness of a minister, (ii) Sick Supply Fund Rules and (iii) Protracted Illness be noted.

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS**Anent Par 82(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 82(4) of the Code the words “let or sold” be deleted and the words “let, sold or provided as security” be substituted in their place.

WILLIAM J HENRY

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 128(3) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 128(3) of the Code the words “special ministries provided” be deleted and the words “special ministries provided, auxiliary ministry posts established, additional pastoral personnel posts authorised” be substituted in their place.

WILLIAM J HENRY

BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS

Convener: Rev CA MEBAN

Secretary: Rev WS MARRS

‘Serving a mission-hearted Church’

1. The General Assembly (2005) approved the vision, purpose, values and strategic priorities of the Board of Mission Overseas (BMO). Its vision is “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.” Its purpose is “to proclaim Christ and his universal reign: educating our Church in God’s purpose for His world; enthusing our members to witness to Christ world-wide; enabling all to share their lives and gifts across cultures.” BMO seeks to uphold four core values of being God-centred, people-focused, Church-based and forward-thinking, and to concentrate and focus the on-going work of BMO in four strategic areas of priority namely: Mission Engagement; Outreach Initiatives; Leadership Development; and Compassionate Ministries – each providing a remit for four General Assembly Committees, themselves served in turn by the Steering Committee operating as the Business Committee of the Board.

Steering Committee (SC)

Para 2 to 29

Main Issues: Fit for Purpose aspirations; The place of Transformation; A people of service and outreach; Partner Church visits and visitors; Staffing; Mission personnel; Finance.

Outreach Ministries Committee (OMC)

Para 30 to 41

Main Issues: New initiatives in Europe; peace-building; medical mission.

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Para 42 to 49

Main Issues: ‘Eyes to See?’ Conference; Evolving leadership development practice; Featured partnership.

World Development Committee (WDC)

Para 50 to 59

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

Mission Involvement Committee (MIC)

Para 60 to 83

Main Issues: Resources, training, and projects.

STEERING COMMITTEE (SC)

2. The locus of salvation in the physical person of Jesus, and in the actual death of this Man on a stake of literal wood outside the wall of Jerusalem makes all Christian mission “local”. At the same time, the mission of God is for every tribe, language, people and nation: always local and always international and global. As an Island people, it is easy for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) to divide mission into “home” and “over-seas”, as if this island is the “Jerusalem” of Acts 1:8. Yet to the majority of Christians in the world, Ireland is “the ends of the earth”, peripheral, remote and far from the centre of their world. Occasionally missionaries from Churches elsewhere sense a call to proclaim the Kingdom at the “ends of the earth”. They are ready to leave their homes, families and culture to bring their experience of the God and Father of Jesus Christ to remote islands in the Atlantic Ocean. How does PCI receive missionaries? And if PCI Congregations struggle to accept outsiders, what message is being communicated?

3. The “Fit for Purpose” General Assembly themes began in 2012-13 with the idea of PCI (and the local Congregation) being “a Prophetic Voice” and in 2013-14 “a Place of Transformation”. With its eye on international Church relationships, the SC report saw in the Peter and Cornelius encounter (Acts 10) a model for being prophetic which also involved the “sending Church” being transformed, both in its willingness to cross apparently “unholy” thresholds in the Spirit of Christ, and in its learning how to be a more inclusive and radically global Church.

4. The role of PCI in international mission is not only to bring a prophetic and transformative message, but to hear and be transformed.

5. As a place of transformation, the SC experienced profound changes in 2013 – three new conveners, some staff changes, the ongoing uncertainty around the future shape of Board and Committee structures, and financial challenges related to the overall decline of the institutional Churches. Rather like managing sails and rudder amidst currents and winds, the SC keeps close watch on the work of the Board and Assembly Committees in the light of financial, staffing and structural changes taking place, not only within Assembly Buildings, but more challengingly in the tides of a culture which itself is shifting faster than the institutional Churches can handle. From contact with partners worldwide, it is clear that the changes are not temporary or merely local blips on an otherwise smooth graph or screen. The Church worldwide is growing though traditional reformed partners report that the strongest growth is seen outside of the traditional Churches.

6. In light of the 2014-15 Fit For Purpose theme, “a People of Service and Outreach”, the year ahead promises to be another where PCI can choose to hear God’s prophetic voice (e.g. through contact with the world Church), undergo transformation (like a chrysalis in the dark, out of sight) and partner in God’s mission to the world (e.g. through mission and faithful, Christ-like loving, at home and overseas) as “A People of Service and Outreach.” There continue to be “prophetic voices from outside of Ireland that PCI needs to hear and BMO would like increasingly to facilitate their amplification within PCI’s Congregations, boards and college” (BMO 2012, 2013 Reports to General Assembly). All that PCI does through BMO is an expression of this aspiration – and again it is in listening to and learning from PCI’s brothers and sisters across the globe (and

in different cultures within Ireland) that PCI learns the deeper prophetic and transformative power, and the cost, of serving and reaching out.

7. It is important that PCI more fully recognises, not least in Church structures, Christians from other countries who did not come as ‘missionaries’, but are already living in Ireland. Some join PCI Congregations, having brought with them experience of the Church in widely different contexts: where the Church is growing and numerically strong, and where it is not; where the historic Reformation traditions have been dominant and where they have not; where the Church has never had the place in the wider society that Irish Christians so often lament; and where “being Presbyterian” has simply looked and sounded different! Such Christians often make an incredible effort to get to know the new culture and new Church in which they have found a home, and yet are rarely seen as having anything critically relevant to offer.

8. SC continues to be concerned at PCI’s reluctance to receive from partners, as if the Irish Church’s hands are so full of the blessings (and responsibilities) of congregational activities and family commitments that there is no hunger for the freshness that comes from the Other, the Voice from Outside the Door, who would come in and sup if the door were opened. What does PCI miss by having so few missionaries from overseas serving here in Ireland, in the same way as PCI missionaries serve with her partners? If PCI does not value receiving missionaries, what is the nature of the gift given to partners when a missionary is sent there? What value does PCI place upon those sent to partner Churches? What message is communicated to those to whom they are sent? Are overseas personnel merely a small part of PCI’s abundance? Something left over after PCI has eaten her fill, filled her pews and made Ireland a Presbyterian stronghold on the earth?!

9. SC believes that the Gospel is all about relationship between God and human beings, amongst human beings and with creation. In mission, relationship is what is important, that reciprocity, the giving and receiving, suffering together, sharing gifts and perspectives, is what mutually enriches. The coming time of structural change may present opportunities to integrate mission locally with international partners and to address this quirk in PCI’s cultural and/or theological make-up. The implications for receiving personnel and input from international partners go beyond the remit of BMO, to include aspects of the work of the Board of Mission in Ireland, the Committee on Reception of Ministers, and the Board of Christian Training.

10. The time may well be coming when PCI will be like **the widow, with insufficient resources to keep herself and her family alive. (1Kings 17.12)** The test is whether at that time, PCI will keep what she has to eat herself and die, or expend what she has to show hospitality towards the outsider prophet, and to cast herself upon the providence and mercy of his God. History teaches that people act in a crisis as their habits have trained them. Therefore the choice about how PCI will act then must be made in the intentionally developed habits of hospitality, welcome, and humility to learn from outsiders now. Thanks are given for all in PCI who already give generously, joyfully, abundantly, and prodigally. The discipline of welcoming the outsider, not only as a guest but as PCI’s teacher, must soon become an intentional feature of PCI’s culture, to “entertain angels unawares”, so that the Church is equipped to live out the fullness of the Global redemption achieved by the slain lamb.

11. In terms of sending, the developing challenges of UK and European Visa restrictions mean that it is urgent that Churches within the European Union learn to give and receive, to enrich each other, teach flexibility and hospitality as the lifeblood of immigrants from the Global South is restricted. BMO continues to carry the deep injustices, sufferings and challenges of the Global South in the Church's heart, whilst sensing that mission in Europe is pressing and challenging for PCI culturally, and PCI must learn to listen and learn as well as serve in European contexts.

12. The 2013 General Assembly asked BMO to explore strategies for partnership and for sending personnel. At the time of writing a special Board meeting is planned for 30th April to discern and hone strategy for partnering and the sending of personnel. It is intended that a significant supplementary report of its deliberations will be available at the General Assembly. The outworking of this will shape the agenda for BMO (or feed into an alternative international mission structure) for 2014-15.

13. SC is monitoring with care the challenges associated with the proposal to incorporate BMO's Mission Involvement priority into a multifaceted Council for Congregational Life and Witness, and seeking to ensure that any new structures flowing from this General Assembly would guarantee and promote the strong global mission focus of the Mission Involvement Assembly Committee and provide for its connectedness to whatever Board/Council is given responsibility for global mission.

SC continues to focus on core tasks, and to think laterally about how these might be addressed in future. The four strategic priorities identified in paragraph 1 anchor all BMO's work, while the four General Assembly committees address those priorities.

14. BMO fosters opportunities for work alongside other local agencies and societies through the **Mission Agencies Partnership** (MAP). Membership of **Global Connections** and the **British and Irish Association of Mission Studies** (BIAMS) facilitates wider and deeper reflection, training and sharing of vital information (including critical legal developments) on mission. All such forums and conferences have provided useful opportunities to equip the BMO team, (staff and volunteers) to enable enriched discussion and challenge on a broad range of mission-related issues.

15. **Partner Church Visits:** The following overseas visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by partner Churches and mission organisations, or share in their projects, and to offer pastoral support and encouragement to BMO mission personnel:-

- Uel Marrs visited with the leadership of the Iglesia Evangélica Española (IEE), Spain, 20-22 June 2013.
- Rob and Karen Craig, accompanied by their daughter Rachel, and Stephen Lynas, accepted an invitation from the World Development Committee to travel to Rwanda and Burundi, visiting Tearfund and Christian Aid projects, 19-31 August 2013. Material from this visit subsequently featured in the 2013 World Development Appeal.
- Elizabeth Moffett and Sandra Stokes visited the Veres family in Romania, 3-11 October 2013.
- Cheryl Meban attended the Church of North India (CNI) Overseas Partnership Meetings, New Delhi, India, 13-17 October 2013.

- Uel Marrs attended meetings of the General Synod of the IEE in Rincón de la Victoria, and also met with representatives of the English speaking Congregation in Torre del Mar, Spain, 29 October – 2 November 2013.
- Uel Marrs joined a group of mission leaders from the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) for discussions with the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (PCOSS) and to visit PCOSS institutions and projects, South Sudan, 2-10 November 2013.
- Uel Marrs attended meetings with the leadership of Igreja Cristã Presbiteriana de Portugal (ICPP) and, European Christian Mission (ECM), and visited with James and Heather Cochrane, Portugal, 3-6 December 2013.
- Gordon Campbell undertook a one-week teaching programme at Faculté Jean Calvin in Aix en Provence, France, 5-12 January 2014.
- Cheryl Meban attended the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) Consultation with partner Churches, Beirut, Lebanon, 13-17 January 2014.
- Uel Marrs attended meetings with the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), the service of re-dedication of PCEA Manyatta Congregation's Church building, PCEA's International Missions Conference, and met with BMO personnel, Kenya, 5-14 February 2014.
- Lesley Carroll attended the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference, organised by Bethlehem Bible College, Israel/Palestine, 9-15 March 2014.
- Rob and Karen Craig, accompanied by Leah McKibben from the Bible Society in Northern Ireland, undertook a visit to projects to be supported by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry (YAC) and to meet with the leadership of the Gujarat Diocese, CNI, and the Bible Society of India (BSI), India, 14-21 March 2014.
- Stephen McCracken attended meetings with the CCAP Synod of Zambia and visited the CCAP Chasefu Theological College, Zambia, 20-29 May 2014.

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

- Maria Silo, AIDS Project Worker from Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi, November 2013.
- Rt Rev Silvans Christian, Bishop of Gujarat Diocese, Church of North India (CNI), 21 November – 3 December 2013.
- István Szabó (Bishop of Budapest), Dániel Peterdi (Deputy Bishop of Budapest), József Zsengellér (Dean of the Theological Faculty of Károli Gáspár Reformed University) and Zoltán Literáty (Assistant Lecturer in the Theological Faculty of Károli Gáspár Reformed University), from Hungary, January 2014.

17. **Personnel:** Jesus' Commission for Christians to 'go and make disciples of all nations' continues to be central to the work of BMO, aspiring to do so in an attitude of obedience to the two Great Commandments. Pausing to look back on the past year, BMO gives thanks to God for His enabling and provision to support and serve PCI missionaries as they actively participate in the Great Commission and the Great Commandments. Appendix A details the varied roles, locations and

partners BMO missionaries are sharing their lives and service with.

18. At the Board meeting on 8 October 2013, calls were issued to Alan and Tracey Johnston for missionary service in Italy. Alan and Tracey hope to depart for service with Coram Deo Ministries during the summer of 2014. Calls were also issued to Stephen and Laura Coulter for missionary service in Central Asia. Stephen and Laura hope to depart for service with PCI's partner organisation there during the autumn of 2014.

19. On 25 October 2013, David McCullagh was ordained, inducted, and together with Pamela McCullagh was commissioned in Kirkpatrick Memorial Church by the Presbytery of East Belfast for missionary service with Scripture Union in Malawi.

20. At the Board meeting on 11 March 2014, a call was issued to Stephen Anderson for missionary service in Spain. Steve hopes to depart for service with the IEE in Torre del Mar during the summer of 2014.

21. Appreciations were recorded for Joe and Janet Campbell who served in Nepal (2006-2011) and Barry McCroskery who served in Indonesia (2004-2013), following their resignation from the Board; and for Una Brownlie who served in Malawi (2007-2013) on retirement from the Board. Robin and Helen Quinn who served in Malawi (1981-1991 and 2004-2014) retired on 31 March 2014 and their work will be similarly acknowledged.

22. Under the Ignite category of service John Justin, a member of Hamilton Road Congregation, served in Malawi with CCAP Livingstonia Synod for a period of three months based in Embangweni in an educational support role. On the 3rd February 2014, Colin and Marjorie Dickson, members of Shore Street Donaghadee, departed for a period of six months of service with the IEE in the Torre del Mar Congregation, Spain.

23. During the past year memorial minutes were recorded and sympathies expressed in respect of Stewart McCullagh who passed away on 7 July 2013, having served in Malawi from 1963 until 1972; Angus Macpherson who passed away on 20 January 2014, having served in Malawi from 1971 until 1975; and the Rev Joseph Crawford who passed away on 8 February 2014, having served in Jamaica from 1972 until 1977.

24. BMO are indebted once again to the team of Pastoral Advisers, James and Willie Barton, Brian Hughes, Dobbie McCaughan, Stephen and Ruth McCracken and Tony and Valerie McGall, who continue to quietly and faithfully encourage and support those serving overseas and those of PCI's overseas partners studying in the UK. The Board values and give thanks for this inconspicuous way of serving.

25. **Office Staff and Volunteers:** BMO is once again extremely grateful to its full time staff who, in handling a heavy workload, have carried out their work with great efficiency, enthusiasm, and adaptability. The staff team has been assailed with a number of ailments that have caused substantial absences and proven the resilience of the whole team. At present that team is comprised of the Overseas Secretary, Personnel Officer (Overseas), and Mission Overseas Development Officer. Over the past year they have been ably supported by an administrative staff team which includes a Senior Administrative Officer with special financial responsibilities, two Senior Secretaries, and a Secretary. We also extend heartfelt appreciation to those who, from time to time, help out in the office on a voluntary basis.

26. On 31 August 2013, Pamela McCullagh resigned from the post of Overseas Mission Training Officer and to date this post has not been filled pending the outcome of PCI's review of structures and staffing. On 30 September Lorna Walker resigned from her role as Secretary and a welcome was extended to Kathryn Anderson who took up this role on 6 May 2014.

27. **Finance:** The on-going 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 £1,000,000 from the United Appeal Board (UAB) in 2014, and the same amount has been requested from UAB for 2015. The married couples' Ireland allowance (formerly furlough allowance), which is the benchmark to the setting of all other missionary allowances, was set at £23,070 for 2014, an increase of 2.2% on 2013. Having budgeted for a cash deficit of £15,451, BMO ended 2013 with a cash surplus of £50,323.

28. Once again the Board of Mission Overseas is very grateful for the on-going support of **Presbyterian Women (PW)** whose office bearers, Central Committee and members continue to contribute faithfully to the work of the Board. In 2014, 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.

29. BMO is once again indebted to Mervyn Whittle who continues to oversee an on-going programme of maintenance for all BMO mission properties. The Board is very appreciative of the on-going support and guidance provided by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE (OMC)

30. "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you". (Luke 6:38)

31. The Kingdom of God does not work according to the principles of this world and often God commands us to act in the opposite spirit of this world; - Love your enemies, repay evil with good. Even though she had barely enough for one last meal, Elijah asked the widow at Zarephath to first prepare him a small cake, and when she obeyed God provided abundantly.

32. Statistics tell us that each year PCI is declining numerically and also working on an ever tightening budget. It is imperative that PCI use her resources wisely, and not spend on what is unaffordable. Surely the least PCI can do is to be 'cutting our cloth according to our purse'?

33. Mission in Ireland must be a priority, for without Mission in Ireland, there may be no Church in Ireland. But what about Mission Overseas, is it a luxury that PCI can no longer afford? After all there are many other great mission agencies with whom Presbyterians are serving. Well maybe, but:

- (i) The Great Commission was not given so much to individuals as to the Church, so it is as a denomination that PCI is commanded to “Go, into all the world and preach the good news to all creation!” (Mark 16:15).
- (ii) The principles of God’s Kingdom dictate that if PCI wishes to receive, she must first give away. If PCI wishes to be blessed by God, she must seek to be a blessing to others. Congregations who have sent mission teams overseas will bear witness that their own Congregation has benefited as a result. If PCI is to prosper, then mission beyond the shores of Ireland is just as crucial as mission within. “For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38).
- (iii) Consider what God is doing. He continues to raise up and call individuals and families to serve with PCI’s partners overseas. When PCI receives back reports from her mission personnel serving in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, it should be counted an honour that God has included PCI to play a part in the amazing things he is doing throughout the world. What follows are some of the new developments of the past year:

34. **Spain:** In 1985, PCI partnered with the Iglesia Evangélica Española (IEE) to plant a new English-speaking Congregation in Torre del Mar (TdM). The IEE’s vision was to reach out to the whole community and care pastorally for a growing number of English-speaking expatriates. With the retirement of the Rev Jacki Hartsmith-Foy, IEE requested that PCI might continue to support the missionary vision for the region. Meanwhile, God had been preparing a PCI member, Stephen Anderson, to accept a call to further develop the ministry of the Congregation to the local community around TdM.

35. To assist the Congregation in preparing for this fresh ministry, the Rev Colin Dickson and his wife Marjorie are serving for 6 months in a role similar to that of a vacancy Convener. Remember to uphold the TdM Congregation in your prayers as this will be a challenging period of change for them.

Portugal and Italy: God has also been calling PCI to renewed efforts in evangelism and Church planting in Northern Portugal (James and Heather Cochrane and family) and Italy (Alan and Tracey Johnston and family - missionary candidates). These are exciting times as God raises up Church members with a burden for mission in Europe. God is not just calling individuals but the whole PCI family to be involved praying and supporting what he is doing and plans to do in these areas. Ease of communication and travel to Europe lends to great possibilities for congregational involvement in these mission initiatives. It is vital that PCI prays that these efforts, alongside those of other Churches and mission organisations, may be used by God’s Spirit to usher in a revival and renewal of the Church in Europe.

36. **Peace-building:** The Rev Uel Marrs visited South Sudan in November 2013 and witnessed encouraging and strategic training in conflict resolution and peace-building initiatives being undertaken by an organisation called ‘Reconcile’ based in Yei. Tragically, just weeks later, there was a coup in Juba, South Sudan that has led to 800,000 displaced from their homes and as many as 10,000 people killed. News from Reformed partners in South Sudan affirms that the people and work he recently visited have been affected very severely. Indeed what started as a political crisis is evolving into a humanitarian crisis as famine looms.

37. Much prayer is needed for the people of South Sudan in this very volatile and increasingly desperate time. It is only the power of the full gospel of the risen Christ that can offer hope and peace in such human pain and misery. The conflict and its consequences highlight the strategic importance of missionary peace-making, testifying to the loving, forgiving, reconciling power of Christ to establish human flourishing that enables physical and spiritual wellbeing; and this seems a further confirmation of why peace-building is a strategic area for outreach in such situations.

38. Stephen and Laura Coulter have been called to work with PCI's partners in Central Asia; Laura is to be involved in a peace-building initiative, and Stephen in the area of mental health. Pray for them as they make preparations to set out in the autumn 2014, that through their lives and witness they may be God's ministers of peace in a broken world.

39. **Focus Area 2014/15 – Medical mission:** “The Lord heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3). Likewise Jesus, in the story of the sheep and the goats, said that what is done for the least of his brothers, is done for him, specifically he mentions “I was sick, and you looked after me” (Matt. 25:36).

40. Wherever people have gone throughout the world to preach the gospel, they have been touched by the physical needs of the people, and realised that the full gospel message must include practical compassion. While in recent times there have been many advances in medical care and provision in the developing world, there is still great need and many governments rely upon the Church as a medical care provider. As Christians (including PCI's mission personnel) look after these basic healthcare needs, the gospel message of God's love comes to life and doors are opened for proclaiming the message of repentance and salvation.

41. A 'Go, See, Do' Medical Team travelled to Malawi in April 2014, where they witnessed the work of BMO's partners in medical mission. Over the next year it is planned that this team will feed back to the wider Church some of the insights they have gained concerning medical mission. OMC plans to prayerfully review its focus statement on medical mission in the coming year, seeking God's leading for future initiatives in mission.

DAVID STEELE, Convener (OMC)

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LDC)

42. The 2013/14 Church-wide *Fit for Purpose* focus – *A Place of Transformation* – led to Resolution 5 of the BMO 2013 report to the General Assembly asking that PCI give thanks for those who come from partner Churches to study here and for “their role in challenging PCI members to lift their horizons and seek to hear the prophetic voice of God.” The Leadership Development Committee continues to encourage input to the Church by the Leaders in Training currently in the UK and Ireland so that PCI members can learn from them how God is doing a work of transformation in PCI's partner Churches and what PCI can learn from their experiences.

43. To this end BMO held a morning conference entitled 'Eyes to See?' in Assembly Buildings in November 2013 when the keynote speakers were the

Rev Elyse McCroskery (Indonesia) and the Rev Eric Muchina Njuru (Kenya), two of BMO's current Leaders in Training (LITs). There were over one hundred participants, the format worked well and feedback on the conference has been very positive. What the keynote speakers told the participants of the experience of the Church in their countries at times of tensions and conflict, together with a short address from the Moderator on his visit to Rwanda, was a challenge to all present. This challenge is for PCI to recognise that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there is more that can be done to see more spiritual growth within PCI and greater reconciliation on the island of Ireland and that it is PCI's responsibility to act. The table group feedback has been circulated to all those who attended and is available to others on request. It is anticipated that a video of the main speakers and the feedback will be available on the BMO website. The Committee commends this to the Church with this challenge from the group discussions: *"There is a danger in being too passive and accepting the status quo in our society/community - We need to take risks for our faith."*

44. Also in November a reception for the current LITs was held and all the current LITs were able to attend. This gave the members of the Committee an opportunity to enjoy food and fellowship with the LITs and to get to know them better on a personal level. Pastoral support for LITs continues to be a priority and links established between members of the Committee and the members of partner Churches studying here at present have proved worthwhile.

45. Following from Resolution 8 of the BMO 2013 Report to the General Assembly the Committee asks members of Assembly to encourage the use of the guidelines leaflets, *'What and Why, Partnership in the Gospel'* and *'Congregational Advice on Hosting a LIT'* as a means of highlighting and developing interest at congregational level in the important work of leadership development in the context of global mission.

46. The Committee continues to give support to BMO's partner Churches. It is anticipated that ten partner Churches and institutions will receive some measure of support for leadership development work, whether through PCI mission personnel or grants towards scholarships facilitating study by key partner Church personnel in their home or neighbouring countries. Following recent visits to partners in Spain, South Sudan, and Kenya, the Overseas Secretary has provided updates on progress at a number of partners' training institutions. It is hoped that Shirley Walker and Cheryl Meban will be able to represent PCI at the 40th Anniversary Celebrations of Faculté Jean Calvin (FJC) in September 2014.

47. A number of partner Churches are facing difficult times of conflict and persecution in regions where they serve. This poses particular problems for leadership and for leadership training. Presently there is deep concern for the Nile Theological College and Giffen Institute of Theology in Malakal, South Sudan, and for the challenges faced by theological and training institutions in Pakistan.

48. The **Featured Partnership Working Group** has met and has welcomed the inclusion of LITs on the Overseas Mission poster. It is anticipated that there will be some further articles in one or more PCI publications on leadership development work in partner Churches in Africa. The Working Group will then consider how best to highlight work in Europe, the area to be featured in 2014/15.

49. Also following on from Resolution 8 of the BMO report to the General Assembly 2013, LDC hopes to encourage reciprocity in leadership development

by investigating ways to enable serving ministers to consider sabbaticals and Students for Ministry to be open to placements in the overseas context. The two questions which need to be discussed further are: *What can PCI do to encourage its own leaders to think more globally and what specialist knowledge and resources will be needed to facilitate this?*

MARIE KANE, Convener (LDC)

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (WDC)

50. Under the theme **Let Justice Flow: Transforming Lives!** the 2013 Appeal continued to focus on the rebuilding of just and rightly ordered relationships in human communities. In keeping with the 2013 **PCI Fit for Purpose** theme, and mindful of the calling of the Church to be a place of transformation, the highlighted projects also bore witness to the transformation to which the Church itself is called in a world of unjust relationships. For where the Church is seriously committed to upholding the dignity of the vulnerable and addressing issues of structural injustice for all, the Church itself will be re-ordered and transformed under the grace of God.

51. The partners highlighted in the 2013 Appeal were **Moucecore** (*Christian Movement for Evangelisation, Counselling and Reconciliation*) in Rwanda, and the **Synodical Board of Social Services of the Church of North India (CNI-SBSS)**. Moucecore has an explicit focus on holistic development and the integration of socio-economic and spiritual transformation in partner communities, while CNI-SBSS positions the Church as a strong advocate of India's most marginalised people, engaging alongside them to address issues of land rights, social exclusion, and a sustainable livelihood.

52. WDC is very grateful to the Moderator of the 2013 General Assembly, the Rev Dr Rob Craig, who enthusiastically agreed to travel to Rwanda on behalf of the World Development Appeal in late August 2013, and who made a significant contribution to the production of the Appeal materials.

53. The Committee is delighted to report that at its meeting held on 6 February 2014, it was able to disburse £500,000 GBP in funds already received for the 2013 Appeal (£250,000 to Tearfund and £250,000 to Christian Aid). WDC would like to express warm gratitude to the Congregations and individuals whose generosity and interest have once again given a public account of the hope that is in PCI, and are bearing a powerful witness to PCI's trust in God's grace and sustaining care for all people and all creation.

54. Very real thanks are also extended to all Presbytery agents, whose role is crucial in enabling the annual Church-wide witness of the World Development Appeal, and to the BMO staff for their practical and moral support.

55. The Moderator-supported Special Appeal for the Philippines was launched on 14 November 2013, just weeks after the launch of the 2013 Appeal materials. By 6 February 2014 this Special Appeal had raised an astounding total of over £480,000 GBP. Thanks are due to the Moderator for his clear leadership in asking that the Special Appeal not take away from core support of the 2013 World Development Appeal. The gracious and generous response of the Church is both moving and inspiring. All funds received are being disbursed through Tearfund and Christian Aid.

56. In September 2013, the Committee authorised annual allocations to projects nominated by the Board. On this occasion, £10,000 GBP was granted to Diakonia, Cluj (the second year of a three-year commitment, supporting literacy and parenting classes), and £20,000 was granted to the United Mission to Nepal for their Integrated Livelihoods Improvement Programme.

57. The total received for the 2012 World Development Appeal was just under £550,000. This represents an increase of 6% on 2011, if a large bequest received in 2011 is discounted. The Syria Crisis Appeal, launched in late March 2013 and formally closed on 30 September 2013, had raised just under £132,000 by its closing date.

58. The IF Campaign came to an end in 2013, but not before having succeeded in placing a number of important justice issues more firmly on the G8 agenda, with the clear public backing of the Churches. Christian Aid is now focused on taking forward all matters pertaining to tax justice. The Committee once again expresses its thanks to the General Assembly for the support given to the IF Campaign in 2013.

59. Finally, the 2014 WDA will feature projects in Haiti and Burma/Myanmar, and will highlight the ways in which barriers to sustainable development are being addressed and overcome in the aftermath of environmental or political destruction or instability. WDC is grateful for prayers as it continues to do the work with which it have been entrusted by the General Assembly, and welcomes your interest.

KATHERINE P MEYER, Convener (WDC)

MISSION INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE (MIC)

60. The Mission Involvement Committee (MIC) reaffirmed its role and remit to support BMO to serve the wider PCI Church family effectively by providing “appropriate resources and training to help develop the missional vision, identity and responsibility of all our members; and, at the right time, enable appropriate and effective mission involvement overseas.” MIC set its focus on serving members of PCI Congregations by seeking to ensure that they have opportunity to hear the story of PCI’s engagement in global mission, engage with it and take opportunity to play a role in its working out in God’s will.

61. The Committee believe the role of informing and challenging Congregations about their involvement in God’s mission story is an essential one and continues to be worthy of the support required through BMO to carry this out effectively.

62. **Working Groups:** In view of PCI’s on-going Structures and Staffing Review and the shortage of staff in the BMO office at different times in the past year, the Committee sought to focus on its priority areas. The strategy of MIC continues to be that of advancing the work through the use of working groups to support executive staff in undertaking the wide range of tasks identified by the Committee as priorities. MIC recognised that while working groups had been set up to support executive staff in dealing with these priority tasks, their effectiveness was restricted by dependence on a reduced number of staff to

service the working groups and committees. The Committee believe that while executive staff should be represented on working groups, the path to greater effectiveness lies in a volunteer taking on the role of convening whilst executive staff ensure the implementation of decisions.

63. Under the direction of MIC, eight working groups operated during the year with additional projects being contributed by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and Presbyterian Women. Two working groups completed their work and handed over resources to be published. The remaining working groups reviewed their roles, priorities and memberships and have continued to investigate new approaches for opportunities to equip PCI members and Congregations for mission involvement in the future.

64. Recognising that MIC's priorities are numerous and diverse, the Committee greatly appreciate the significant work undertaken by so many dedicated mission enthusiasts, both staff and volunteers, without whom little or no progress on these tasks could have been made.

65. As in MIC's report to the General Assembly 2013, the Committee would encourage the General Assembly to ensure that BMO Executive and Administrative staffing levels are such that any remit given to MIC by the General Assembly is achievable. Likewise, MIC would ask that whatever Board or Council structures are agreed by the General Assembly, they (a) include the provision of good communication channels in order that the strong and important links between the many and varied aspects of BMO's work are not weakened and (b) do not allow the denomination's call to involvement in global mission to become diluted or lost amongst the many other demands of congregational life.

66. **Informing:** In light of the restructured **Prayer Handbook**, the Committee has reviewed the provision of prayer resources which seek to inform members of the work of PCI and her partners and engage their prayer-support on a specific and regular basis. Recognising this as a priority, the Committee is working towards a more integrated approach to enlisting and developing prayer support for missionaries, partners and global mission issues. **Wider World** now includes an overseas prayer diary designed to be used on a daily basis. The Committee is keen to receive feedback on the use of this new resource and the scope of its use among men and women, younger and older members. A review of the format for **Prayer Letters** has been undertaken and mission personnel now provide short monthly bulletins, including specific prayer requests, for uploading onto BMO's website. **Prayerline** will continue to be produced in line with the new format used in the Prayer Handbook to provide balanced and focused prayer information from our mission personnel, overseas partners and others.

67. The Committee appreciated the increased use of **social media** (especially Twitter) to encourage prayer support for a wide range of global mission initiatives, issues and partners, including significant use in support of campaigns and appeals on behalf of the poor and oppressed Churches and communities overseas. The Committee was also pleased to note that **BMO's website** continues to be used and developed as the hub of a relevant and reliable information service for an increasing number of people with global mission interest and concern. The Committee commends the use of these media to Congregations for their accessibility, flexibility of use and their provision of up-to-date and relevant information.

68. New editions of **Take 2** and the **Mission Personnel Wall Poster** have been published in 2014. MIC considers them to be priority publications which effectively inform members about BMO's mission personnel, their situations and how BMO is involved in serving God globally. This year BMO leaders in Training (LITs) are being included in the poster.

69. The Committee give thanks that the two Celebration of Global Mission (CGM) evenings held in October 2013 in Assembly Buildings, Belfast and in First Cookstown Presbyterian Church, were very well received, as was the special 'Malawi in Focus' evening in November 2013 in Templepatrick Presbyterian Church. However, given BMO's current staffing situation, there were no CGM's in the spring 2014. The working group will focus on plans for autumn 2014.

70. In view of the need to restructure deputation to fit in with the changing patterns of overseas work and home visits the Deputation and Celebrations Working Group will do some new thinking on MIC's strategy and approach to deputation and the role, format and impact of CGMs. This working group will report to BMO in the autumn of 2014.

71. A Communications Working Group will be convened to review much of this work and establish communication and publicity priorities for the ongoing events, projects and developments.

72. **Envisioning and Equipping:** MIC continues to provide a programme of training and support designed to enable members and Congregations to connect in a more lively way with missionaries, partners, and their life and work in serving God among the nations. This includes provision of training for a panel of Mission Overseas Representatives, ministerial students, elders and Church leaders, Bible study group members and those preparing to send teams overseas or go as a member of a team. This work depends heavily on the willingness and availability of volunteers and the partnership of other agencies involved in global mission training. The Committee commend all who have supported this work and has called on the members of BMO to continue to volunteer in this generous way in order to ensure that the training and support programmes can be maintained.

73. The Mission Bible Study Working Group has now completed its task of producing a Bible study resource to allow individuals and Congregations to explore what the Bible says about mission and God's heart for the nations. This aims to reawaken PCI members to the missionary nature of God's word and help them understand better what is meant by the word "mission". The studies will be produced in a format easily accessed by anyone wishing to use them with a study group and the Committee commends them to Congregations and individuals as a means of exploring what the Bible says about mission.

74. The task of producing a set of guidelines on best practice in congregational twinning has also been completed. The resulting document will be reviewed by the Training Events Working Group and brought forward for publication. In the meantime the Committee would like Congregations to know that the guidelines are available for use in electronic format on request.

75. MIC noted that the **training for ministerial students and licentiates at Union College** had been well received in 2013 and considered this a priority in its programme of envisioning and equipping. Dates have been agreed for another series of lectures on the Missiology Short Course and the UTC Working Group has developed the content and approach taken.

76. The Committee also received positive feedback regarding BMO's contribution to the YAC and BCT Road Trips and it is hoped that BMO involvement will continue in this regard.

77. MIC is keen to collaborate with Presbyteries and Congregations in providing support for Presbytery Mission Agents, Kirk Sessions and Congregational Mission Committees as they, like MIC, seek to encourage a greater involvement in God's global mission at the Presbytery and Congregational levels. The Deputation and Celebrations Working Group will undertake the task of developing appropriate links and resources.

78. The 'Prepared to Go?' training event in April 2013 was very well received. Through an extensive seminar programme, this event provided relevant, practical advice and training on topics not normally or easily accessed by Congregational leaders, team leaders, teams or individuals in their pre-departure preparations. MIC considered that this made a significant contribution to its Envisioning and Equipping training programme and is indebted to the Rev Dr Mark Welsh, Mission Mobiliser (Ireland) for Interserve, who volunteered to organize the 2014 event on behalf of MIC and in conjunction with Mission Agencies Partnership.

79. **Engaging:** MIC is fortunate to have as part of its engaging strategy the projects organized on behalf of the Junior Boys Brigade, by the PW and YAC. The Committee is very encouraged by the level of support being given to the annual projects under this strategy.

80. The **Junior BB Project** 2012/13 just completed, entitled "Let's Look at Leprosy", enabled £7,500 to be sent to the Koraput Leprosy Centre in Orissa and £1,500 to the Jivandwar Leprosy Rehabilitation Centre in Gujarat. The 2013/14 project is 'the Light of the Amazon', and is being run in conjunction with The Bible Society of Northern Ireland. The project is funding a hospital boat offering medical and dental care, and providing Bibles and Christian literature for remote parts of the Amazon. Each year efforts are made to identify suitable projects for Primary 5-7 boys and encourage more companies to take up the materials. The project continues to be the main way in which young boys in PCI Congregations are given a vision of the wider world and of the mission of God in it. The Committee commends it through the General Assembly as a worthy strategy in mission engagement for Congregations.

81. **Presbyterian Women's Special Project** – The 2013/14 project hopes to donate £20,000 towards the furnishings, fitting and equipping of new premises currently being sought by PCEA UK Outreach Congregation, East London. For the 2014/15 project PW Central Committee has agreed to contribute funds toward the purchase of a school bus for PCEA Tuum Girls' Secondary School.

82. Youth and Children's Project – The 'Uzima' Project 2012/2013 raised £55,000 for overseas work and this is in the process of being disbursed for work in Kenya on a pastoral programme for Masai school children at Ol Kinyiei, and resourcing a new Girls' Secondary School at Nanyuki. The 2013/14 project is entitled 'Places of Hope' and the overseas dimension focuses on the work of the Christian Care Foundation, Thailand. The overseas dimension of the 2014/15 'Emmaus' project is seeking to increase the opportunities for Bible engagement with children and young people in India, by distributing Bibles, Biblical material and other resources into orphanages and schools, in partnership with the Bible Society of India.

83. The Overseas Opportunities Working Group reported on successful team visits to Italy, Romania and Malawi. Teams planned for 2014 include a “Go-See-Do” team to Southern Malawi and a team to Romania.

MAURICE MCNICHOLL, Convener (MIC)

84. Aside from the full-time staff in the Mission Overseas Office, so many members of the Board willingly sacrifice of their time, resources, creativity, generosity and a spirit of good will 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.

85. 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

BMO Missionaries: the names, spheres and category of service of the Board’s Mission Personnel 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), 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

KENYA

Stephen & Angelina Cowan	1985	Outreach & Development Work,
	1989	Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuum
Naomi Leremore	1991	Educational resource development with Sunday School and TEE Departments, PCEA, Nairobi
Derek & Linda Roulston	1998	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Timau
Gary & Mary Reid	2000	Outreach & Development Work, PCEA, Olkinyiei

MALAWI

Diane Cusick	1995	Pre-school teacher training, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Livingstonia Synod, Mzuzu
Neil &	2008	Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics & Child Health – College of Medicine of the University of Malawi & Consultant Paediatrician in the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital
Sara Kennedy		Teaching, Phoenix International Primary School, Blantyre
Volker & JinHyeog Glissmann	2010	Executive Director, Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), Zomba
Lyn & John Dowds	2011	Doctor, DGMH, CCAP, Livingstonia Synod, Livingstonia
David & Pamela McCullagh	2013	Ministry Co-ordinator Resources Co-ordinator Scripture Union of Malawi, Lilongwe

NEPAL

Peter & Valerie Lockwood	2012	Programme Advisor and Expatriate Recruitment Co-ordinator United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Kathmandu
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PAKISTAN

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

James & Heather Cochrane	2008	Church Planting, The Igreja Christã Presbyteriana de Portugal, Porto
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ROMANIA

Csaba & Ilona Veres	2001 1993	Programme Co-ordinator, IKE-YMCA Mera Children's Project, 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**

Colin & Marjorie Dickson 2014 Torre del Mar Congregation, Iglesia Evangélica Española

CANDIDATES IN MISSION**SPAIN**

Stephen Anderson 2014 Community Development and Outreach,
Torre del Mar, Iglesia Evangélica Española

CENTRAL ASIA

Laura &
Stephen Coulter 2014 Peace Building, Partner Mission
Mental Health

ITALY

Alan & Tracey Johnston 2014 Associate Pastor, Sola Grazia Church,
Coram Deo Ministry Church Plant,
Mantova

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly request the Committee on Reception of Ministers to prayerfully review current guidelines with the aim of facilitating and encouraging gifted ministers and missionaries with global Church perspectives to serve with PCI on the island of Ireland.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks for BMO's new outreach initiatives in the European context, consider afresh the Macedonian call to mission in Europe, and redouble efforts to pray and seek opportunities to share the life of Christ with Ireland's nearest neighbours.
4. That the General Assembly give thanks that from the conflict in Ireland the Church has resources (people, skills and experience) to share that testify to the reconciling work of God in Christ, and commit to pray for peace in South Sudan, Central Asia and in Ireland.
5. That the General Assembly and Presbyteries encourage the use of the guidelines leaflets, 'What and Why, Partnership in the Gospel' and 'Congregational Advice on Hosting a LIT' in order to highlight and develop interest at congregational level in the important work of leadership development in the context of global mission, and opening PCI Congregations to learning from our partners on Fit For Purpose themes, including 'a people of service and outreach'.
6. That the General Assembly commend the Overseas Mission Poster, with its inclusion of partner Church Leaders in Training, alongside PCI's overseas mission personnel, and encourages prominent display and prayerful use in local Congregations.

7. That the General Assembly give thanks for the strategic opportunities afforded to BMO's Mission Involvement Committee to share in the training of students for the ministry and licentiates, and encourage BMO's Leadership Development Committee to engage with the Union Theological College Faculty and the Board of Christian Training (BCT) on maximising the effectiveness and integrity of leadership training of PCI and her global partners.

8. That the General Assembly request particular care be taken in facilitating mission development and mission involvement to ensure PCI's focus be outward-looking and faithful to the global gospel.

9. That the General Assembly celebrate and give thanks for the exceptional and continuing generosity of the Congregations and members of the PCI in supporting both the 2013 World Development Appeal and the Special Appeal for the Philippines, and encourage prayerful support for the 2014 Appeal focusing on Haiti and Burma/Myanmar.

BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Convener: Rev CHRISTOPH EBBINGHAUS
Secretary: Rev DAVID J BRUCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From A Church That Does Mission To A Missional Church

1. The Board of Mission in Ireland (BMI) is committed to *servng the Church by enabling mission*.

2. In recent times the Board has sought to enable mission in a great variety of ways, not least by inviting every Congregation in Ireland to prepare a mission plan for use as a basis for outreach into its local community. The Board is grateful to God for the way in which this venture has led to local mission being given a new level of prominence in the mind of many local Congregations.

3. While there is much to be grateful for the Board is clear that the work of enabling the Church for mission has really only begun. The mission planning work of the last few years may have helped to raise the level of priority given to local mission. It may have resulted in an increased level of missional activity throughout the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI). But it has not, so far, helped the PCI to move from being a Church that occasionally engages in missional activity to becoming a network of missional Churches full of disciples of Jesus Christ for whom living and telling the gospel has become a way of life. This is the challenge that lies before the PCI early in the third millennium.

4. The Board is seeking to serve the Church by envisioning and equipping it to create whole-life, missional disciples; people whom God will use to transform their neighbourhoods and their workplaces and all the other spheres where God has sent them. Among much else, this report tells of the *Every Day in Every Way* pilot scheme, which the Board has facilitated in 2013-14, giving ministers and elders from twelve Congregations an opportunity to be inspired for whole-life disciple making ministry. It tells also of helpful conversations which have been opened with the Board of Christian Training with regard to whole-life disciple making and an event that is being planned for an appropriate time in 2014/15.

5. The Board recognises the decline that is widespread throughout our denomination, particularly in our urban centres. This report tells of the important work of the Belfast Panel, reflecting on the challenges of urban mission and seeking new models and processes to bring missional followers of Jesus into our urban spaces. It is hoped that some of the work of the Panel will prove helpful in the future in other urban situations.

Revision of the Book of Public Worship

6. The Very Rev Dr David Clarke has convened a Panel for the last three years working on a comprehensive revision to the Book of Public Worship. This represents a major achievement, and he and the Panel are to be warmly thanked. The Rev Prof Drew Gibson has headed up a sub-committee of the Panel looking in detail at services of Ordination, and the Rule of Faith. The Presbytery

comments received are reflected in the proposed changes to the Code, tabled as part of the BMI report this year.

Board Committee Convenerships

7. This year, the Board said farewell to two Committee conveners: Debra Anderson from the Personnel Committee, and the Rev Trevor McCormick from the Communications Committee. At its March meeting, the Board had the opportunity to thank them for their committed service to these respective Committees in recent years. In addition, one of our Assembly Committee conveners set aside the role this year, and a resolution is appended thanking Chris Kennedy for his work with the Research and Resources Committee.

The BMI Team

8. 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 are grateful to God for all the ways in which he uses these men and women to serve the wider Church and enable so many in the mission of the gospel. A directory of their names and spheres of service is appended as Appendix A to this report.

9. We are grateful too for the work of the office team which serves the needs of the Board with such dedication and such a passion for God's glory. The Board records its special thanks to them: Lorraine Beatty (Support Officer, Property and Grants), the 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), the Rev David Thompson (Mission Development Officer), and Marianne Trueman (Secretary Personnel pt).

STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEE

1. The remit of the Committee is the supervision of the Home Mission and the Irish Mission of the Church and the formation of missional strategies, including mission planning, development, Church planting and specialist networks. The Secretary to the Committee is the Board Secretary. The Nightlight Panel reports to the Committee.

Mission Development

Every Day in Every Way

2. The Fit for Purpose theme for 2014/15 is *A People of Service and Outreach*. Across our denomination, Church members experience an amazing variety of opportunities to live out the mission of God in their everyday worlds of work and study, family and social networks. In response to Congregations expressing a need for support in equipping members to be more aware of these opportunities and better able to live as whole-life disciples, the Board initiated a pilot project under the heading *Everyday in Every Way*. The aim was to further

explore what mission looks like when viewed through the lens of the everyday rhythms of life experienced by our membership.

3. This was not the Board's first venture in this area. The *Tapestry: A Mission Woven Life* resource, still available for download on the BMI website, seeks to acknowledge that a continuing emphasis on gathered congregational mission in the parish locality needs to be supplemented by developing the potential of every member mission in the places to which God scatters them to live for Him in daily life. This year's pilot project has sought to deepen and develop our understanding of this challenge. The Committee has been grateful for the opportunity to work in partnership with the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) which has a long track record of work with Churches in developing this area of life and witness.

4. Twelve Congregations from a wide variety of contexts, and a range of different starting points on the journey of developing an emphasis on whole life discipleship, took part in the pilot project. The group met three times throughout the year with a focus on sharing their emerging experiences and receiving specialist input from Neil Hudson of LICC. Meetings involved both sessions for ministers of participating Congregations and for ministers along with key leaders. This approach delivered valuable insights from two interconnected perspectives – both pulpit and pew.

5. Early in the process it became clear that the issue was multifaceted and represented a significant series of challenges to the existing culture of how core issues of Church life, mission, ministry, membership and discipleship are understood.

6. As a number of these areas are the subjects of on-going work under the remit of Christian Training, a fruitful conversation has been opened with the appropriate Committee and Panel conveners of the Board of Christian Training. The result is that it is planned to hold an event informed by this more comprehensive agenda at an appropriate slot in 2014/15. The programme will seek to frame the issue of whole life discipleship in the wider denominational and congregational context of:

- understanding and equipping members for the challenge of everyday mission;
- the developing picture of how discipleship overlaps with the agenda for pastoral care;
- leading culture change in the area of expectations of Church members;
- the implications of embracing disciple making as a core vocation of ministerial training.

7. It will represent a first word, rather than a last word, on the interconnectedness of these issues which are complex and sensitive. As such, it will form an important step into what will undoubtedly be an ongoing journey for the Church.

8. The Board is grateful to those Congregations who contributed to the pilot project and remain committed to taking our shared learning forward to form an appropriate on-going agenda for this important area of Church life and witness.

Urban Mission

9. The 2013 General Assembly passed the following resolution:-

That the General Assembly encourage the Board of Mission in Ireland in its reflection upon the challenges of mission in urban situations, and in particular in its discussions with the Union Commission in seeking to secure more sustainable models for resourcing Presbyterian mission in our cities. (Resolution 2, p.34 Minutes of the General Assembly 2013)

10. The resolution highlights the rapidly deepening crisis facing Presbyterian presence for mission in our cities as established urban Congregations continue to decline in strength. To fail to acknowledge this reality will allow the present situation to deteriorate beyond retrieval. A conversation between practitioners and decision-makers is required. There is an urgent need to pro-actively communicate a direction of change and the reasons why it must happen within Congregations, Presbyteries and the wider Church if the mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is not to become restricted to rural and suburban communities. This message needs to be balanced with the development of new imaginative models and approaches to urban mission which enact hope that change is possible, and that the Church can engage in gospel ministry to the contemporary city.

11. The Board has sought to respond to the Assembly's resolution in a variety of appropriate ways. Chief among these was the formation of a Belfast Panel under the convenership of the Rev Robert Bell, facilitated by the Board's Mission Development Officer and with a membership comprised of representatives of the Union Commission, the Board of Mission in Ireland and the three Belfast Presbyteries. The Belfast Panel's aims for 2013/14 were:

- To develop a fully inclusive discussion between the Union Commission, BMI and the three Belfast Presbyteries about the challenges and opportunities for developing a sustainable model for Presbyterian mission across the city of Belfast;
- To outline a series of options for urban mission by which to extend the range of present opportunities;
- To report to the General Assembly 2014, providing an analysis of the issues and a series of directions of travel.

12. Parallel discussions have been opened with the Derry and Donegal and Dublin and Munster Presbyteries about urban mission in the cities of Londonderry and Dublin. The Board recognises that, despite common issues in urban mission, each city needs to be considered in its own context in terms of existing Presbyterian presence for mission and the potential for new work. It is hoped that some of the work of the Belfast Panel will suggest principles which may prove to be transferable to other urban situations.

Belfast Panel

The Rev Robert Bell reports:

Place and Time

13. Contemporary cities are complex and diverse *places*.

14. Effective future models of urban mission will need to take careful note of some of the following realities about Belfast as a *place*:

- The city centre is characterised by movements of people rather than being a place of residence. Unlike other cities around the world, Belfast has failed to re-populate its city centre. It exhibits little sense of neighbourhood which militates against the adoption of a traditional parish model.
- The inner city ring has become a place of post-industrial decay and socio-economic deprivation. The development of the infrastructure of the city often further marginalises these communities by navigating ways around them. The Congregations that seek to minister to the inner city are often made up of membership that no longer resides in the district making local connection challenging.
- Belfast is identified as one of the most suburbanised and car dependent cities in Western Europe. Over the last forty years, Presbyterians have followed a societal trend of retreat from the city, first to live in the suburbs, more recently to satellite commuter towns.

15. In terms of the *times* in which we live, the Panel noted the following significant factors for future urban mission strategy in the city:

- City development prospects have stalled in the face of economic recession;
- Inner city communities still tend to be backward, rather than forward, focused in defining local identity. This mind set is exacerbated by their social exclusion from newly emerging opportunities in the post-Troubles era;
- Belfast remains a divided city segmented by ‘peace lines’ and a strongly ingrained sectarian divide;
- Partly as a result of the technological and social media revolution, some urban communities now form around *networks* of relationship rather than the more traditional *neighbourhood* model – although this tends to remain a younger/middle class/professional, rather than older/working class, phenomenon;
- Demographic trends show Belfast is an increasingly aging, culturally Roman Catholic and politically Nationalist city;
- It will be important for continuing work to continue to monitor developments in the city and consider how they impact on future strategy for of Presbyterian presence for mission.

Extending our range of Models

16. The Panel discussed a variety of models of urban mission which would extend the range of present possibilities. These included:

- City centre mission – an intentional equipping of members who work in, or connect with the city centre in another way, to become more aware of, and able to take, opportunities for witness in their daily lives. This could be a means of envisioning and harnessing the members of the suburban Church in the opportunity for everyday mission.
- Congregational revitalization for urban mission – a transitional re-imagining of a parish ministry and mission model intentionally

addressing the realities of the local starting point for gospel engagement.

- Church planting – a fresh start genuinely shaped by the principles of listening, service, forming community, contextually appropriate worship, evangelism and discipleship.
- Church re-planting – the creation of a ‘second centre’ of intentionally contextually driven ministry and mission alongside existing ministry activities in an existing Congregation, beginning a process in which a presently declining form of Church gives way to something new.
- Multi-site collaborative team ministry – the assembling of a team for ministry and mission deployed across a wider area than a single parish unit and operating in a number of physical locations.
- Suburban-urban partnerships – a formal or informal partnership harnessing the strengths of the suburban Church with the opportunities of the urban situation.

17. The Panel recognise that there remains much work to be done in teasing out what such models might look like on the ground. Harnessing a variety of approaches will, however, best equip the Church for developing existing bases for urban mission and departing from the familiar to strike out in new directions.

Toward Processes for Developing Urban Mission

18. While acknowledging the crucial importance of deepening our understanding of urban context and widening the range of vision for urban mission, the most challenging aspect of the Panel’s work involved thinking about developing improved and inclusive *processes* to enable effective and sustainable urban mission.

19. Observing the present situation, the Panel noted that there are four crucial elements with which we need to grapple and find ways to positively reframe as a denomination. This will involve the engagement of Congregations, Presbyteries and the relevant Boards of the Church.

- Structure – while requiring arrangements enabling work to be managed, our present methods are often formal in a ‘form is all’ sort of a way. They do not tend to promote relational engagement;
- Systems – key players in present structures are often aligned adversarially, rather than facilitated for co-operation;
- Culture – our denominational approach to assessment, decision-making etc. is often too soft and passive. The Church is willing to live with fuzzy expectations of ministry and mission and seems ill equipped in handling processes of review and the need to make hard choices;
- Relationships – general levels of trust are poor and relational fabric is frayed. Capacity often limits what the Church might do, yet it continues to prefer to separate processes between Presbyteries and the Boards, rather than address them collectively.

20. Consequently, the Panel considered that any emerging way forward needed to be:

- Robust and flexible – a well thought through structure and adequately designed systems for addressing both decline of some existing forms of urban ministry and mission and facilitating the applications of a range of new models.
- Capable of gaining the confidence of the denomination – developing a relationship of trust between local and wider participants i.e. Congregation, Presbytery, urban mission strategy (at present BMI), resource allocation (at present UC).
- Symbolic of a new approach – signaling a denomination ready to re-engage with contemporary urban realities in ways that are both faithful to the gospel and fitted to today's Belfast.

Assessing sustainability of initiatives in urban mission

21. Any development of urban mission needs to strike a delicate balance between *facilitating* necessary work on the ground and finding viable ways of *resourcing* it. These two realities need to be constantly communicated and developed in tandem if opportunities are not to be wasted by either continuing to pour funding into existing situations of terminal decline or supporting inadequately conceived new models of mission. Consequently, a means of reviewing work is a priority.

22. The Panel gave careful consideration to developing a way forward in the area of assessment around a 'soft objectivity' approach to discerning where God seems to be at work. This stands in contrast to our present default to 'soft subjectivity', in which difficult issues and questions tend to be avoided, or a 'hard objectivity' that too quickly mimics a business approach in which numbers become the measure of everything. Assessment and review would be conducted from alongside and within, rather than from above and without. Using a combination of clear sight of numerical and financial realities, but with a careful ear to the story of what is actually happening on the ground, realism about the elements required to enable a viable unit of mission going forward may be expected to emerge.

23. The Panel envisages that careful consideration of a range of factors may facilitate the kind of snapshot that would enable a process of review to come to a judgment in the round about prospects of urban mission in existing congregational situations. Minor amendment to the criteria would enable assessment of the viability of proposed new initiatives in mission.

Place

- Situation of the Church building?
- Realistic parish bounds?
- How well the area is provided for in terms of gospel witness?
- Where is the nearest neighbouring Presbyterian Congregation?
- What weight do we give to issues of deprivation, demography and community division?
- Significant physical and social changes likely to happen, or not?
- In what way is the existing building an asset or hindrance to future mission?

Presence

- How well is the Congregation embedded in the community's life?
- How is it looked upon and received?
- What difference would it make locally if it was no longer there?
- Is there a better means of Christian presence?

People

- How many have attended at least one communion in the last year – core?
- How many members are active in the mission of the Church?
- How many live locally?
- What is the age profile of the Congregation?
- What are the staff team's vision and gifting?

Pounds

- What is the financial situation of the Congregation?
- What is the likely projection for the next period?

Programme

- What is the immediate starting point for missional challenge and opportunity?
- What is the Congregation doing in mission?
- How does it arise out of, and minister into, the context in which it is working?
- What is the longer-term track record of local mission that is more than aspirational?

Preparedness for transitioning

- What changes have taken place in ministry and mission in the last five years?
- What degree of harmony is there within the Congregation?
- Is there realism about challenges?
- What willingness does the leadership show to embrace and lead necessary change?

24. Having considered these factors, it should be possible to begin to discern appropriate ways forward as follows:

Patterns emerging

- On the basis of the above what is the Spirit saying to the denomination in terms of general direction in which it could be encouraging and accompanying Congregations?
- What one or two things could make a significant difference to the Congregation's ministry and mission? Is there a way to provide that resource – whatever it is?
- Is there another way for the Congregation to be engaged in a more co-ordinated approach to Presbyterian presence for mission through partnership, linkage, amalgamation?
- If none of the above – what is the legacy of this Congregation for mission?

Pathways into the future

- How can the Congregation be accompanied in creating opportunities for new beginnings, approaching transitions, enabling good endings?

Other related issues

25. The Panel noted a number of related issues that bear upon the future of urban mission and will need to form part of the future discussion. These included:

- Provision of specialist urban mission training for ministerial students and through ministerial In Service Training;
- Consideration of the method of deployment of ministers with specialist urban mission training in situations where radical transition or new forms of ministry are required;
- Development of pathways in which young adults can be envisioned for and engaged in urban mission;
- Development of a model of pastorally and financially viable ministry in Congregations which are presently augmented, but not considered a priority for development of new mission.

Proposals to progress

26. The Panel has concluded a very full and positive first year's work, but is very aware that much more remains to be done. The Panel propose the following steps as the next phase of what will be an ongoing process.

- It is envisaged that a Consultative group for Belfast (working title) representing the Union Commission, the Board of Mission in Ireland and the three Belfast Presbyteries will be formed going forward. This Consultative Group will provide a collective assessment on issues concerning vacancies, tenure reviews, consultations and resource allocation decisions within Belfast, as referred to it.
- The current Belfast Panel will continue its work, to develop processes for use by this new consultative group, in conjunction with the three Belfast Presbyteries, aiming to have this work completed by February 2015.
- The current Belfast Panel will consult with the Union Commission (or its successor) towards the appointment of the new Consultative Group, from September 2014.
- The Consultative Group for Belfast will commission a major strategic overview of the current Presbyterian presence in Belfast, including new possibilities for mission. This work will include an analysis of available census statistics and the application of agreed criteria to existing Congregations and potential new work.
- The Consultative Group for Belfast will be made up of ten people: two from each Belfast Presbytery, two from the BMI and two from the Union Commission. (The precise allocation of membership may change depending on the outcome of the Structures review.)

- In order to achieve its purpose, the constituent bodies represented on the consultative group for Belfast will pool aspects of their several responsibilities:
 - ◊ The Consultative Group will carry out on behalf of the Presbytery concerned its initial consultative and exploratory role relating to tenure reviews, vacancies and, in some circumstances, elements of a formal consultation process.
 - ◊ The Consultative Group will carry out on behalf of the Union Commission its initial consultative role, currently undertaken by its office-bearers or others, in the analysis of data and drafting of recommendations to the Union Commission.
 - ◊ The Consultative Group will carry out on behalf of the BMI its initial consultative role, currently undertaken by the Strategy for Mission Committee, in analysis and the drafting recommendations to BMI and to the Union Commission regarding Congregations with Urban Mission status, or Congregations in augmentation.

Home Mission

27. A full list of ministers serving with the Home Mission is included in Appendix A to this Report

Craigavon

28. The Congregation of Craigavon made application to become an Urban Mission Congregation, as part of the Home Mission. Following decisions of Presbytery, Congregation and the Union Commission, the Board accepted this application.

Mission Partnership Forum and the Alternating Ministry Scheme

29. Following previous discussions at the Mission Partnership Forum where the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches dialogue together, specifically on collaborative ventures including the Alternating Ministries Scheme, a resolution is appended to this report. A parallel resolution will be brought to the 2014 Methodist Conference.

Irish Mission

Irish Mission and Irish Mission Fund Supported Personnel

30. The Board gives thanks to God for the work of face-to-face evangelism being carried out in many parts of Ireland by the Irish Mission Workers, and other staff employed locally with the support of the Irish Mission Fund.

Retirement

31. During the year Mr Billy Patterson retired from the Irish Mission. Warm tributes were paid to Mr Patterson at the Board meeting in October 2013, following his period of service with the Irish Mission in successively Kilkenny and Drogheda, and which began on 1 September 1984.

32. The Board gives thanks to God for the life and service of these former Irish Mission Workers who passed away during the year:

- Mr John Montgomery, born 1931, who served with the Irish Mission from 1957-1969.
- Mr Rollie Patterson, born 1922, who served with the Irish Mission from 1956- 1986.

Nightlight Panel

The Rev Alistair Bill reports:

33. Nightlight's street ministry has continued throughout the past year. Teams of volunteers go out on to the streets of the Golden Mile, the Odyssey and the Cathedral Quarter on Friday and Saturday evenings, from around 10 pm to 3 or 4 am. With the changing nature of these entertainment areas the teams require to be flexible in their approach.

Staff

34. Mrs Linzie Cobain and Mr Brian Simons head up the teams in the Golden Mile and Odyssey complex, with Brian overseeing the Cathedral Quarter ministry. Again this year Brian Simons has also ministered each Tuesday during the daytime to the students, tourists and other workers who use *The Dock* coffee shop in Titanic Quarter. During the year both of them have been formally redesignated as BMI Field Officers, with new contracts of employment reflecting this revised status.

35. Mrs Catherine Dalzell continues as a part-time Resource Worker, producing Nightline Prayer Letters, information packs and publicity leaflets, and also co-ordinating deputation.

Deputation

36. The staff, together with the Revs Alistair Bill and David Thompson, are presently developing a new deputation programme, revolving around the Nightlight values statement (P.U.R.E.)

- Presence
- Unconditional love
- Relationship
- Evangelism

37. This will begin in the world of Nightlight ministry and tell that story, but use it to challenge Congregations about their thinking about mission. Accordingly, it will extend the range of possibilities for deputation, to include e.g. Presbyterian Women, Sunday night alternative format worship, midweek and youth fellowship meetings. It is planned that this new programme will be ready for delivery in September 2014, and will be offered to Congregations in the 3 Belfast Presbyteries in the first instance, though enquires from other Congregations will continue to be welcome.

Team members

38. The Panel continues to be grateful to God for the numbers of volunteers offering to serve in the ministry. Some aspects of their work are noted:

- Training: This is provided on a regular basis, including a recent evening given both by the PSNI on the current drugs situation, and the Mission Development Officer in the use of the 3 'itsnotwhatyouthink' postcards.

- Prayer: In addition to devotional times each evening, regular opportunities are offered for the team to gather for prayer and sharing.
- Safety: The staff team strive to help team members assess the possible risks in any situation, and take advice from the PSNI, who have also supplied 20 personal alarms.
- Core Group: Some senior members of the teams constitute a Core Group which meets with the Field Staff and Panel representatives on a regular basis to discuss the work and bring forward suggestions for its development.

BRIAN COLVIN, Convener

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The remit of the Research and Resources Committee is to commission and undertake research and produce resources to serve and enable the mission of the denomination.

2. The Secretary to the Committee is the BMI Mission Development Officer, the Rev David Thompson.

3. The following Panels report to the Committee:

Panel on Worship;

Panel on the Review of the Book of Public Worship;

Panel on Divine Healing.

Convenership

4. During the year, the Rev Chris Kennedy resigned as Committee Convener. His place was taken by the Board Convener pending the appointment of a successor by the General Assembly. A resolution is appended.

The Current Year

5. As the environment in which the Church seeks to show and share the gospel continues to shift, the importance of reflecting on how to proclaim the unchanging Word in a changing world remains of crucial importance. The Committee's work seeks to both facilitate the Church in its grasp of the implications of changing contexts and equip its members for the task of mission.

6. Some of the Committee's agenda continues to overlap with Strategy for Mission Committee initiatives such as informing the work of the Belfast Panel and aspects of the Everyday in Every Way Project. Other specific initiatives have included the provision of the innovative *It's Not What You Think* evangelistic resource, which uses a range of media to address important questions about God, suffering and judgment; receiving an important piece of research on the challenges and opportunities around mission in the West of Ireland and helping signpost Churches to available funding, with appropriate permissions for mission projects.

Rural mission

7. One particular area of focus for the Committee this year has been a review of the on-going work of supporting and equipping the rural Church for mission. The first phase of the work of the Rural Mission Network built on the initial suggestions of a Rural Think Tank and led to a series of responses including:

- regional and Presbytery Rural Mission Network gatherings;
- rural shaped Mission in Ireland Evenings;
- work with individual Congregations on request;
- rural specific content in ReachOut magazine and on the BMI website;
- ensuring rural specific content in Fit for Purpose DVD clips;
- an initial conversation about the realities of being a Presbyterian minority presence for mission against the backdrop of our recent 'troubles' and the mission opportunities in some areas afforded by improving cross-community relations.

8. This work has been generally appreciated, but as is always the case, as it develops it raises a series of other deeper questions with which to begin to grapple. Believing it was time to seek to discern again what the key issues in rural mission are as the denomination moves forward, a working group compiled a discussion document which was presented to a new Rural Mission Think Tank in March. On the basis of their responses the Committee will begin to form an agenda for future work in this area.

Urban mission

9. The first programme of Ministerial In Service Training has commenced with a group of seven participants exploring the area of urban mission. Delivered in conjunction with the Board of Christian Training's scheme, the programme offers ministers access to six days of good quality in-service training dispersed throughout the course of the calendar year and delivered locally within Ireland, all within the budget of their annual grant allowance. The Committee look forward to developing content for similar programmes around rural mission and congregational transitions for mission for delivery in future years.

10. One re-emerging theme in the Committee's agenda is the interface between issues as they arise on the ground and the on-going needs of Ministry formation among both students and those in Ministry post.

11. The Committee is keen to open an on-going dialogue with the Board of Christian Training in areas such as equipping ministers for mission in rural and urban contexts, facilitating conversations and processes for leading congregational change for mission and stimulating awareness of members of the potential for mission in the rhythms of their daily lives.

Young Adults Mission

12. A significant conversation has been opened with the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry concerning mission to, and through, the 18-25 demographic. It will be important to develop this discussion to understand both what is required to appropriately equip this age group to reach their peers and to provide them with pathways to engage in emerging new areas of the Church's mission.

Panel on Worship

The Rev Karen Campbell reports:

13. The Worship Panel continues its mentoring scheme, which identifies and releases experienced musicians to mentor congregational music teams who have asked for more support. This may take the form of a one-off worship workshop or consultation with the Worship Committee of the Church in order to build vision and set realistic goals. Over the past year a number of Churches have availed of this provision.

Residential youth worship camp

14. This summer, the Worship Panel is partnering with the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry to pilot a residential worship camp for older teenagers. (6-9 August, ages 16+ years at Wellington Presbyterian Church, Ballymena)

The Big Sing

15. After the success of last year's event, another Big Sing was held on 26 April 2014 with the theme Old Hymns, New Ways. The purpose of this event was to encourage corporate choral singing as well as resourcing the Church with fresh relevant material for the PCI context. A large number of Churches supported this event and hopefully the new material produced will now be used in regular corporate worship.

Survey of Ministers

16. On 1 November 2013 the Panel distributed a survey questionnaire to ministers and other Church personnel involved in leading corporate worship. The total response rate was 36% of all of those who received the questionnaire. Some of the findings were that regardless of age, location or position, there is strong agreement that there is a need for a greater understanding of the theology of worship within the context of PCI. Also, most people who responded felt that there remained tensions in worship between contemporary and traditional styles: there was a clear indication that urban Congregations especially, have tensions in their Congregations between worship styles.

17. In conjunction with this, the Panel notes the growing number of requests asking for support in Congregations where there are tensions within worship settings, and is seeking to respond as appropriate.

Publication of 'Wise Church'

18. In June 2010, the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) was born through a merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC). PCI is a member of WCRC. At this Conference delegates met together to consider the draft document: 'Worshiping the Triune God: Receiving and Sharing Christian Wisdom Across Continents and Centuries'. In January 2014, 4 PCI ministers travelled to Calvin College to reflect on this document with participants from over 30 countries, and it proved to be an enriching experience. This document has now been published in the form of a study booklet called *Wise Church* by Emily Brink and Paul Detterman (Faith Alive 2013) and is a useful tool to provide a deeper understanding of the theology of Reformed Worship.

Panel on the Review of the Book of Public Worship

The Very Rev Dr David Clarke reports:

Resources for celebration of the Sacraments

19. Completed work on the Sacraments of the Church was received by the Board at its meeting in March 2014, and placed on the Church websites.

Service of Ordination, and the Rule of Faith

20. Following comments from Presbyteries received when the proposed changes to Paragraph 212 and 10-14 of the Code were sent down by the Assembly in 2013, a sub-group redrafted the materials and offer them to the 2014 General Assembly for consideration. These will be found in Appendices B and C to this Report, with appropriate overtures.

21. The Panel records its thanks to those Presbyteries which responded, some at considerable length and having taken great pains to analyse the proposals placed before them. The Panel has sought to reflect the comments, both positive and negative, in the revision.

22. In all its work, the Panel has been conscious of the help and leading of the Spirit of God, as he has led it to forms of words, orders of service and other resources to help ministers in their regular work of leading the people of God in worship.

Panel on Divine Healing

The Rev James Tosh reports:

23. The Panel on Healing continues to facilitate discussion on matters of concern relating to health and healing.

2013 Conference on Depression

24. In November 2013 the Panel organized a very well supported seminar in the Assembly Buildings, attended by about 270 people, which sought to lead people to a deeper understanding of depression and how to minister to those suffering from it. The keynote speaker was Dr Lena Morrow.

Suicide prevention

25. The Panel continues to monitor the work of Flourish, the new inter-church training programme on suicide prevention, supporting people bereaved by suicide and promoting positive mental health.

2014 Conference

26. In November 2014 the Panel plans to organize a seminar on issues relating to forgiveness and healing which will be facilitated by Russ Parker of the Acorn Christian Healing Trust.

CHRISTOPH EBBINGHAUS, Acting Convener

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The remit of the Committee is the approval of plans for new Churches, halls, manses and other structures erected on congregational property. In addition, the Committee approves plans for the demolition and renovation of existing buildings including (for example) the installation of audio - visual systems.

2. The Secretary to the Committee is the BMI Support Officer, Miss Lorraine Beatty.

Enquiries and Submissions

3. A large number of submissions were dealt with during 2013/14.

4. These included several new Church halls, new manses and installations of audio-visual equipment, along with the usual major and minor renovations.

5. All enquiries and submissions for the Church Architecture Committee should be sent to: Miss Lorraine Beatty, Secretary, The Church Architecture Committee, Assembly Buildings, Belfast, BT1 6DW. E-mail: lbeatty@pcinet.org

6. There is a continuing interest in Congregations wishing to redesign the entrance areas to their Churches and halls. From a missional perspective the Committee welcomes this trend. Such spaces provide opportunities for congregational members to mingle before and after worship, and for visitors, occasional attenders and others to find a welcoming space within the precincts of the building. Some Congregations use this space for a coffee-dock or cafe through the week, while others provide staffing for such a facility when it is used as a community space by outside groups. The Church Architecture Committee is available to offer advice to Congregations considering such alterations, even in principle.

7. In addition to its regulatory role, the Committee or its representatives are prepared to make site visits as appropriate, and on request to assess plans and to offer comment to ministers, Congregational Committees or others.

TOM REID, Convener

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Rev Trevor McCormick reports:

Introduction

1. The remit of the Committee is the supervision of the production of digital, printed and other recorded materials for the BMI, including editorial oversight of ReachOut magazine and the BMI website. In addition, the Committee facilitates the conferences and events run by the Board.

2. The Secretary to the Committee is the BMI Communications Officer, Robin Fairbairn.

3. The Editorial Panel reports to the Committee.

ReachOut Magazine

4. An extensive review of ReachOut has been undertaken, including a meeting of the Editorial Panel. Responses have been positive and encouraging, and circulation continues to grow. The Committee is aware of the tensions in maintaining a balance of news and information with articles to expand vision and stimulate action. There are also restraints with budgetary control. The Committee will request the Finance Committee to consider reconfiguring the allocation of chargeable costs to ReachOut to more accurately reflect the proportion of time it demands of staff.

Video materials

5. Some of the work of BMI has been highlighted in video/DVDs during the past year, most recently work in Kilkenny and Arklow (a DVD was included in the Feb/Mar copy of ReachOut sent to ministers). An evaluation survey will be undertaken to assess the use of this material before committing to further productions. A significant number of video clips, suitable for use in public worship or other settings is available for download from the BMI YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PCIMissionIreland>.

Other publications

6. An updated deaconess poster is now available and is being distributed by Presbyterian Women (PW).

7. An updated BMI Field Staff poster is in production and will be distributed via ReachOut agents. Displays highlighting the work of mission in Ireland are available for events on request from the BMI office.

Events

8. 10 Mission in Ireland Evenings were held during March 2014 throughout Ireland.

9. A BMI staff workers retreat was held in Newcastle 24-25 March 2014.

10. BMI work will be presented at Keswick at Portstewart, New Horizon and Bangor Worldwide Convention.

11. An exhibition trailer has been purchased for use at events. A number of practical details regarding its use are being addressed, including insurance, mobile power supply, administration, booking, training for users, storage and on-going supervision. The trailer may prove suitable for use at agricultural shows, markets, and other community events.

Social media

12. The Committee recognises the rapid growth in various social media channels including Twitter, Facebook and others, and seeks to ensure that the work of mission in Ireland is communicated well in this environment.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Board Secretary reports:

Introduction

1. The remit of the BMI Personnel Committee is the recruitment, review and supervision of all aspects of the work of field staff called or otherwise deployed by the BMI. The Secretary to the Committee is the Board Secretary. A full Directory of staff deployed by the Board is included in Appendix A

Deaconesses

2. Some adjustments to regulations for deaconess deputation in cases of maternity leave or returning from long term sick leave were made. These have been communicated to serving deaconesses, and an adjustment has been made to the deaconess handbook.

3. As part of its role to ensure the adequate support and supervision of deaconesses working in Congregations or projects, the Committee is proposing to run a seminar for supervising ministers or project leaders with deaconesses as part of their teams.

4. The Board Secretary and the PW Secretary met with members of the Union Theological College (UTC) Faculty to discuss the content of the deaconess training curriculum. Further conversations with deaconesses who have been trained in the last five years are on-going, in preparation for anticipated adjustments prior to the next intake of students.

5. The three-yearly cycle of deaconess reviews is on-going. During these reviews, the deaconess and her supervising minister complete a *pro forma* before the meeting, and meet separately with a joint BMI/PW Review Panel. The outcomes of the review are communicated in a letter sent to both minister and deaconess, which forms the basis of further discussions between them locally.

6. Interviews and selection for three student deaconesses have been completed during the year. A resolution concerning the reception of Rachel Cubitt, Jill Tuff, and Heidi England as students was passed by the Board in March 2014. Mrs Jill Tuff has been given permission to defer entry to Union College for up to two years, and during this time will remain under the care of the North Belfast Presbytery. Miss Rachel Cubitt and Mrs Heidi England anticipate commencing studies at Union from September 2014.

7. Congregations seeking the services of a deaconess, once applications have been received, are referred to the Strategy for Mission Committee for approval.

8. Jean Gwyn-Patton and Jackie O'Neill have given notice to the Board of their intention to retire from deaconess service in coming months. An appropriate presentation and appreciation to mark their years of service will take place at the October meeting of the Board.

Home Mission Ministers

9. Pastoral Care and supervision of Home Mission ministers. The Code Paragraph 301(4) reads:

Presbytery shall exercise normal supervision over Home Mission Congregations and ministers in their life and work; and the Home Mission shall be associated with them in such supervision.

10. The Committee, with others, is considering the appropriate level of support and supervision offered to Home Mission ministers by the Board and its staff, in light of this associated role with Presbytery.

Irish Mission workers

11. The three-yearly cycle of reviews of Irish Mission workers is on-going. This follows a similar process to deaconess reviews outlined above.

Nightlight Staff

12. Discussions with the Board of Finance and Personnel concerning the creation of a new category of PCI Field Staff employee have been successfully completed, and pay scales and contract details have been agreed with the current post-holders.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Denis Guiler reports:

Introduction

1. The remit of the BMI Finance Committee is the general oversight of BMI finances, including the review of quarterly management accounts, the preparation of annual accounts for presentation to the Board and the General Assembly, consideration of the finances of major capital projects, and the preparation of budgets for annual submission to the United Appeal Board. The Grants Panel reports to the Committee. The Secretary to the Committee is the BMI Finance Manager, Mr Nehru Dass.

Financial results 2013

2. The Committee records thanks to God for his generous provision.

Bequests

3. The Board received several bequests in 2013, the most notable of which was a further £188,713 from the Estate of Harold McCauley. The PCI Trustees are to be thanked for their willingness to make this further transfer to assist with capital building projects to be carried out in 2014. If this funding had not been received, the operating deficit of the Board would have exceeded £400,000 – a figure which is clearly unsustainable in the long term.

Capital projects

4. The Committee prepares projections of income and expenditure for the Board's capital programme in line with projects approved. A number of factors such as delays in purchasing land, the obtaining of planning permission, the appointment of professional advisors and tender approvals can make the prediction of project completion dates imprecise.

Disposal of assets, and capital funds

5. The Board holds some properties that are no longer required by the Church and the sale of some of these will be expedited in 2014 to meet expected capital expenditure on on-going projects.

Controlling costs

6. The Committee continues to look at expenditure, seeking to identify any possible savings while safeguarding the Board's key mission priorities. Total expenditure (excluding grants) fell by almost £90,000, which is equivalent to a reduction of almost 5%.

Grants Panel

7. The Grants Panel met five times during the year to consider requests for help from Congregations and Presbyteries through Mission Support Grants, Irish Mission Fund Grants and Repair Grants for Home Mission Congregations. All applications for assistance are considered according to criteria agreed by the Board.

8. The Panel also monitors projects as they proceed to completion. The quality of projects submitted for grant assistance from every part of Ireland is encouragingly high. Each applicant must demonstrate a strong missional focus, consistent with already agreed plans, with appropriate approval by both Kirk Session and Presbytery.

9. The Committee considers that this grant-making capacity is central to the work of the Board and has increased expenditure in this area in 2013 by over 25%, which includes upkeep and depreciation costs of Board properties of £20,452.

Grants awarded in 2013

Revenue Grants	£	£
Urban Mission Support	49,445	
Building Repair (Home Mission)	157,935	
Irish Mission Fund	79,045	
All revenue grants		286,425
Capital Grants		
All capital grants (Home Mission)		338,598

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Mr Cyril Cavan reports:

Introduction

1. The remit of the BMI Property Committee is the management of all aspects of the property portfolio of the Home Mission and Irish Mission, including acquisitions, disposals, construction and maintenance. The Secretary to the Committee is the BMI Support Officer, Miss Lorraine Beatty.

2. In addition to the stated meetings of the Property Committee, individuals or sub-groups from the Committee have visited various Church

Properties and met with several Congregational Committees, project groups and other representatives in all parts of the island of Ireland during the year.

Strand, New Church Building, Belfast

3. The Opening Service for the new Church building in the Sydenham area of East Belfast was held on Sunday 20 October 2013. Numbers now attending the Sunday services and organisations throughout the week have been encouraging for the minister and Congregation.

Mullingar New Church Building

4. Work commenced on site in February 2014. The overall tender price and fit out costs will be in the region of €1.2 million with a contract period of one year.

Shankill Road Mission premises

5. Minor holding repairs have been carried out to maintain a weatherproof envelope to the property. Several potential purchasers continue to express an interest although funding is a common problem. One of those interested has now obtained funding to prepare a feasibility study.

Nun's Island, Galway City

6. The only potential purchaser of this unique property, Galway City Council, at their recent meeting, indicated that 'they were not in a position to allocate funding towards the purchase of this property in 2014'. Owing to the potential financial risk with our continued ownership of this property, the Property committee will now consider all options in disposing of the property.

New Manse for Donabate

7. A Memorial seeking permission for the Dublin and Munster Presbytery to constitute Donabate Church Plant as a Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland will be before the 2014 General Assembly. Consequent upon such decisions, a suitable manse will be required for the minister, and arrangements will be put in place to locate and purchase this. The Church planter has been living in rented accommodation to date.

House in Maynooth

8. The former Irish Mission Worker's house, 22 Rockfield Square, Maynooth has been agreed for sale.

Carrickmacross Church

9. Regarding this disused Church which remains in reasonable condition a lease is in preparation with Youth Work Ireland which, if implemented, will allow for the use of the building as a Youth Café.

General

10. The Committee endeavours to be supportive to all Home and Urban Mission Congregations throughout the island and would encourage those seeking

assistance in any way within the appropriate remit to make contact through the Committee Secretary at an early stage in their planning.

APPENDIX A

Directory of ministers, deaconesses and Irish Mission workers currently called and deployed by 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 RSG Beacom	Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge, and Newtownbutler
Rev Janice M Browne	(Kerrykeel, Milford) and Rathmullan
Rev D Boyle	(Frankford, Castleblayney), Corvalley and Ervey
Rev CFD Clements	Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo
Rev D Conkey	Enniscorthy and Wexford
Rev Molly Deatherage	Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
Rev AJ Dunlop	Howth and Malahide
Rev DTR Edwards	Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount
Rev JG Faris	Cork and Aghada
Rev H Freeburn	Galway (Alternating Scheme)
Rev S Glendinning	Moville, Greenbank, Carndonagh and Malin
Rev WJ Hayes	Tullamore and Mountmellick
Rev HJ Honeyford	(2nd Castledearg) and Alt
Rev KA Jones	(Waterside) and Fahan
Rev SJ Lockington	Corboy and Mullingar
Rev Vicki Lynch (MCI)	Christ Church, Limerick (Alternating Scheme)
Rev Dr DK McCrory	Maynooth
Rev IT McKee	(Aughnacloy) and Ballymagrane
Rev G Jean Mackarel	Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan and Bellasis
Rev Katherine P Meyer	Sandymount (Alternating Scheme)
Rev GA Mitchell	Sligo and Boyle
Rev W Montgomery	Fermoy and Cahir
Rev M Proctor	Naas (and Tallaght Hospital chaplaincy)
Rev SW Rea	Carlow and Athy
Rev DW Reid	(Ardstraw) and Douglas
Rev D Reyes Martin	Kilkenny
Rev SJ Richmond	Donegal and Stranorlar
Rev S Stewart	Clones, Stonebridge, Ballyhobridge and Newbliss
Rev RB Thompson	(Badoney, Corrick) and Glenelly
Rev DJ Woodside	Drogheda
Vacant	(Blackrock) and Bray
Vacant	Carrigart and Dunfanaghy
Vacant	(Cavanaleck) and Aughtentaine

Vacant	(Dundalk, Castlebellingham) and Carlingford
Vacant	Greystones
Vacant	Inch (Stated supply)
Vacant	Kells (Under review)

Urban Mission Ministers

Rev M Gibson	Westbourne
Rev R Love	Taughmonagh
Rev D Rankin	Strand, Belfast
Rev L Webster	Craigavon

Church Planters

Rev A Carroll	Donabate
Rev DF Leal	Cliftonville Road

Deaconesses

Sonya Anderson	Shore Street, Donaghadee
Eileen Black	1st Magherafelt
Jenny Clegg	Ballycrochan, Bangor
Amanda Cooper	New Row, Coleraine
Muriel Cromie	BCH Chaplaincy Team and Ballygilbert, Bangor
Doreen Draffin	Whitehouse and Hospice Chaplaincy Team
Eleanor Drysdale	Wellington, Ballymena
Sharon Heron	Strand, Belfast
Roberta Irvine	Greystone Road, Antrim
Christine Kyle	Ulster Hospital Chaplaincy Team
Phyllis Linton	West Church, Ballymena
Heather McCracken	Alexandra & RVH Chaplaincy Team (locum)
Sadie McCullough	Whiteabbey
Lynda McFaul	1st Carrickfergus
Amy Magee	Muckamore
Elizabeth Matthews	Elmwood, Lisburn
Tracey Nicholl	St James, Ballymoney
Julie Peake	Portrush
Michelle Purdy	Ballyclare
Hazel Reid	1st Broughshane
Margaret Robertson	Gardenmore, Larne
Jenny Robinson	South Belfast Friendship House
Kathleen Spence	Maze and Ballinderry (temporary)
Rosemary Spiers	1st Antrim
Evelyn Whyte	1st Lisburn
Joanne Dunlop	Hillhall & Chaplaincy Teams, AAH and CAH

Irish Mission Workers

David Boyd	Adelaide Road, Dublin
Tom Dowling	Kilkenny
Harry Moreland	Cork
Keith Preston	International Meeting Point, Belfast
William Workman	Athy
Philip Whelton	Arklow

APPENDIX B

Panel on the Revision of the Book of Public Worship**Proposed amended version of the Code, Paragraph 212**

212. The Presbytery having been previously constituted by prayer, the order of service shall include the following:

(1) opening worship, including praise, prayer and the reading of the Word, an appropriate sermon, or an address or statement dealing with the principles of the Church, its ministry and government, shall be delivered.

The minister-elect takes his/her place before the Presbytery

(2) *The Moderator says:*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, who, having ascended to the right hand of the Father, has given gifts for building up the Church, which is his body, we are meeting as (a commission of) the Presbytery of *PP* (to ordain *NN* to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and) to *install/induct him/her* to the pastoral charge of *CC*.

or - to install *him/her* to the Home Mission and induct him/her to the pastoral charge of *CC*

or - to induct him/her as assistant minister/associate minister in *CC*.

or - to *install/induct him/her* to the position of *Principal/Professor of* [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - to *install/induct him/her* to missionary [or other] service in *XX*.

or - to *install/induct him/her* as a minister in recognised service in his/her appointment as

(3) As required by the Law of the Church, the Clerk will now read the Statement of the Standards of the Church, including the Rule of Faith. (Code Chapter I, section III, paragraphs 10-14).

(4) Thereafter the Moderator shall put to the minister-elect the prescribed questions as follows

(5) *The Moderator addresses the minister-elect:*

NN, Having heard the statement of the Standards of this Church, including the Rule of Faith, I now require you to answer the following questions. The first two are a public profession of your personal faith and sense of call.

(i) Do you believe in one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour?

I do.

(ii) So far as you know your own heart, are the call of God, zeal for His glory, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of men and women through the power of the Holy Spirit, your central motives as you offer yourself for this new sphere of service?

They are.

And now three questions concerning your understanding of the Church of Jesus Christ and this Presbyterian Church in Ireland in particular.

(iii) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and as such, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

I do.

(iv) Do you promise to uphold Reformed doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in a spirit of love towards all your brothers and sisters in Christ, in a way that seeks to preserve the peace and unity of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as part of the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ?

I do.

(v) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland adheres to the fundamental doctrines of the faith, set out in the Supreme and Subordinate Standards of this Church. Do you promise to teach them and defend them to the utmost of your power, against all error?

I do

(vi) Do you accept the Presbyterian form of Church government to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and 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 so long as you remain a minister of this Church?

I do

Now, two questions on the conduct of your ministry.

(vii) 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.

(viii) Having accepted the call of this Congregation, do you promise, through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of Mission in Ireland to this Home Mission charge, do you promise, through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call to become (associate minister/assistant minister) in this Congregation, do you undertake to retain your appointment for a period of not less than twelve months, in support of the minister; and do you promise through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the appointment of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace, to be faithful in your ministry in the position in Union Theological College to which you have been appointed and in all the other duties and opportunities falling to you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace to be faithful in your ministry in the position to which you have been appointed?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace, as a minister in recognised service to the Church in your appointment as to be faithful in your ministry, discharging your duties and using your opportunities of witness and of service with all diligence as a minister of Jesus Christ?

I do.

(6) Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith

The Moderator addresses the minister-elect in these words:

You have confessed your belief that the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and life. It is under that supreme standard, which alone is final, that this Church holds its subordinate standards. This being understood, are you now prepared 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.'?

I am

The Formula is signed in the Minute book of Presbytery.

In cases certified by the Board of Mission Overseas, where the spouse is to be commissioned with the person being ordained or installed, the following question shall be asked of the spouse;

Do you, *NN*, commit yourself to be a partner with your *husband/wife* in the missionary service to which *he/she* is being appointed?

I do

(7) *The Congregation stands and the minister-elect kneels.*

(a) For services which include ordination those who are to participate in the laying on of hands take their places. The Moderator shall lead in prayer saying the following or similar:

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, death and resurrection he has declared your love for the whole world, satisfied your justice, and 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 an appropriate number of other members of Presbytery including at least two other ministers lay hands on the minister-elect.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us the Presbytery of *PP* and 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 to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament within the Church Universal; and

install/induct him/her to the pastoral charge of CC.

or - *install him/her* to the Home Mission and induct *him/her* to the pastoral charge of CC

or - induct *him/her* as assistant minister/associate minister in CC.

or - *install/induct him/her* to the position of Principal/Professor of [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - *install/induct him/her* to missionary [or other] service in XX.

or - *install/induct him/her* as a minister in recognised service in *his/her* appointment as

May *he/she* be faithful in preaching your word, administering the sacraments and sharing in the government of the Church as *he/she* fulfils the ministry which you have called *him/her* to undertake.

We pray 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.

(b) For all other services, the Moderator shall lead in prayer saying the following or similar:

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.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us the Presbytery of *PP* and this your servant *NN*, whom we now, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer *install/induct* to the pastoral charge of CC.

or - install to the Home Mission and induct to the pastoral charge of CC

or - induct as assistant minister/associate minister in CC.

or - *install/induct* to the position of Principal/Professor of [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - *install/induct* to missionary [or other] service in XX.

or - *install/induct* as a minister in recognised service in *his/her* appointment as

May *he/she* be faithful in preaching your word, administering the sacraments and sharing in the government of the Church as *he/she* fulfils the ministry which you have called *him/her* to undertake.

We pray 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)

(8) *The Moderator, addressing the minister-elect, says:*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole 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/inducted to this pastoral charge of CC.

or - installed to the Home Mission and inducted to the pastoral charge of CC

or - installed as associate minister/assistant minister in this Congregation.
 or - installed/inducted to the position of Principal/Professor of
 [or other post] in this College to which he/she has been
 appointed.

or - *installed/inducted* to missionary [or other] service in the field to which
 you have been called [and in cases so certified by the Board of Mission Overseas
 add, ['and together with your *wife/husband*'], to be commissioned for this task.

or - *installed/inducted* as a minister in recognised service to the Church in
 your appointment as

As a sign of this I, as Moderator, on behalf of the Presbytery, extend to you
 the right hand of fellowship.

(9) When the minister is being installed or inducted into a Congregation,
the Moderator says the following or similar;

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.

The Moderator says: Having committed yourselves, Presbytery, 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 ...

(10) Charge. The minister appointed by Presbytery preaches a sermon as a
 charge to the new minister and to the Congregation.

(11) The service and the meeting of Presbytery shall conclude with the
 Benediction.

*PP is used for the name of the Presbytery and CC for the name of the
 Congregation. NN is used for the name of the minister-elect or spouse. XX is the
 name of the country to which the minister-elect will go.*

APPENDIX C

Proposed amended version of Code, Paragraph 10-14

10. 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.

11. It is the privilege, right and duty of every person to examine the
 Scriptures, 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
 each person's duty to accept and obey it. In exercising this God-given right of
 private judgment, 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 except 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.”

12. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a witness for Christ, has adopted subordinate standards. In these are found what the Church 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.

13. 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 civil rulers must be obedient to Christ in their own area of authority, yet they ought not to attempt, in any way, to constrain any person’s religious beliefs or intrude upon their rights of conscience.

14. The Church alone has the right to interpret and explain her standards, under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received

Strategy for Mission Committee

2. That the General Assembly welcome the collaboration of representatives of the three Belfast Presbyteries, the Board of Mission in Ireland and the Union Commission in pursuing the remit of the Belfast Panel (Reports pages 127-133) and encourage the Panel to further progress its work as outlined.

3. That the General Assembly direct the Mission Partnership Forum to review the purpose of and principles underlying the operation of the Alternating Ministry Scheme between the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland and bring proposals regarding the future of the Scheme to the General Assembly in 2015.

4. That the General Assembly commends the Nightlight deputation programme to Congregations initially but not exclusively in the three Belfast Presbyteries, and encourages Congregations to keep before their members the opportunities for serving and developing their evangelistic gifts through participation on Nightlight teams.’

Research and Resources Committee

5. That the Rev Chris Kennedy be thanked for his service as Convener of the Research and Resources Committee, and that the Rev Stephen Richmond be appointed in his place.

General

6. That the General Assembly commend *ReachOut* magazine to all Congregations, and encourage its wide circulation as a stimulus to missional thinking and action.

7. 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.

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Pars 10-14 of the Code**

that Pars 10 -14 of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in their place:

10. 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.

11. It is the privilege, right and duty of every person to examine the Scriptures, 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 each person's duty to accept and obey it. In exercising this God-given right of private judgment, 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 except 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."

12. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a witness for Christ, has adopted subordinate standards. In these are found what the Church 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.

13. 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 civil rulers must be obedient to Christ in their own area of authority, yet they ought not to attempt, in any way, to constrain any person's religious beliefs or intrude upon their rights of conscience.

14. The Church alone has the right to interpret and explain her standards, under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Anent Par 212 of the Code

that Par 212 of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

212. The Presbytery having been previously constituted by prayer, the order of service shall include the following:

(1) opening worship, including praise, prayer and the reading of the Word, an appropriate sermon, or an address or statement dealing with the principles of the Church, its ministry and government, shall be delivered.

The minister-elect takes his/her place before the Presbytery

(2) *The Moderator says:*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, who, having ascended to the right hand of the Father, has given gifts for building up the Church, which is his body, we are meeting as (a commission of) the Presbytery of *PP* (to ordain *NN* to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and) to *install/induct him/her* to the pastoral charge of *CC*.

or - to install *him/her* to the Home Mission and induct him/her to the pastoral charge of *CC*

or - to induct him/her as assistant minister/associate minister in *CC*.

or - to *install/induct him/her* to the position of *Principal/Professor of* [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - to *install/induct him/her* to missionary [or other] service in *XX*.

or - to *install/induct him/her* as a minister in recognised service in his/her appointment as

(3) As required by the Law of the Church, the Clerk will now read the Statement of the Standards of the Church, including the Rule of Faith. (Code Chapter I, section III, paragraphs 10-14).

(4) Thereafter the Moderator shall put to the minister-elect the prescribed questions as follows

(5) *The Moderator addresses the minister-elect:*

NN, Having heard the statement of the Standards of this Church, including the Rule of Faith, I now require you to answer the following questions. The first two are a public profession of your personal faith and sense of call.

(i) Do you believe in one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour?

I do.

(ii) So far as you know your own heart, are the call of God, zeal for His glory, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of men and women through the power of the Holy Spirit, your central motives as you offer yourself for this new sphere of service?

They are.

And now three questions concerning your understanding of the Church of Jesus Christ and this Presbyterian Church in Ireland in particular.

(iii) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and as such, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

I do.

(iv) Do you promise to uphold Reformed doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in a spirit of love towards all your brothers and sisters in Christ, in a way that seeks to preserve the peace and unity of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as part of the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ?

I do.

(v) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland adheres to the fundamental doctrines of the faith, set out in the Supreme and Subordinate Standards of this

Church. Do you promise to teach them and defend them to the utmost of your power, against all error?

I do

(vi) Do you accept the Presbyterian form of Church government to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and 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 so long as you remain a minister of this Church?

I do

Now, two questions on the conduct of your ministry.

(vii) 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.

(viii) Having accepted the call of this Congregation, do you promise, through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of Mission in Ireland to this Home Mission charge, do you promise, through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call to become (associate minister/assistant minister) in this Congregation, do you undertake to retain your appointment for a period of not less than twelve months, in support of the minister; and do you promise through the grace of God, to be a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people; preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, administering the Sacraments, nurturing children and young people, teaching and pastoring all the people, especially those in need, aiding in the government of the Church and discharging all other duties incumbent upon you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the appointment of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace, to be faithful in your ministry in the position in Union Theological College to which you have been appointed and in all the other duties and opportunities falling to you as a minister of Jesus Christ?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace to be faithful in your ministry in the position to which you have been appointed?

or

Having accepted the call of the Board of the General Assembly, do you promise, through God's grace, as a minister in recognised service to the Church in your appointment as to be faithful in

your ministry, discharging your duties and using your opportunities of witness and of service with all diligence as a minister of Jesus Christ?

I do.

(6) Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith

The Moderator addresses the minister-elect in these words:

You have confessed your belief that the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and life. It is under that supreme standard, which alone is final, that this Church holds its subordinate standards. This being understood, are you now prepared 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.'?

I am

The Formula is signed in the Minute book of Presbytery.

In cases certified by the Board of Mission Overseas, where the spouse is to be commissioned with the person being ordained or installed, the following question shall be asked of the spouse;

Do you, *NN*, commit yourself to be a partner with your *husband/wife* in the missionary service to which *he/she* is being appointed?

I do

(7) *The Congregation stands and the minister-elect kneels.*

(a) For services which include ordination those who are to participate in the laying on of hands take their places. The Moderator shall lead in prayer saying the following or similar:

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, death and resurrection he has declared your love for the whole world, satisfied your justice, and 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 an appropriate number of other members of Presbytery including at least two other ministers lay hands on the minister-elect.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us the Presbytery of *PP* and 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 to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament within the Church Universal; and

install/induct him/her to the pastoral charge of *CC*.

or - *install him/her* to the Home Mission and induct *him/her* to the pastoral charge of *CC*

or - induct *him/her* as assistant minister/associate minister in *CC*.

or - *install/induct him/her* to the position of Principal/Professor of [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - *install/induct him/her* to missionary [or other] service in *XX*.

or - *install/induct him/her* as a minister in recognised service in *his/her* appointment as

May *he/she* be faithful in preaching your word, administering the sacraments and sharing in the government of the Church as *he/she* fulfils the ministry which you have called *him/her* to undertake.

We pray 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.

(b) For all other services, the Moderator shall lead in prayer saying the following or similar:

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.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us the Presbytery of *PP* and this your servant *NN*, whom we now, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer *install/induct* to the pastoral charge of *CC*.

or - install to the Home Mission and induct to the pastoral charge of *CC*

or - induct as assistant minister/associate minister in *CC*.

or - *install/induct* to the position of Principal/Professor of [or other post] in this College to which *he/she* has been appointed.

or - *install/induct* to missionary [or other] service in *XX*.

or - *install/induct* as a minister in recognised service in *his/her* appointment as

May *he/she* be faithful in preaching your word, administering the sacraments and sharing in the government of the Church as *he/she* fulfils the ministry which you have called *him/her* to undertake.

We pray 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)

(8) *The Moderator, addressing the minister-elect, says:*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole 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/inducted to this pastoral charge of *CC*.

or - installed to the Home Mission and inducted to the pastoral charge of *CC*

or - installed as associate minister/assistant minister in this Congregation.

or - installed/inducted to the position of Principal/Professor of [or other post] in this College to which he/she has been appointed.

or - *installed/inducted* to missionary [or other] service in the field to which you have been called [and in cases so certified by the Board of Mission Overseas add, ['and together with your *wife/husband*'], to be commissioned for this task.

or - *installed/inducted* as a minister in recognised service to the Church in your appointment as

As a sign of this I, as Moderator, on behalf of the Presbytery, extend to you the right hand of fellowship.

(9) When the minister is being installed or inducted into a Congregation, *the Moderator says the following or similar;*

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.

The Moderator says: Having committed yourselves, Presbytery, 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 ...

(10) Charge. The minister appointed by Presbytery preaches a sermon as a charge to the new minister and to the Congregation.

(11) The service and the meeting of Presbytery shall conclude with the Benediction.

PP is used for the name of the Presbytery and CC for the name of the Congregation. NN is used for the name of the minister-elect or spouse. XX is the name of the country to which the minister-elect will go.

DAVID J BRUCE

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 2nd day of June 2014

The Memorial of the Interim Kirk Session of the Donabate Church Plant Respectfully Showeth:

That the Church Plant in Donabate was begun on 7th February 2010 with the ordination and induction of the Rev Andy Carroll as church planter;

That God has prospered and sustained the work since that date, and that there are currently 85 adults with 45 children regularly worshipping;

That an interim Kirk Session has been overseeing the work, in addition to a joint BMI and Presbytery Panel;

That the joint BMI/Presbytery Panel unanimously supports the prayer of this Memorial;

That in light of the growth in this work, there is an evident need for reformed Christian witness in the Donabate area;

That it would benefit the witness and growth of this new church if they could elect their own Kirk Session;

That it would enhance the development of the work in the church and the area if a minister could be called to serve them;

That the Congregation has reached a stage in its development where it might be constituted a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland;

That the constituted congregation would still require financial assistance and would intend, with the support of the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster to seek appropriate status under the Board of Mission in Ireland or another appropriate body as identified by the General Assembly.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to authorise the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster to establish the Charge of Donabate as a Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland under that name on a convenient date after 30th June 2014 and to place them in the Secession Synod.

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

Adopted by the Interim Kirk Session at its meeting on 16 January 2014

ANDY CARROLL, Moderator
MARGARET McKENNA, Clerk

Licensed by the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster at its meeting on 4th February 2014 and transmitted with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

M ANDERSON, Moderator
STUART FERGUSON, Clerk

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

President: Mrs ELIZABETH MOFFETT
 General Secretary: Mrs CAROLINE HAWTHORNE

Theme for the year 2013/2014: God is Able

(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. Each year PW Central Committee decides a theme and the theme for this past year 2013-2014 has been God is Able. We believe that nothing is impossible with God and this theme was to encourage women to appreciate the sovereignty and power of God and to trust Him with the big and the small issues in their lives.

2. The *Presbyterian Women's* (PW) Office is currently staffed by Mrs Caroline Hawthorne, General Secretary; Mrs Charlotte Stevenson, Communications and Development Officer; Mrs Rose McCullagh, Senior Secretary; Miss Naomi Campbell, Receptionist/Secretary and Mrs Jayne Martin, part-time, temporary Receptionist/Secretary. Thanks go to the Staff team for their consistent hard work over the course of the year.

3. The Resources Committee continues to be commended by members for the production of the PW Resource Pack. Groups are offered this pack each year to help with their programme – it contains useful ideas relating to the current theme. PW records sincere thanks to Mrs Lynn Murray for convening this Committee and for the valuable contribution that she and Committee members have made over the past year.

4. The PW webpages within the PCI website contain useful information relating to the organisation. Helpful resources and images are available on the webpages to download, which can be found under www.presbyterianireland.org/pw PW also operate a Facebook page and a Twitter account, in the hope that this might aid information flow amongst our members, stimulate greater interest, and promote awareness.

5. PW CENTRAL COMMITTEE 2013/14

Office Bearers:

President:	Mrs Elizabeth Moffett (Iveagh)
Home Vice President:	Miss Anna Morison (Ballymena)
Overseas Vice President:	Mrs Sandra Stokes (Down)

Committee Members:

Mrs Mary Cargill (Ards)	Mrs Elma Leeburn (Dromore)
Mrs. Edna McIlwaine (Armagh)	Mrs Jean Annett (Iveagh)
Mrs. Pamela McManus (Ballymena)	Mrs Pat Martin (Monaghan)
Mrs Evelyn Coleman (North Belfast)	Mrs Pauline Irvine (Newry)
Dr Jean Shannon (South Belfast)	Mrs Valerie Reid (Omagh)
Mrs Margaret Grayson (East Belfast)	Mrs Ann Millar (Route)

Mrs Valerie Tweedie (East Belfast)	Mrs Edith Holmes (Templepatrick)
Mrs Lynda Stothers (Carrickfergus)	Mrs Anne Thompson (Tyrone)
Mrs Jean Farlow (Coleraine & Limavady)	Mrs Caroline Hawthorne (Staff)
Mrs Elaine Crockett (Derry & Donegal)	Mrs Charlotte Stevenson (Staff)
Mrs Liz Hamilton (Down)	Mrs Karen Craig (Moderator's Wife)
Mrs Helen Dawkins (Dublin & Munster)	Ex Officio

6. New Members of PW Central Committee 2014/15

Mrs Christine Davidson (Armagh)
Mrs Janet Maxwell (East Belfast)

7. New Office Bearers from Annual Meeting, 8th May 2014

President 2014-2015: Miss Anna Morison (Ballymena)

Home Vice President 2014-2016: Mrs Margaret Grayson (East Belfast)

8. Central Committee met seven times during the year. As well as carrying the responsibility of steering the work of the organisation, the Committee continues to provide representatives to several Boards and Committees within PCI and various other organisations and bodies.

9. Dr Jean Shannon represents PW at Women's Link.

10. Mrs Valerie Tweedie represents PW at Women's Forum.

11. Mrs Elizabeth Moffett has served as PW President during 2013/14. During this year she has given generously of her time in attendance at meetings of Boards and Committees and has travelled throughout Ireland to fulfil many speaking engagements. Elizabeth also travelled to Transylvania in October 2013, with Mrs Sandra Stokes, to visit Ilona and Csaba Veres to see the work in which they are involved through the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania. PW Central Committee deeply appreciates the contribution Elizabeth has made to PW over the years and especially during her term in Office.

12. PW Central Committee continues to appreciate the support and advice given by the Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev Dr DJ Watts and wishes him and his wife, Fiona every blessing on their retirement.

13. PW Central 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 partnership with PW and for their support and encouragement.

14. Events 2013/14

- The Annual Meetings were held on 9 and 10 May 2013 in Assembly Buildings. The music, provided by Brian McNarry and band on Thursday (Bloomfield Congregation), and Graham Hawthorne and band on Friday (Woodlands Congregation), was uplifting and the songs were relevant to the theme. The guest speaker for the Annual Meeting was the Rev Dr Heather Morris. Heather is the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland and previously the Director of Ministry at Edgehill Theological College. In her talk she emphasised that the theme *God is Able* is a foundational truth, which should affect how we live. The message was challenging and was delivered in an engaging and humorous way. Following

the pattern from the previous year, we held our Annual Meetings on two days and included an afternoon seminar by Catherine Campbell. The Friday afternoon seminar was attended by three hundred women and Catherine explored the question, 'If God is able, why worry?'

- Prior to PW Central Committee in September 2013, the Rev Adrian Moffett conducted a Communion Service.
- In the autumn of 2013 *Presbyterian Women* hosted a series of Roadshows in five different venues throughout the Province. The *Going Deeper* Roadshow followed on from the first series of Roadshows that were held in spring 2010. The 2010 Roadshows were aimed at helping women to share their faith and the 2013 Roadshows were designed to show women the journey of transformation, beginning at the Cross. The programme included talks, drama, and DVD clips. A user-friendly version of the programme is available on the PW webpage – www.presbyterianireland.org/pw
- PW Forum met in February 2013 and again in February 2014. The PW Forum brings together PW LINK representatives at a central level. Five representatives from each PW LINK are eligible to attend, along with members of the PW Central Committee and its sub-committees. Representatives from the Deaconess Association and mission personnel on home assignment are also invited. The programme gives updates and training on PW as well as ideas of how to further develop PW LINKs and Groups. It also introduces the Resource Pack for the incoming year – the February 2014 Forum introduced the 2014/15 “...so I am sending you” Resource Pack.

South Belfast Friendship House (SBFH)

15. The House is funded by PW through the PW Mission Fund.

16. PW Central Committee continues to value the partnership with the Board of Social Witness in relation to the management of South Belfast Friendship House. Indeed, PW would like to express their sincere gratitude to the Board of Social Witness for a grant of £10,000 which they have agreed to provide on an annual basis for an initial period of three years (2013-2015).

17. The SBFH Management Committee is thankful to Mrs Jenny Robinson, Mrs Eunice Moore, Miss Natalie Johnston, Miss Alannah McMullan, Mr Matty Smyth and Miss Sarah Atchison for their faithful service and commitment to the work of South Belfast Friendship House. The Committee would like to record its thanks to the many volunteers who help on a regular basis – their support is invaluable. It has been very encouraging to see the Youth Alpha team grow over the past year. We would like to give thanks to Derryvolgie Presbyterian Halls for their support over the years with volunteers for the After School programmes. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, they are no longer able to continue with this support.

18. The work of the House continues to grow through After-school Group; Homework Club; Youth Alpha; Breakfast Club; Friendship Group; Toddler

Group; and Utility Street Men's Hostel. In conjunction with St. Aidan's Church of Ireland a Messy Church has been started in Sandy Row on the second Friday of each month. Messy Church is a relatively new concept that many Churches are adopting. It aims to present the faith to families in a way that involves fun, creativity and hospitality.

19. In May 2013, seven dedicated young people from the VIP (Volunteers Internship Programme) ran the programmes at the House for one week. In August 2013, excellent summer programmes were offered once again at the House for young people living in and around Sandy Row. One week was led by Stuart Hawthorne and a team from Woodlands Presbyterian Church and the other week was led by a team from the PCI Youth and Children's Board. The Committee is truly thankful for God's provision of these teams who have been an invaluable resource to the young people in Sandy Row. There is on-going contact with the teams as some of the team members continue to volunteer throughout the year.

20. Once again, there was a wonderful response to the SBFH 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. In all, 85 santa sacks, 20 plus family bags, 20 toddler bags and 30 senior's gifts were distributed. In addition, Christmas dinners were provided to 30 men from the local Hostel, in partnership with Belfast City Mission, and to 25 pensioners. Once again this year, a number of PW Groups and individuals gave of their time to help wrap and sort gifts which was much appreciated. Indeed, it is 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.

21. PW would like to record their thanks to the Belfast City Mission for their partnership in sharing the Gospel in Sandy Row, not least when it comes to the Men's ministry. Special thanks goes to Willie Logan for his continual support and encouragement.

22. In February 2014, South Belfast Friendship House received their fourth annual team from Eden High School, Ontario, Canada, as part of their 'Take Flight' programme. This year the team was made up of seven young people who were able to get involved with ministries happening both within and outside of Friendship House.

Finance

23. PW Central Committee is very grateful for the on-going support of its members which enables PW to contribute to the mission of the Church. Income from PW Groups to the Mission Fund in 2013 amounted to £578,191.

24. PW gave a grant of £250,000 in 2013 to the Board of Mission in Ireland to partly support 30 Deaconesses serving in Congregations, the Community, Hospitals and the Prison Service. PW acknowledges the retirement of the following deaconesses who have served the Church faithfully for many years:

Carol McRoberts	5.1.13
Lynda Gibson	1.6.13
Jean Gwyn-Patton	28.4.14
Jackie O'Neill	30.6.14

25. In addition to the annual grant to BMI, PW will be supporting two student deaconesses who will commence their training at Union Theological College in September 2014.

26. PW gave a grant of £190,000 in 2013 to the Board of Mission Overseas.

27. PW records its thanks to the Youth and Children's Board for the donation of £10,000 from their Sunday School project towards the work of South Belfast Friendship House.

28. PW records its thanks to the Board of Social Witness for the donation of £10,000 towards the work of South Belfast Friendship House.

29. The offering received at the 2013 PW Annual Meetings was £8,280.06 plus an additional £971.02 from Gift Aid.

30. The offering received at the 2013 Going Deeper Roadshow events was £4,935.63.

31. PW was delighted to donate £2,188.00 to Diakonia, an organisation of the Hungarian Reformed Church, from the sale of Romanian Christmas baubles. This will support The Mera Project in which Ilona Veres is involved.

32. PW Central Committee acknowledges with thanks the following bequests:

Jan 2013	Annie M Miller	£500.00
Jan 2013	Kathleen H Barr	£11,040.09
Jan 2013	Ms Currie	£10.40
Jan 2014	Janette E Dick	£2,000.00

33. Through the PW Special Projects (2012/13) the following was donated: £20,000 to Drogheda Presbyterian Church
£20,000 to support the GBU movement in Spain

34. Through the PW Mission Fund it is hoped that the Special Projects (2013/14) will support the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society and PCEA UK Outreach Congregation, London. At the time of writing PW had donated £4,805 to the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society's special grant scheme.

Wider World

35. PW Central Committee wish to record sincere thanks to the Editor, Mrs Charlotte Stevenson, for producing magazines of a consistent high standard which have included articles on overseas mission personnel, deaconess work, pastoral issues, topical subjects and PW Groups and events. Some of these articles are available to read on the PW webpage – www.presbyterianireland.org/pw

36. Wider World has a readership of over 17,000. The Committee continues to promote Wider World amongst women within our Churches and communities and would encourage more to subscribe to this excellent resource.

37. Selected extracts from Wider World continue to be available on audio tape, through the RNIB, for those who are blind or partially sighted.

Structures

38. On Thursday 11 April 2013, PW Central Committee voted unanimously to be incorporated into the proposed new structures of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland presented to the General Assembly in June 2013. Under these new structures PW would sit under the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, and would liaise with other Councils in relation to mission at home and overseas.

Should the proposed structures be accepted at the 2014 General Assembly, PW look forward to enjoying further integration, greater communication and increased opportunities to influence women's ministry across the board within these new structures.

39. PW Central Committee would like to express their thanks to the Rev Dr DJ Watts and the Very Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop for their guidance and help in communicating the implications of these new structures, and their support and encouragement as Central Committee prayerfully sought God's will with regard to PW inclusion.

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
- 423 staff
- 200 volunteers
- £8.9+ million operational budget

AREAS OF WORK

- **Residential Care** – Older People and Learning Disability
- **Nursing Care** – Older People
- **Working with people with Addictions**
- **Working with Offenders**
- **Supported Housing** – Older People and Learning Disability
- **Student Accommodation**
- **Counselling Service**
- **Child Protection** – Training, Advice and Support
- **Chaplains** – Hospital, Hospice, University Forces and Criminal Justice
- **Ministry to the Deaf**
- **Family Centre** – Young Families, Older People, School Children and Homeless
- **Lobbying and Campaigning**
- **Family Holiday**
- **Pastoral Care**
- **Day Care** – Learning Disability
- **Disability Health & Wellbeing** – promoting concern for and action in these areas

BOARD STRUCTURE

- Specialist Ministries
- Older People Services
- Family Services
- Adult Services
- Social Issues and Resources

In Summary

The Board of Social Witness (BSW) Reports will include:

1. **Strategic Planning**. The Board has agreed its Strategic Plan for 2013-2018. (Appendix 1)
2. **Specialist Ministries** reports on the on-going work of Chaplains working in Criminal Justice, Health Care, Education, the Armed Forces and with links to Sports Chaplaincy, along with the work of Kinghan Church for the

Deaf. The report refers to the on-going demands in a stretched Health Service and in the re-structuring of the Prison Service which impacts on the current and future work of Chaplains. The report also refers to encouragements in Forces chaplaincy recruitment, in the developing work of Kinghan Church and to an on-going review of student chaplaincy in the Greater Belfast area.

3. **Older People Services** reports on the extensive work carried out in Residential and Nursing Homes. The report draws attention to the current consultation into 'Transforming Your Care' being carried out by the Health and Social Care Board. It also highlights the consistently high quality of residential care provided by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) which is an acknowledged Witness within the Health and Social Care world.

4. **Family Services** reports on the care for families and the disabled through Aaron House, Willow Brook and Topley Terrace, PCI Counselling, Friendship House and PCI Family Holiday, and reports on the work of Taking Care and Disability, Health and Wellbeing. The report highlights the areas of mental health, self-harm and suicide through day conferences and the production of Flourish materials. The report also refers to the nurture of new Taking Care Trainers and the potential for the BSW to take over the management of Lawnfield House Respite facility in Newcastle.

5. **Adult Services** reports on the work of Thompson House ex-offenders hostel; Carlisle House Addiction Rehabilitation Centre and Gray's Court. The report highlights again the underfunding of these projects but the high quality of provision maintained in them. It also refers to the on-going stresses surrounding Thompson House but the development of ministry to the residents.

6. **Social Issues and Resources** reports on the on-going production of a Church resource on bereavement.

BOARD REPORT

1. In **Matthew 5 vs 13-16** Jesus tells His followers, **'You are the salt of the earth ... you are the light of the world.'** Rodney Stark, writing from the perspective of a sociologist about the impact Christianity had on Greco-Roman cities in the first four centuries says that Christianity served as 'a revitalization movement that arose in response to the misery, chaos, fear and brutality of life in the urban Greco-Roman world.'

2. He goes on, 'To cities filled with the homeless and impoverished, Christianity offered charity as well as hope. To cities filled with newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered an immediate basis for attachments. To cities filled with orphans and widows, Christianity provided a new and expanded sense of family. To cities torn by violent ethnic strife, Christianity offered a new basis for social solidarity. And faced with epidemics, fires and earthquakes, Christianity offered effective nursing services.' [Rodney Stark, 'The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History' quoted in 'Transforming the World' Edt by JA Grant and DA Hughes.]

3. In a world and society that demands to see authentic action before it will count a message as authentic the Church must be both salt and light. It needs to **"see our good deeds"** before it will **"praise our Father in heaven."**

4. The various areas of work in which the Board of Social Witness is involved is more than Social Care – it is Social WITNESS, giving testimony

in action to the love and grace of God. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is providing an active witness to the love of Christ daily in health care, the student world, prisons, the armed forces, the area of disability, rehabilitation from alcohol and substance abuse, offender re-entry into society, elderly care, and through counselling services, child protection, family services and more.

5. Behind this work is a wealth of professional and Christian wisdom, experience and know-how that is a resource in itself to the Presbyterian Church and is highly respected in the world outside the Church. The work of Social Witness gives the Presbyterian Church a voice in various public and statutory arenas which the Church might not have otherwise. For example, the Presbyterian Church, through the Board, has been the first denomination to engage directly in the on-going consultation regarding 'Transforming Your Care'. Often these arenas are complex, difficult and painstaking to navigate and require a depth of knowledge and, especially in Northern Ireland, personal contacts and relationships that have been built up over time. On behalf of the Presbyterian Church the Board seeks to be a Christian witness and voice in these areas.

6. This reputation, provision and witness of the Presbyterian Church are things to celebrate – but it is nowhere near enough! The work is valuable in itself, precious for what it does, but it is an example of what can be done as individuals and Congregations. Placing value and dignity on the lives of the elderly, the young, the sick, the vulnerable, the stranger, the addict, the broken, the fearful – because each is made in the image of God – is being salt and light. It is giving authenticity to the message of the Gospel. It is witness. It is necessary. It is individual and corporate. It is costly. But, by the Spirit of God, it is achievable. In the work of building a platform for the gospel through our good deeds, the Board is a resource of wisdom, advice and experience in Social Witness to be drawn on by the wider Church.

7. The next Strategic Plan 2013-2018 (Appendix 1) reflects both the current needs of the Board and anticipates some of the issues and challenges that may arise in the future. This may have to be revised following the decision of the General Assembly in relation to Structures.

8. The Strategic Plan also attempts to reflect both the needs of our Church and that of the Social Care world in which it operates. The denomination has so often responded in a tangible way to a social need as opposed to reacting without actions. This enables the Board to speak and comment with some authority on many of the important issues.

9. During the period of the new Strategic Plan the Board acknowledges that funding will continue to be a major issue and that our funders will continue to demand further savings but expect a better service.

10. The Board acknowledges that many of our buildings are requiring major refurbishment or replacement. In the current economic climate, this is going to be a challenge.

11. **The Board acknowledges that Welfare Reform** has dropped from the daily headlines and is no longer the centre of discussion on radio and television current affairs programmes, but its impact is being experienced in the lives of benefit claimants. There was universal agreement that reform was overdue, but the haste and timescale of its implementation was widely criticised. Welfare Reform, together with other changes in Child Benefit, small or no pay increases

and Income Tax changes has reduced the overall income of many families. The issue of parity with England, Scotland and Wales in relation to the main “passport benefits” (Income Support, Job Seekers and Pension Credit) remains unchanged. That is estimated to cost the Northern Ireland Assembly £5million a month.

12. **Health Service.** The Board has discussed the serious issues within our Health Service with so many investigations in relation to levels of care and the closure of specialist units.

13. **Flourish.** The Board welcomed the launch of Flourish, suicide awareness material and training for Clergy. The Board thanked the Rev Mairisine Stanfield for her contribution to Flourish and welcomed the Board’s Director as her replacement on the Steering Group.

14. **Consultations.** Board staff play a significant role in the wider Health and Social Care world. Their role on advisory committees and boards gives Social Witness an opportunity to speak into that public space concerning a number of key issues including, ‘The Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion’; and, ‘Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland.’

15. **BSW Recognition Awards.** The Board launched the BSW Recognition Awards, an opportunity to celebrate the part that Social Witness plays in both the work of the Board and in congregational life.

16. The Board warmly congratulates the Rev Dr Michael Barry, Convener of the Chaplains Committee under Specialist Ministries, on his election as Moderator-designate of the Presbyterian Church and assures him of our prayers for the incoming year.

THANKS

17. The Board is continually thankful for the service of the many staff in the offices, projects, Local Support Committees, Board and Assembly Committees and Panels. The Board continues to give thanks for the insight and knowledge of our Secretary and Director of Social Service, Lindsay Conway, and remember him and his family in what has been a very difficult year.

18. The Board is particularly grateful to Mrs Linda Wray, our Residential Services Manager, whose job title does not do justice to the breadth of her involvement and initiatives within the Board and the additional cover she provided at significant times in the past year.

19. The Board is grateful to be able to work closely with a wide range of statutory and public agencies which seek to minister to a broad range of needs in society. These include the 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 Siochana; partner Housing Associations; Department of Education and many others. Grateful thanks are extended for their continued funding and support.

20. Gratitude is expressed to those within the Presbyterian Family who work alongside and help so much in the facilitation of the work of the Board; 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 its funding and support. Thanks are also due to all Board Conveners,

Secretaries and their staff with appreciation for cooperation and shared vision in an unsettling year.

21. **The Rev Bobby Liddle.** The Board thanks the Rev Bobby Liddle for his six years as Board Convener. Bobby has brought great wisdom and dedication to his role as Convener. The Board especially acknowledges his role in representing the wider Church on commenting on a number of significant social issues, including the whole area of Human Sexuality. Bobby associated himself with every facet of the wide and varied work of the Board, being a regular visitor and attending meetings over and above those in his role as Convener. Much of our work has grown and been blessed under his leadership.

SPECIALIST MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

1. In a changing world which is less sympathetic to the Christian voice and influence, PCI is blessed still to have opportunity to minister within the spheres represented by this Committee. There are increasing challenges and stresses – professional, financial, theological and cultural – but PCI personnel continue to minister with dedication and enthusiasm. The Committee commends its work to the prayerful support of the wider Church.

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

Healthcare Chaplains:

2. There are major concerns in relation to the Chaplaincy provision within our hospitals. It is becoming more and more difficult to provide an effective service in the current climate. The Generic Chaplaincy model continues to be discussed.

3. There is concern with regard to the new call out system in some of our hospitals, placing individual chaplains under considerable pressure.

4. The Board noted the forthcoming retirements of the Rev Henry Wilson and Jean Gwyn Patton from the Royal Victoria Hospital Belfast.

Criminal Justice Chaplains:

5. **Visits:** The Rev Dr Michael Barry, Chaplains Committee Convener, visited Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre in Bangor. Dr Barry talked of the tremendous work of the staff and in particular that of the Rev Colin Megaw, Chaplain, who displayed a wonderful rapport with the staff and the boys.

6. **NIPS Review:** The on-going Review of Prison Chaplains has yet to be concluded. The Rev Bobby Liddle and the Moderator attended a meeting set up to discuss the Review. Brian McCaughey (Northern Ireland Prison Service) has stated that the Northern Ireland Prison Service appreciates and values the work of Chaplains but that there is no more money available for prison chaplaincy and that his department would have to work within a given budget.

7. The Board is encouraged with the on-going chaplaincy provision and also with discussions in relation to Community Chaplains and the use of volunteers within the Prison Estates. The Director, Lindsay Conway, was a speaker at a recent conference exploring this whole area.

8. In relation to the vacancies at Hydebank Wood and Magilligan, the Chaplains Committee has agreed to await the full implementation of the review before filling the vacancies. The appointment of a joint Church of Ireland, Methodist, Presbyterian Chaplain at Hydebank is also being discussed.

FORCES COMMITTEE

9. **General Assembly 2014:** The presentation of chaplains this year will also be an opportunity for the General Assembly to commemorate the outbreak of the First World War and the role of its chaplains during the conflict.

10. Appointments and Postings:

- (a) The Rev Heather Rendell remains in Catterick with the ITC (Infantry Training Corps)
- (b) The Rev Stephan Van Os remains at Worthy Down and will stay there until he leaves the Army this year. He is presently looking for a new charge.
- (c) The Rev Norman McDowell is stationed at Aldergrove.
- (d) The Rev Paul Swinn has been promoted and is posted to the Army Personnel Centre at Glasgow.
- (e) The Rev Colin Jones remains in Wattisham.
- (f) The Rev Mark Henderson is at the Army Training Depot, Pirbright.
- (g) The Rev Dr Philip Wilson is halfway through his initial Cranwell training.
- (h) The Rev Mark Donald has completed his training as a chaplain with the Reserves and is presently attached to the Second Battalion the Royal Irish Regiment.

11. Chaplains serving with Cadets:

- (i) The Rev Kenneth Crowe serves in the Army Cadet Force and the Rev Joseph Andrews and the Rev Professor Patton Taylor in the Air Training Corps.

The two officiating military chaplains are the Rev Prof Patton Taylor and the Rev Derek Weir.

12. **Recruitment and Retirements:** The Committee reported that the Rev David Edgar retired from service as a chaplain in the Royal Air Force in June/July 2013. He had a long and successful career and is now settled in England.

13. Mr Ivan Linton, presently a licentiate in Drumachose and Derramore, received a call from the Board of Social Witness on 4 March 2014 to serve as an Army Chaplain. His Service of Ordination and Induction was on 25 April.

KINGHAN CHURCH

14. The Committee reports that through the innovative and energetic work of the Rev Glen Jordan and Miss Judith Lyness (Youth Associate) the Kinghan Church members and the Local Support Committee are being connected to some of the needs of the wider deaf community in Northern Ireland. Attendances at Sunday worship and at the weekly Bible studies are good. Monthly Family Services continue to be enjoyed. The website and Facebook continue to be a vital means of communication, the monthly Fun Days organised by Judith are very popular, and the lunch club on Thursdays is well attended.

15. The ministry staff are ably assisted in administration by Mrs Claire Nicholson.

16. The Congregation were saddened at the passing of their former minister, the Rev Dr George Grindle MBE. Numerous tributes have been paid to George's remarkable and gifted Ministry with the Deaf Community. The Kinghan Church held a service of thanksgiving and celebration. A trust fund has been established in George's memory to be used for the educational needs of deaf people, especially towards preparing any deaf candidates for the ordained ministry.

17. The Rev Glen Jordan has become aware of very many deaf people isolated from any deaf organisation and with no Church group in which they can meaningfully participate. There are also Churches and individuals who want to be able to include deaf people and enable them to learn and worship, e.g. monthly services are taking place in Ballykelly Presbyterian, and an Alpha Course is being planned. There is a need to train people, both deaf and hearing, to be able to lead Bible study and simple acts of worship using British Sign Language (BSL).

18. The Local Support Committee was interested to learn from the Rev Dr Will Murphy of the success of the Church of England in preparing deaf candidates for ordination. In the short term, approaches are presently being made to BSW and the Church of Ireland Board of Social Responsibility for assistance in training suitable deaf people to lead Bible study and worship.

19. Judith Lyness (Youth Associate) has been organising several Deaf Awareness courses in the University of Ulster at Jordanstown. Over 80 people have signed up for a 6-week taster course in BSL, and now she has been invited to the Coleraine campus.

STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

20. **Review and Accountability:** The new Committee Convener, Dr Maureen Bennett, has been communicating with Chaplains and has suggested that review and accountability might be built into the work to allow Chaplains and Committee to be aware of each other. The Committee had received reports from the Rev Karen Mbayo at Queen's University; the Rev Cheryl Meban at University of Ulster, Jordanstown and Belfast campuses; the Rev John Coulter, University of Ulster at Coleraine; the Rev Nigel Craig, University of Ulster at Magee and the Rev Dr Brian Brown at Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

21. **Proforma:** The Committee agreed that they needed to make a response to the reports requested and received from the Chaplains. It was further agreed that a proforma similar to that used presently for hospital/hospice Chaplains could be adapted for the Student Services Chaplains.

22. **Terms of Reference for the Review of Chaplaincy Work in Greater Belfast** prepared by Dr Bennett were very well received. It was agreed that these Terms of Reference could be used for a parallel review of chaplaincy in the Greater Dublin area.

23. **Local Support Committees:** the Committee agreed that these would be beneficial and would be in line with all other Board activities.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. The care and treatment of older people in our society is often to the forefront of our media but for negative reasons. However, the Committee is pleased to report that Board Residential/Nursing Homes continue to receive very positive Inspection Reports from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority. These inspections look at Care Practices, Estates and Pharmacy. Older People Services Quality Audits also indicate residents and their families' appreciation of the service provided.

2. At last year's General Assembly the Board reported on correspondence to Mr Edwin Poots, Minister for Health regarding the proposed closures of statutory care homes. Mr Poots met with Board representatives in September when discussion took place on a number of relevant care issues, including the need to have a range of accommodation options for older people to choose from, including respite and domiciliary provision. This was followed up in February when a consultation seminar was held with representatives from the 'Transforming Your Care' team in relation to proposed Home Closures. It was gratifying to hear the Transforming Your Care team acknowledge positive feedback on our own Homes.

3. The Older People Services Committee is conscious of the need to upgrade or look at the replacement of certain Homes. The replacement of Ard Cluan House, Londonderry and York House, Portrush are high priorities. Tritonville Close, Sheltered Housing Scheme in Dublin, is also keen to undertake its final upgrade of 6 bed-sits into 4 x one bedroom apartments. Regrettably there is no movement on the provision of projects at Lucan or Ballybay.

4. People are living longer and this brings many challenges to Care Homes. At the year end 2013 some 77 of 230 residents were aged 91+. Annual statistics show that numbers continue to increase for residents who need assistance with mobility and personal care and being diagnosed with dementia. Some Homes have also increased the number of registered beds for people with dementia.

5. The Board staff are highly committed and enthusiastic in undertaking their roles and the importance of working as a team is vital. The role of catering, domestic and administrative staff is as important as the holistic package of care as that provided by the nursing and social care staff. Appreciation is recorded for how staff often go the extra mile to ensure residents' needs are met.

6. The Board is pleased to report that all of our social care staff are registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council protects the public by promoting high standards of conduct, training and practice for the social care work force in Northern Ireland. Staff undertake mandatory training annually in areas such as Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Challenging Behaviour and Moving and Handling.

7. The Board is pleased to report that 3 staff have completed the Quality Credit Framework Level 5 in Health and Social Care and 2 more are near completion. We also have 6 trained as Dementia Care Facilitators in partnership with the University of Stirling which has spearheaded developments in Dementia care. Two Home Managers are currently undertaking Post Qualifying training as Social Workers.

8. The Board welcomes as Home Managers, Anna McCaffrey in Sunnyside House, Bangor and Miriam Chambers in River House, Newcastle.

The Board said farewell to Jean Gourley (Salaries and Wages) and Helen Cousins (River House) both of whom gave many years of faithful service to Older People Services. Thanks are also extended to Mrs Norma Picking, Senior Care Assistant at Adelaide House who, for some 9 months, was Acting Manager at Corkey House, Belfast during Ann Anderson's period of absence.

9. Older People Services acknowledges staff in the Board of Social Witness office who provide the back up to the management of the Homes – May Gordon, Assistant Residential Services Manager, Gail, Wilma and Jennie. Mr Lee Wilson, Home Manager of Adelaide House is involved in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust group on Palliative and End of Life Care. Through involvement with groups like this the Board is able to promote good practice but also help to form strategies for province wide practices.

10. **Corkey House.** The Board congratulates Corkey House on 50 years of witness, outreach and provision of care for Older People in North Belfast and on their 10th anniversary in their new building.

11. Older People Services is indebted to those who serve faithfully on our Local Support Committee and "Friends Of" groups and to volunteers. These individuals add to the service provided. They undertake a range of tasks from Monthly Unannounced Visits to activities, outings and fund-raising. Anyone who feels they could contribute to the work of the Church with older people should contact the Board. Thanks are also recorded to Mrs Shelagh Caldwell, who has served on Adelaide House Local Support Committee for over 25 years, as she now resigns from that role.

JOHN SEAWRIGHT, Convener

FAMILY SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. Family Services continues to be a busy Committee with oversight of Taking Care, PCI Counselling, Addiction Services, Disability, Health and Well-being, Learning Disability, PCI Family Holiday, Pastoral Care and, in partnership with PW, South Belfast Friendship House. This is just a snapshot of some of the projects supported and work being done in the name of Presbyterian Social Witness.

2. **Taking Care.** Last year saw Taking Care organise and deliver 132 training sessions at congregational and regional level and already this year 5 designated person training events have been organised and Mrs Deborah Webster and Mr Geoff Marshall have undertaken the commitment given by the General Assembly to train all ministers in Taking Care procedures.

3. The Taking Care Office has processed over 2,000 Access (NI) forms and over 100 Garda Vetting Forms in the past year.

4. The office has also dealt with 42 incidents ranging from general concerns in relation to inappropriate behaviour, bullying, social network issues, to self-harm and suicide.

5. **We Care 4u leaflets** have been rebranded and were launched by the Moderator.

6. **A Taking Care Conference** was held on Saturday 12 April in Assembly Buildings. The main speaker, Kathy Bell from *The Big House*, spoke on self-

harm and there were seminars dealing with bullying, welcoming children with additional needs and the reality of pornography and its effects on our Church and young people.

7. **‘Training the Trainers.’** This new initiative in partnership with Union College, was rolled out in May this year. The course involves 2 full days and 1 residential to improve the delivery of our Taking Care training. Thanks to Deborah Webster (Co-ordinator) for the organisation and enthusiasm in bringing this initiative to life and to Deborah and Amanda Kyle (Administrator) for excellent results in the recent Access NI audit.

8. **Disability, Health and Well-being.** The ‘Breaking the Silence’ Conference organised in conjunction with SPUD welcomed 140 delegates who listened to an informed debate about the issues facing young people today. The Committee also looked at guidelines for people with visual impairments and the size, style and colour of fonts to be used in printed articles and in powerpoint presentations. This will be a valuable resource for Congregations.

9. **Learning Disability.** Life has also been busy for residents and staff in Aaron House and tenants in Willow Brook and Topley Terrace. Thanks as always go to the staff, volunteers and Local Support Committee members and Friends of groups who make these things possible, especially Denise Keegan and Clare McAleese. God’s richest blessing is offered to Clare McAleese, Project Manager at Willow Brook and Topley Terrace as she leaves to take up a post with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Willow Brook and Topley Terrace have been validated by Supporting People, the main funders and both Willow Brook and Aaron House have received positive Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority Inspection Reports. Aaron House continues to provide respite care for up to twelve individuals throughout the year. This is an invaluable service for these families. Aaron House Day Care continues to meet the needs of thirteen individuals. The Advisory Group on Learning Disability also made a submission to the Stormont Assembly on Post 19 Special Educational Needs Education Training and Employment and highlighted the need for additional places to be available in Adult Centres.

10. **PCI Family Holiday.** The annual PCI Family Holiday in Lisnaskea was held at Easter. Thanks to the Rev Stuart Finlay for organizing, the Rev Johnny Moxen as the guest speaker and ensuring the Youth Team are recruited and trained for this event. As ever, gratitude is expressed for the on-going financial support of Presbyterian Orphan and Children’s Society.

11. **PCI Counselling.** Counsellors under the watchful eye of Stephanie Windrum are continuing to receive training and supervision. An extra 7 Counsellors have now been equipped to provide couples counselling and, due to the complexity of cases presenting, there is a need for specialized training in suicide, OCD, childhood abuse and same-sex attraction. With a move from group supervision to individual supervision more time and finance will be required, but the benefits will ensure the service will continue to offer excellent resources for those who are in need of support and guidance. The audit to determine need and demand for counselling in other areas of the island has been completed, and is hoped to address the needs for PCI Counselling and its development.

12. **Flourish.** A recent resource from Flourish will also be made available to ministers, dealing with suicide and mental health issues, and providing advice for prayers and sermons.

13. **Denegarth House** will be developed into a counselling and training resource.

14. **Lawnfield Residential Facility.** The Board has agreed to respond to a request from the Disabled Christian Fellowship for the Board of Social Witness to take on the management of Lawnfield Residential facility. This complex, in Newcastle, is currently offering holiday and respite accommodation for 20 people and it is hoped that the discussions and approvals will be gained for Lawnfield House to be added to the projects already being managed.

ANNE TOLLAND, Convener

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. The Adult Services Committee acknowledges the commitment and dedication of staff; members of the Local Advisory Committee and volunteers in meeting the strategic objectives of the work for which they have responsibility.

2. **THOMPSON HOUSE.** Thompson House operates not just to meet the accommodation needs of 19 men but complies with Probation Board Northern Ireland standards and the governance set by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate. It works closely with other Criminal Justice Agencies, including Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland, Probation Board Northern Ireland, Criminal Justice Inspectorate and the Prison Service to ensure the protection of the community and to develop their trust and confidence in its service provision.

3. Statistics show that there is a lower rate of re-conviction by offenders while living in approved accommodation. This illustrates the contribution of Thompson House to crime reduction and public protection.

4. It is now 18 months since the residents moved back into the refurbished accommodation. Unfortunately, paint bombs, stones and eggs continue to be thrown at the building, along with protest demonstrations being held outside the premises. This is difficult for staff and residents and the prayers of our Church for this situation are needed.

5. David Farrow, Director at Thompson House, continues to encourage a range of projects and activities to be undertaken by the residents. Initiatives range from guitar lessons, drug awareness sessions and cookery skills. Two Christianity Explored courses have been run with 6 attending the first course regularly and 4 residents at the second course. The Board acknowledges that there is merit in a Programme based approach in working with residents. These programmes should give skills and a new routine to those leaving prison.

6. The Prison Fellowship has facilitated a Sycamore Tree Course which focuses on Restorative Justice using Zaccheus as the model and 5 residents have attended.

7. Many of the residents have mental health and drug issues and this is often challenging for staff to deal with, but the staff team continues without complaint to work closely with these men in difficult circumstances. Regrettably one of the residents died from a drugs related incident.

8. The Thompson House Advisory Group has developed with the addition of some new members and is now undertaking Monthly Unannounced Visits.

Supporting People (Northern Ireland Housing Executive), our funders, have undertaken a Validation Visit to ensure compliance with their standards.

9. **Fresh Start Initiative.** The Fresh Start volunteer initiative in Hydebank Prison is seen by the Prison Service as a vital part of its commitment to the development of the prisoners. To date, 10 volunteer mentors are working with prisoners in Hydebank Young Offenders Centre, mainly in developing literacy and numeracy skills. This project involves close working between the Board of Social Witness and the Northern Ireland Prison Service in all aspects from recruitment of volunteers to their training and familiarisation with prison regimes.

10. **CARLISLE HOUSE.** Referrals from the Belfast and Northern Health and Social Care Trust remain constant and the six-week residential programme provided is highly regarded. The percentage of residents who complete the treatment process is 70.2%. This is in comparison to the National Treatment Agency figure of 48%.

11. The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority undertook an Inspection in November 2013 which resulted in a positive Inspection Report (www.rqia.org.uk).

12. The Board has been involved in discussions with the Public Health Agency regarding the Bamford Consultation for Tier 4 Services and is awaiting the outcome of this process so that strategic direction can be planned. Carlisle House could become one of two rehabilitation centres in Northern Ireland.

13. The Pharmaware Project has been very successful and it is hoped to run this project again. Topics covered included managing depression and smoking cessation. The Service User Group continues to meet and support former residents.

14. A range of activities and group sessions are organised for residents which include Art Therapy. The involvement of residents in staff recruitment interviews is being considered.

15. The restructuring of the Administration Team is complete and this has reduced costs along with greater utilisation of resources.

16. Productive meetings have also been held regarding future funding agreements with the Health and Social Care Board. There was a commitment from the commissioners to ensuring service providers were sustainable and that there was parity across the service providers.

17. **GRAY'S COURT.** Gray's Court provides support accommodation for up to 7 individuals. Funding was secured from Supporting People for an additional support worker for weekends and evenings and Roy Warke has commenced in this position.

18. Gray's Court had a period of low occupancy levels at the end of 2013 but this has improved in recent months. Frances Craig, Support Worker, ensures that a variety of programmes of outings, activities and healthy eating initiatives are provided.

19. A recent Supporting People validation was also positive. These validations show our compliance with our funders' standards.

COLIN MEGAW, Convener

SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES

1. The Committee continues to deal with a small number of pastoral issues related to the wider Church. The booklet *Getting Married* was launched at last year's General Assembly, was well received and is already in its second print. The Committee is currently drafting a similar resource on bereavement, to be launched later in the year.

2. The *Praying Scriptures* resource is being well used and is to be added to.

CHARLES McMULLEN, Convener

APPENDIX 1**STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2018****Strategic Objective 1**

“The Board shall deliver an effective Social Witness service for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to the wider community”

Key Tasks:

- ii By following the demands of the General Assembly.
- ii By the provision of Residential, Nursing, Supported Housing, Respite, Day Care and Community Based Care.
- ii In partnership with appropriate organisations.
- ii By the promotion of volunteering.
- ii By responding to the needs of the Social Care and Faith Sectors.
- ii By commenting on Social Issues.
- ii By supporting those with additional needs.

Strategic Objective 2

“The Board shall effectively communicate to its members, the wider Church and community, the work, services and achievements of the Board.”

Key Tasks:

- ii By the use of a vibrant fresh Web-site.
- ii By the production of regular News Sheets.
- ii By the organising of regular training events, seminars and conferences.
- ii By the establishment of a Staff Award Scheme.
- ii By the generation of regular Press Statements.

Strategic Objective 3

“Specialist Ministries shall promote and support all the work of Health Care, Criminal Justice, University and Forces Chaplains. Develop and support our Church's Ministry to the Deaf Community.”

Key Tasks:

- ü Continue the support of all Chaplains.
- ü Implement the Prison Chaplains Review.
- ü Continue to lobby on behalf of Health Care Chaplains.
- ü Promote opportunities within HMF for Chaplains.
- ü Establish Local Support Groups within our University Chaplaincies.
- ü Continue to support and develop our Ministry to the Deaf Community.

Strategic Objective 4

“Older People Services will deliver a high standard of day, residential, nursing and respite care to all our users and campaign and raise awareness on behalf of older people issues and services. Support the development of the Pastoral Care Support of those requiring support in their own homes.”

Key Tasks:

- ü Carry out a comprehensive survey of all our Units.
- ü Continue to consider the relocation of Ard Cluan House and York House.
- ü Continue to challenge Government Policy in relation to ‘Transforming Your Care’.
- ü Explore opportunities to provide Home Care Services.
- ü Promote and develop a range of Respite and Short-term care.
- ü Explore models of Home Care which will involve Congregations.

Strategic Objective 5

“Family Services will promote a healthier family life and the physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing of our members. Continue to develop services for those who are vulnerable or with additional needs. Actively raise awareness of the impact of Welfare and Health Reforms. Support the work of the Taking Care Programme, PCI Counselling, PCI Family Holiday and South Belfast Friendship House.”

Key Tasks:

- ü Develop the work of the Disability Health and Wellbeing Committee.
- ü Facilitate and fund the Taking Care Business Plan.
- ü Explore the feasibility of a Respite Unit in Aaron House.
- ü Promote an Addiction free lifestyle.
- ü Develop Denegarth House (Counselling Services and Horticulture / Chickens Projects)
- ü Promote Getting On Board Volunteer Programme.
- ü Develop Christmas Cracker throughout PCI.

Strategic Objective 6

“Adult Services shall manage and develop the work of Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray’s Court. To contribute to an addiction and crime free society.”

Key Tasks:

- ü Establish a closer collaboration between Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray’s Court.
- ü Develop a Crime Reduction and Life Skills Programme for Thompson House.
- ü Participate fully in the Regional Drug Strategy Programme.

Strategic Objective 7

“The Financial Management, Personnel Functions, Information Technology and Property Management of the Board is supported by the Finance and Personnel Board.”

Key Tasks:

- ü To continue to enforce strict Financial Controls.
- ü To establish more appropriate funding streams with Stakeholders.
- ü To explore possible savings through group purchasing.
- ü To ensure funds from capital projects are appropriately controlled.
- ü To agree a protocol for the use of money given as a gift or bequest.
- ü To project manage all new developments and capital Programmes.
- ü To explore other sources of funding and resources for our work.
- ü To improve on our recruitment and appointment procedures.
- ü To monitor all Board staff against the appropriate Professional Codes.
- ü To explore and implement an appropriate Appraisal Scheme.
- ü To further reduce our use of agency staff.
- ü To implement Data Protection Act compliance.
- ü To explore appropriate I.T. systems to assist in the overall care of users.
- ü To deliver training to enable widespread use of IT in all BSW facilities.
- ü To maintain all property and equipment to an acceptable standard.
- ü To further develop cyclical maintenance in each of our properties.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly commend to the prayers of the Church the work of Health Care and Prison Chaplaincy in a time of on-going uncertainty and change.
3. That the General Assembly continue to monitor the debate and impact of Welfare Reform and respond as appropriate.

4. That the General Assembly support a comprehensive review of University and Further Education Chaplains.

5. That the General Assembly communicate to the (Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety) their on-going concerns with regards to Health Care Services and the on-going concerns in relation to the “Transforming Your Care Review”.

6. That the General Assembly acknowledge the huge sacrifice paid by so many in the First World War and encourage acts of Remembrance at the appropriate time.

7. That the resignation of the Rev Bobby Liddle as Convener of the Board of Social Witness be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that _____ be appointed in his place.

8. That the resignation of the Very Rev Dr Donald Patton as Convener of Specialist Ministries be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that _____ be appointed in his place.

FOR INFORMATION

The following funds are not under the control of the General Assembly and the Reports are included for information only. The change to the Constitution requires the approval of the General Assembly.

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN’S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES’ FUND

The Rev W P H Erskine reports:

1. The Directors report that, during the last financial year which ended 31 December 2013, 93 beneficiaries (41 in the Old Age Fund, 36 in the Women’s Fund and 16 in the Indigent Ladies’ Fund) received grants.

2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year is as follows:

Beneficiaries	Old	Presbyterian	Indigent	TOTAL
Receiving Quarterly Grant	Age Fund	Women’s Fund	Ladies Fund	
At 1 January 2013	36	35	17	88
New Grants Provided	3	1	-	4
Deaths	(1)	(2)	-	(3)
Grants no longer required	(3)	(1)	-	(4)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
As at 31 December 2013	35	33	17	85
Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	3	3	-	6
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	4	4	-	8
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
No of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	42	40	17	99
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £148,719 (£62,483 from the Old Age Fund, £58,605 from the Women's Fund and £27,631 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. An annual grant of £1,360, paid quarterly, was sent to beneficiaries during the year (2012: £1,300).

5. A 'Special Gift' of £340 (2012: £325) 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.

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in Ireland to meet in Belfast on 2, June, 2014.

The Memorial of the Directors of the Old Age Fund Respectfully Showeth:

The Old Age, Presbyterian Women's and Indigent Ladies Funds provide assistance to those in financial need and who are connected with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Applications for assistance are though the minster of the Congregation and help is provided through modest quarterly or one-off exceptional needs grants.

The Old Age Fund presently operates under a Constitution approved by the General Assembly in 1968 (original 1906). The Presbyterian Women's Fund (incorporating the Indigent Ladies Fund) operates under a court scheme approved in 1992. The Funds are managed by a Board of twenty seven Directors and the constitution of the Old Age Fund provides that not more than six of the Directors may be appointed by the General Assembly or their appropriate Board.

The Code provides in Para 281(1)(e) that the Social Witness Board "relate the work of the Presbyterian Old Age Fund and similar funds or agencies to the general social witness of the Church" and that Board is presently responsible for the appointment of the six directors referred to above.

A copy of the accounts of the Funds is included in the Book of Account presented to the General Assembly.

The Directors of the Funds, having reviewed the present governance arrangements, have agreed that it is now appropriate to combine the three funds into one fund which they plan to name the "Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund".

A proposed constitution is appended.

The present Constitution of the Old Age Fund states in Rule 17 that “The Constitution of the Fund may be altered by two-thirds of the persons present and entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting, but notice of the alteration proposed must be given in the notice convening the meeting and any such alteration must be approved by a resolution of the General Assembly before it will take effect.”

At the Annual General Meeting of the Funds on 28 March the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund was approved.

If the General Assembly approves the amended constitution the Directors intend to seek the approval of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and will then seek to register the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund as a charity.

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly to approve the revised constitution.

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

Adopted by the Directors at their meeting on 28 March 2014 and by the Annual General meeting on the same date.

ROY VALLELY, (President)
WPH ERSKINE, (Honorary Secretary)

**CONSTITUTION OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND RELIEF FUND**

(Incorporating the Old Age, Presbyterian Women's and Indigent Ladies Funds)

1. DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATION

1.1 In this Constitution, the following expressions have the specified meaning

- (a) "Applicable Charities Legislation" means the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 1964, the Charities (Northern Ireland) Order 1987 and the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to the extent that they are for the time being in force.
- (b) "the Board" means the Board of the Trustees of the Charity.
- (c) "the Charity" means the charity referred to in Clause 2 of the Constitution.
- (d) "the Code" means the book of The Constitution and Government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
- (e) "Financial Expert" means a body which is reasonably believed by the Trustees to be qualified to give the relevant advice and/or provide the relevant services by its ability in and practical experience of financial and other matters relating to the investment.
- (f) "the Fund" means the investments, bank balances and any other property belonging to the Charity.
- (g) "General Assembly" means the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
- (h) "General Meeting" means an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Charity as the case may be.
- (i) "Objects" means the objects of the Charity as defined in Clause 3.
- (j) "Trustee Report" means the Report of the Trustees to be submitted at each Annual General Meeting of the Charity pursuant to Clause 10.5 below.
- (k) "Trustees" means and includes the trustees or trustee for the time being of the Charity and "Trustee" means any one of the trustees.

2. NAME OF THE CHARITY

2.1 The Charity shall be called the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund.

3. THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS

3.1 The Charity's Objects are to promote the following purposes for the public benefit-

- 3.1.1 the prevention of poverty; and
- 3.1.2 the relief of poverty of those under the pastoral care of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; and
- 3.1.3 the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

4. POWERS

4.1 The Charity has the following powers, which may be exercised only in promoting the Objects:

- 4.1.1 to provide financial assistance to those in demonstrable financial need who are under the pastoral care of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland;
- 4.1.2 to provide grants to assist in the provision of facilities, equipment, premises, resources and other items which would not otherwise be provided from public funds;
- 4.1.3 to promote, encourage, carry out or commission research, surveys, studies or other work and to publish the findings;
- 4.1.4 to provide advice and other charitable services;
- 4.1.5 to publish or distribute information in any format;
- 4.1.6 to cooperate with other bodies;
- 4.1.7 to enter into any funding or other arrangement with any government (local, national or international) and to obtain from such government any rights, concessions, privileges, licences and/or permits;
- 4.1.8 to establish, participate in and/or support (financially or otherwise) groups, forums, associations, federations, or organisations with purposes that are within the Objects;
- 4.1.9 to set up, make grants to, support or administer other charities and undertake and execute charitable trusts;
- 4.1.10 to raise funds but not by means of taxable trading;
- 4.1.11 to accept any gift of money, property or other assets whether subject to any special trusts or not;
- 4.1.12 to acquire or hire property, rights or privileges of any kind and to construct, restore, improve, maintain and alter such property;
- 4.1.13 to let or dispose of or turn to account property of any kind (but only in accordance with the restrictions imposed by Applicable Charities Legislation (if any));
- 4.1.14 to pay any rent and other outgoings or expenses and execute and do all such other instruments, acts and things as may be requisite in connection with the use, maintenance, upkeep, expansion, alteration and improvement of such property;
- 4.1.15 to purchase, lease or hire and operate and maintain any equipment necessary or convenient for the administration of the Charity;
- 4.1.16 to make grants or loans of money and to give guarantees;
- 4.1.17 to set aside funds for special purposes or as reserve against future expenditure;
- 4.1.18 to deposit or invest funds in any manner (but to invest only after obtaining advice from a Financial Expert, unless the Trustees reasonably conclude that in all the circumstances it is unnecessary or inappropriate to do so, and having regard to the suitability of investment and the need for diversification);
- 4.1.19 to insure the property of the Charity against any foreseeable risk and take out other insurance policies to protect the Charity when required;

- 4.1.20 to purchase insurance designed to indemnify the Trustees against any personal liability in respect of any negligence, default, breach of trust or breach of duty committed by them in their capacity as Trustees provided that the terms of such insurance exclude the provision of indemnity for liability incurred:
- 4.1.20.1 to pay a fine imposed in criminal proceedings;
 - 4.1.20.2 to pay a sum payable to a regulatory authority by way of a penalty in respect of non compliance with any requirement of a regulatory nature (howsoever arising);
 - 4.1.20.3 by a Trustee in defending criminal proceedings in which he is convicted of an offence arising out of any fraud or dishonesty or wilful or reckless misconduct by him, or
 - 4.1.20.4 by a Trustee, to the Charity that arises out of any conduct which he knew (or must reasonably be assumed to have known) was not in the interests of the Charity or in the case of which he did not care whether it was in the interests of the Charity or not;
- 4.1.21 to employ paid or unpaid agents, staff, professionals or advisers;
- 4.1.22 to enter into contracts to provide services to or on behalf of other bodies;
- 4.1.23 to do anything else within the law which the Trustees believe will promote or help promote the Objects;
- 4.1.24 to arrange for the Fund or other property of the Charity to be held in the name of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland or a nominee (being a corporate body controlled by the Financial Expert acting under the instructions of the Trustees) and to pay any reasonable fees required;
- 4.1.25 to adopt and pursue the ethical investment policy adopted from time to time by the General Assembly; and may so invest the monies of the Charity not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments, securities or properties as may be thought fit and left in such condition (if any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law;
- 4.1.26 to remunerate any person, firm or company rendering services to or for the Charity.

5. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

5.1 A Trustee must be a natural person aged 18 or over and a communicant member of a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

5.2 A Trustee may not appoint an alternate trustee or anyone to act on his or her behalf at meetings of the Trustees.

5.3 Trustees have control of the Charity and its property and funds.

5.4 The Board shall consist of a maximum of sixteen Trustees. The Trustees may appoint a President, a Vice President, an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary from amongst their number. Not more than one half of the

Board of Trustees may be Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Not more than one quarter of the Board of Trustees may be appointed by the General Assembly or its appropriate Board and any person so appointed by the General Assembly or its appropriate Board shall hold office for one year and may be eligible for re-election.

5.5 At the date of adoption of this Constitution the Trustees shall be:

Mr David Boyd	Rev R Vallely
Dr Pamela McKee	Miss E Nicholl
Mrs E P Crossley	Rev T J McCormick
Mrs W Bristow	Mr R Kerr
Mr C Graham	Sir John Pringle
Rev W P H Erskine	Mr A J Rankin
Mr L Conway OBE	Mrs E McCormack
Rev R J Beggs	Mrs E Simpson

5.6 At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees following the adoption of this Constitution an Interim President, Interim Vice President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary shall be appointed each of whom shall remain in office until the first Annual General meeting referred to below.

5.7 Every Trustee must sign a declaration of willingness to act as a Trustee of the Charity before he or she is eligible to vote at any meeting of the Trustees.

5.8 A technical defect in the appointment of a Trustee of which the Trustees are unaware at the time does not invalidate decisions taken at a meeting.

5.9 Any casual vacancies occurring amongst the Trustees shall be filled by the Board and the persons so co-opted shall hold office for the remainder of the period for which the persons replaced would have held office.

5.10 The Board shall make such regulations as it thinks fit from time to time for the management of its business and meetings.

5.11 Six Trustees shall form a quorum for all meetings.

6. POWERS OF THE TRUSTEES

6.1 The Trustees shall manage the business of the Charity and may exercise all the powers of the Charity unless they are subject to any restriction as imposed by the Applicable Charities Legislation, the Code or any resolution passed pursuant to the Code.

6.2 Any meetings of Trustees at which a quorum is present at the time the relevant decision is made may exercise all the powers exercisable by the Trustees.

6.3 The Trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee consisting of not fewer than four Trustees appointed by them.

7. PROCEEDINGS OF TRUSTEES

7.1 The Trustees may regulate the proceedings as they think fit, subject to the provisions of this constitution.

7.2 Any Trustee may call a meeting of the Trustees.

7.3 Questions arising at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes.

7.4 In the case of an equality of votes the person who is chairing the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

7.5 No decision may be made by a meeting of the Trustees unless a quorum is present at the time the decision is purported to be made.

7.6 A Trustee shall not be counted in the quorum present when any decision is made about a matter upon which that Trustee is not entitled to vote.

8. DECLARATION OF TRUSTEES' INTERESTS

8.1 A Trustee must declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which he or she has in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the Charity, or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the Charity which has not previously been declared. A Trustee must absent himself or herself from any discussions of the Trustees in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the Charity and any personal interest (including but not limited to any personal or financial interest) unless expressly invited to remain in order to provide information.

9. GENERAL MEETINGS

9.1 An Annual General Meeting of the Charity shall be held as soon as possible after each financial year end, at such time and place as the Trustees may from time to time determine. The persons entitled to attend and vote at such meeting shall be the Trustees.

9.2 At each Annual General Meeting of the Charity one-third of the Trustees, other than the President, Vice President and those Trustees appointed by the General Assembly or its appropriate Board, shall retire. The retiring Trustees shall be the longest in office. Any Trustee, who retires in accordance with this clause 9.2, if willing to act, shall be eligible for re-election. At each such Meeting, an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary shall be appointed for a term of one year and may be eligible for re-election.

9.3 Auditors shall be appointed at each Annual General Meeting of the Charity. Retiring Auditors shall be eligible for re-election.

9.4 The President shall be elected by the Trustees at the first Annual General Meeting after the adoption of this Constitution for a term of three years and may be re-elected for one further term.

9.5 A Vice President shall be elected by the Trustees at the first Annual General Meeting after the adoption of this Constitution for a term of three years and may be re-elected for one further term.

9.6 At each Annual General Meeting of the Charity a full statement, certified by the auditors, of the financial position, including all investments shall be submitted together with a Trustee Report. A copy of the accounts and Trustee Report shall be furnished to the next meeting of the General Assembly.

9.7 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Charity shall be convened upon the written request of not fewer than three Trustees. Such written request shall include full details of the business to be transacted at such Extraordinary General Meeting.

9.8 No business shall be transacted at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Charity unless it has been notified to each of the Trustees pursuant to 9.7 above.

9.9 Notice of the holding of a General Meeting shall be given to the Trustees in writing, by post or electronic mail, not later than fourteen days before the date fixed for the meeting.

10. ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

10.1 The financial year of the Charity shall end on 31 December or such other date as may be determined by the Trustees.

10.2 The Trustees shall maintain such Bank Accounts for the Charity as they consider appropriate and every sum received on account of the Charity shall be paid to the credit of such accounts. All cheques and orders for the payment of money from such accounts shall be signed by two persons as approved from time to time by the Board

10.3 The Trustees shall keep a minute book and proper books of account for the Charity.

11. ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION

11.1 The Constitution of the Charity may be altered by two-thirds of the persons present and entitled to vote at a General Meeting, but notice of the alteration proposed must be given in the notice convening the meeting and any such alteration must be approved by a resolution of the General Assembly before it will take effect.

12. DISSOLUTION

12.1 In the event of the dissolution of the Charity, any assets remaining after satisfaction of the debts and liabilities of the Charity shall be transferred to a suitable Charity having objects the same or materially similar to those of the Charity as the Trustees from time to time may decide and subject always to approval by resolution of the General Assembly.

BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Interim Convener: Rev GRAEME KENNEDY
Acting Director: Miss BARBARA McDADE

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry exists to provide support and encouragement to every Congregation and member of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as they engage in the task of passing on the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord to generation after generation. This covenantal responsibility is being undertaken in a context of rapid change in technology, ethics and culture. Recognising these challenges the Board continues to support a thoughtful and biblical approach to the discipling of our children and young people.

2. The constantly changing world of social media purports to offer a form of online 'community' for young people while, at the same time, isolating them from genuine engagement through constant use of mobile phones, tablets and other devices. The Board recognises that part of the challenge for the Church is to demonstrate real community built on faith in Christ and lived out in love for our young people.

3. The Board is encouraged by the discussions on human sexuality taking place at a wider level in the Presbyterian Church. As so many young people struggle with issues of identity it is encouraging to see the Church seeking to develop a biblical, loving and thoughtful approach to this issue. Any results from this on-going discussion will clearly have implications for youth and children's ministry as well as every other area of congregational life and witness.

4. The Board's remit is to support, equip and resource ministry amongst those aged 0-25. The key stages of development within this wide range are identified and given equal priority within the Board's work (children – 0-11 years; youth – 12-17 years; young adults – 18-25 years). Each stage in development is equally reflected in the work of the Board and its Development Officers. Ruth Bromley is Children's Development Officer; Graeme Thompson, Youth Development Officer and Carol Johnston, Young Adults' Development Officer. These three posts ensure that every Congregation has access to vital expertise, support and advice as they pursue their ministry among children and young people.

5. The potential changes being proposed to the structures of our General Assembly Boards will mean significant change for the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. If, as proposed, the work of the Board comes under the wider work of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, the Assembly Committee for Youth, Children's and Family Strategy and Co-ordination will continue to draw attention to the ministry to children, young people and young adults as a significant priority in the life of our denomination and of every Congregation within it.

6. Currently the work of the Board is delivered through five Assembly Committees. The Board is grateful for the work of conveners, working group chairs and hundreds of volunteers who work tirelessly throughout the year

planning, thinking, praying and delivering so much of the Board's work. The Board is grateful to God for all those who continue to serve the work of the Board with wisdom, grace and deep concern for reaching the next generation.

- The Training Committee continues to provide help and expertise to leaders through Road Trip, Mission Outreach Training (MOT) and the Certificates in Youth and Children's Ministry and has been encouraged by the response to the Close to Home initiative as leaders are helped to rethink and reapply covenantal theology throughout the youth and children's ministry of the Congregations.
- The Ministry Events Committee is encouraged by the response to the Little Day Out for pre-school children and by the fact that over 3,500 children and young people from across Ireland have taken opportunities to meet, worship God and be disciplined together.
- The renamed Discipleship Committee (formerly Ministry Opportunities Committee) continues to offer opportunities to young adults to grow in discipleship through engagement in mission at home and overseas as short-term volunteers and interns.
- The Ministry Resources Committee has launched Little Resources to help those engaged in ministry to under 5s, and has developed a new resource, 'Belong', to help young people to find their place as part of the Presbyterian family.

Full reports from each Committee follow later in this report.

7. The Board is grateful to all the volunteer leaders who work with children and young people across our Church as well as to those who serve in staff positions in local Congregations as full-time youth, children's or family workers. Congregations could not fulfil their covenantal responsibilities without their weekly sacrificial offering of time and talents in the service of God and young people. The training opportunities and resources provided by the Board are intended to help and equip these volunteers. The events run by the Board allow youth leaders together to give young people experiences that could not be provided by one Congregation alone. The discipleship opportunities provided by the Board give young adults the opportunity to learn, serve and grow in various contexts with the aim of equipping them for on-going service in the local Church.

8. The valuable work of the SPUD Youth Assembly was recognised this year in the Breaking the Silence Conference held in Assembly Buildings on Saturday 1 February 2014. After two passionate and articulate speeches from SPUD delegates at last year's Assembly on the subject of mental health in young people, this Conference was organised in conjunction with the Board of Social Witness and chaired by our SPUD delegates. It was an event which confronted head on the issue of mental health in young people and was very much appreciated by those who attended. SPUD continues to engage with the work of youth participation across our denomination through the 'Grow your own SPUDs' programme.

9. Once again the Board is deeply grateful for the work carried out by those employed to serve the Church through the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry – Miss Barbara McDade (Acting Director), Mrs Ruth Bromley (Children's Development Officer), Mrs Carol Johnston (Young Adults' Development Officer), Dr Graeme Thompson (Youth Development Officer) who are supported by a professional and hardworking administrative team led by Mrs

Lois Gibson (Senior Administrative Officer). The Board is indebted to Mr David Pattison for his expertise in organising and compiling the Board finances.

10. The Acting Director and Development Officers are available to provide support, guidance and advice in any aspect of youth and children's ministry. The Board encourages Congregations to draw on their professional support and expertise. Congregations can also make use of a consultation process which allows for the review of ministry to children, young people and young adults at a local level. This service has been widely used and proved to be of great benefit to the Congregations which have gone through it. Requests for consultations should be directed to the YAC Office.

11. The Board has expressed its concern over the proposed changes to the Guides' promise and the implications this has for Guide groups that are part of our Congregations. The Acting Director, Barbara McDade, along with Dr Rob Craig and others have been actively involved in representing the Church's views to the Guides. The General Board has also expressed its concern over this matter and discussions continue.

Rev Jonathan Moxen

12. The Board records its deep and heartfelt gratitude to the Rev Jonathan Moxen for his 6 years of service as Board Convener and, before that, as Convener of the Events Committee. Much of the success of the MAD weekend is down to Jonathan's role for a number of years as chair of the MAD working group. Jonathan has brought passion, vision, dedication and humour to his years as Board Convener. He has led the Board through an important process of management change and renewal and has given unstintingly of his time to the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

Ms Lynda Gould

13. The Board records its sincere thanks to Lynda Gould for the work she undertook as Convener of the Research and Education Committee. As someone who has been involved in youth work for many years, Lynda brought a deep concern for how the Church addresses the needs of young people both inside and outside of the Church.

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES

The Rev David Stanfield, Interim Centre Director for the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland, reports:

1. I am pleased to report another successful year in my role as Director of the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland (CYMI), during which Youth Link NI also celebrated 21 years of Christian leadership training firmly rooted in the contexts of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Over that period Youth Link has become the largest provider of leadership training in the youth sector across the United Kingdom and Ireland.

2. This year our third cohort of students graduated and I am able to report that, as in previous years, almost all are working in the areas of ministry they feel called towards.

3. CYMI now has graduates working in Australia, North America and England though the majority have remained in Ireland, particularly Northern Ireland. While most graduates remain in youth ministry roles some use the skills developed in other contexts, one is now a candidate for ministry in our denomination. The fact that at every level we seek to encourage and enable students to integrate theology and youth work theory and apply both to their practice contexts means that our graduates should be well prepared to minister in a wide variety of roles.

4. The course seeks to provide an intentional environment where students (who we regard as missionaries in training) can develop their awareness of 'call'; a maturing Christian character; and the qualities and skills that enable them to minister with competence in a variety of contexts, particularly focused on young people which include the age range 4-25.

5. There is strong evidence that our students grow in each of these characteristics but during this past year I have been conducting research into how we can improve the quality of opportunity for students and staff to grow spiritually and this research will lead to an even greater focus on the spiritual formation as a critical element of the formation of Christians as they seek to minister in the name of Jesus.

6. In this past year we have welcomed students who have transferred from other youth ministry and youth work courses in Scotland and England as well as Ireland as the reputation of the quality of the qualification continues to grow. We are delighted with the number of PCI Churches that are benefiting directly by hosting students for the duration of their course. These placements enable students to undergo training within the context of a local Congregation, while the Congregation benefits from the contribution a student can bring to their ministry amongst young people.

7. The training of students for ministry and mission is a very labour intensive process and almost 140 people are actively involved in teaching, supervising and supporting the students on the course. We have an excellent team of quality module tutors, who are mostly practitioners, with expertise in their particular area of teaching. As a result we are able to integrate theology, theory and practice into every aspect of the course.

8. I am encouraged that there are now some young adults applying because they have seen the difference the course has made in the lives of graduates who are now demonstrating significant impact in various ministries across Northern Ireland and beyond.

9. Once again I wish to record my gratitude to the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and 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 provided practice contexts for our students.

The Rev John Peacock, Community Relations Manager at Youth Link: NI, reports:

1. In a divided society, as a partnership of Churches working together, Youth Link aims to contribute to a more inclusive and welcoming society by

enabling young people and youth practitioners to build positive sustainable relationships within and between communities through training and empowerment programmes.

2. Over the past number of years Youth Link has developed a coherent pathway to youth work training. Young people can begin at Open College Network Level 1, progress through levels 2 and 3, complete a Certificate in Community Youth Work and then progress on to degree level either with ourselves on the CYMI degree or at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown.

3. Youth Link staff have settled into our new training and resource facilities on the Springfield Road enabling us to further develop the Centre for Youth Ministry degree programme, our OCN accredited Youth Work and Community Relations training and our participation work with young people.

4. Having relocated to an area of division and socio-economic need, Youth Link developed the Apprenticeship Peace Programme. 68 participants from Church, faith and community-based groups in North and West Belfast have completed the programme. 10 have moved on to study youth work at degree level, many being the first in their family to study 3rd level education. Funding is currently being sought to continue this programme.

5. Youth Link's work continues to attract 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 continues to focus on areas where the infrastructure and confidence of the Protestant community has traditionally been weak.

6. Youth Link and YMCA Ireland are faith-based organisations committed to embedding the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into all aspects of their ethos, policy and practice. As such, we have entered a partnership to implement the Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy, which provides funding to develop an initiative which is designed to empower youth practitioners and young people to be key players in building a peaceful, just and inclusive society.

7. I would like to thank the Presbyterian representatives on the management council of Youth Link for their on-going support and encouragement.

TRAINING COMMITTEE

1. The Training Committee continues to endeavour to ensure the provision of high quality, localised training for those involved in youth and children's ministry. The Committee thanks God for His guidance and blessing on the Committee and working groups during the past year, and expresses its appreciation to all who contribute to this aspect of the Board's work.

2. When it comes to training there appears to be a mindset in many of our Congregations that the need for regular training applies to someone else! The Committee strongly encourages ministers and other congregational representatives to promote the necessity of training within their Congregations and ensure that their children and youth leaders are informed and encouraged to make use of the training opportunities on offer.

Certificates in Youth and Children's Ministry

3. The Certificate in Youth Ministry course has again been facilitated this year on Monday nights at Union Theological College, Belfast, with the course also taking place in 1st Coleraine Presbyterian on Thursday evenings. It is anticipated that 35 people in total will successfully graduate from this certificate course in May. In addition to the course at Union, the Training Committee plans for the course to once again take place at a different regional venue during 2014-15.

4. The Certificate in Children's Ministry Course ran in Union Theological College and an additional course was also in Downshire Road Presbyterian, Newry. These courses are being completed by 39 participants in total. The plan for 2014-15 is to hold this certificate course in Union as well as at a further regional location, most likely to be in the west of the province.

Road Trip

5. The 2013-14 Road Trip will soon have taken place in 9 different locations with participants having had the opportunity to learn in areas including 'Me... a children's ministry leader?'; 'Relationship: fuelling youth ministry person to person'; 'Creative ways to teach the Bible'; 'Emerging adults: engaging effectively with 18-25s'; 'Leadership: how your life can impact others'; and a further stream particularly aimed at ministers and elders called 'Keeping close to home: make your youth and children's ministry a success.'

6. The Committee plan to hold Road Trip training in 9 locations in 2014-15 following the policy of returning to each geographical area at approximately the same time of year in order to allow ministers and youth leaders to build it into their Congregation's annual calendar. Next year's Road Trip locations will include 2 in the Republic of Ireland.

Young Adults Ministry Training Sessions

7. Plans are developing for the provision of a short training course in the area of ministry to young adults. The Committee envisages that such a course would take place over 2 Saturdays or 3 evenings and include topics such as, for example, why young adults ministry is needed, young adults culture, small groups, leadership development, keeping young adults connected, and integration into the Church family. Details of this course will follow in due course.

Mission Outreach Training Day

8. The Mission Outreach Training Day took place in June 2013 with over 200 in attendance. This training is aimed at all leaders and helpers who are taking part in some form of summer mission to children and young people. The planning for a 2014 event is well under way. The Committee would encourage Congregations to understand that this is a training opportunity for all those serving in their own congregational holiday Bible clubs and other summer activities, in addition to those who are serving as part of PCI Summer Teams and Camps. As in previous years the training day will have a range of seminars and workshops aimed at everyone from the most experienced team leaders and members right through to someone who is being a helper for the first time.

Close to Home

9. A total of 9 people have been trained in delivering the ParenTeen course, a course designed to encourage and equip parents in leading their teenagers in the Christian faith. By the summer of this year, ParenTeen training will have taken place at a total of 9 venues, with further venues planned for 2014-15.

10. The Training Committee, in conjunction with the Close to Home working group, are planning a 'Close to Home' one-day conference for ministers, elders, Church staff and leaders committed to passing on faith to the young within the covenant community. This conference will take place in early 2015 and is a follow-on from the successful Close to Home Conference which took place in April 2013. The conference will have both a theological and practical aspect to it. Theologically the concept of covenant theology will be explained, with further time being spent addressing the practical outworking of covenant theology in our Congregations.

Communicators' School

11. A Communicators' School is scheduled to take place in October 2014, with Duffy Robbins as the keynote speaker.

Ad Hoc Training

12. 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 opportunities on offer, along with training events such as ParenTeen and the Mission Outreach Training day. The Board recognises however that training requirements occasionally arise in Congregations which are not immediately addressed by the current courses or Road Trip. As a result the Board has developed a database of approved trainers who can deliver training on a wide variety of topics on an ad hoc basis if the need arises. Congregations or Presbyteries requesting training in a particular area of youth and children's ministry should contact the Youth and Children's Office.

Building Blocks Conferences

13. Building Blocks Conferences, run as a partnership between PCI, the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church, and Scripture Union, are now firmly established as an important training event for children's ministry leaders in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Conference took place in November 2013 at Wellington Presbyterian Church and All Hallows College, Drumcondra, Dublin on the theme of 'worship'. Plans are underway for another Building Blocks Conference this November when the theme for the Conference will be 'Messy Church'.

DARRAN McCORRISTON, Convener

DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE

1. The Discipleship Committee is committed to providing opportunities for young people and young adults to grow in their Christian faith through serving God and experiencing His enabling power in a variety of ministry contexts. The various working groups, leaders, mentors and volunteers endeavour to promote the core values of discipleship as they foster a culture where participants are encouraged to learn, serve and grow. Through its various ministries the Committee is helping to grow a generation of disciples who will mature in their desire to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. The opportunities for discipleship are manifold with outreach and mission teams serving both at home and overseas, residential camps, mentoring programmes and volunteering in local Congregations. In all this, the Board seeks to meet the challenges of ministry and mission in today's world. The Committee appreciate the many hours put into supporting this vital work by the field and administrative staff in the Youth and Children's Office.

Teams and Camps

2. The Board is passionate about encouraging and strengthening local Congregations in their missional outreach and continues to provide opportunities for young adults to serve on teams during the summer months. Across the whole island in rural, urban and provincial settings, teams are placed to work in partnership with local Congregations in the variety of ministry contexts the denomination serves.

3. The working group are constantly thinking of ways to expand and develop this work to help build capacity into local congregational life and witness. The introduction of a new Worship Camp, alongside Tech Camp provides specialist programmes for young people and young adults to grow in their gifts and seeks to encourage them to use these gifts within the context of their local Congregation.

4. The Committee encourages all leaders, volunteers and mentors to avail themselves of the training programme provided by the Mission Outreach Training day in June.

Volunteer and Intern Programme (VIP)

5. The VIP scheme continues to witness significant growth in its participants as they deepen in their faith and develop their gifts in a more full-time ministry capacity. Working closely with the minister of their placement Congregation, they can contribute to the expansion or consolidation of ministry already being undertaken by the Church. The VIPs are involved in a mentoring programme facilitated by the Young Adults' Development Officer and their post-VIP progress is followed with prayerful interest.

Overseas Opportunities Working Group

6. A joint initiative and partnership with the Board of Mission Overseas continues to develop and is responsible for the management of YAC Overseas Teams (Ignite Teams) and the international component of VIP. Working across the two Boards allows the facilitation of the exchange of information and expertise that is of benefit to the participants.

SPUD (Speaking, Participating, Understanding and Deciding)

7. The SPUD working group have continued to focus the direction of its work within Congregations. Workshops, services and special events are held locally to encourage Congregations as they seek to increase youth participation in their life and witness. Delegates continue to participate in General Assembly debates, Boards and Committees, bringing freshness and significant contributions to the Assembly. This past year SPUD partnered with the Board of Social Witness to promote an awareness of mental health through the Breaking the Silence Conference in February.

RICHARD HOUSTON, Convener

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to strive to provide the best possible resources for those engaged in ministry to children and young people. It is committed to fulfilling its role in equipping leaders and facilitators for the vital work they do among families throughout Ireland.

2. The Committee acknowledges the major contribution made to the work of the Board by the YAC staff, development officers, and members of the working groups. The Committee praises God for His faithfulness over this past year, and continues to seek His guidance as it endeavours to provide the materials necessary for this important ministry.

Website

3. The website continues to be well used and is a useful source of information on upcoming events and the on-going work of the Board. The Committee appreciates all the work Pamela Patton does in keeping the content up to date and the recent review undertaken by Ruth Bromley. Congregations can download a range of resources produced by the YAC Office, specifically written for use in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The latest content can be accessed by visiting the website at www.pciyac.org

Youth and Children's Project

4. The Committee has been greatly encouraged by the response to the 'Uzima 2012-13' project which has raised £75,000 (£45,000 for Ethiopia, £20,000 for Peru, and £10,000 for Friendship House).

5. Money continues to come in for the 'Places of Hope' 2013-14 project which will support the work of Rainbow House in Thailand, and provide resources for the children's ministry in the new Church in Mullingar.

6. The Youth and Children's Project for 2014-15 is 'Emmaus', the overseas focus will support the work of the Bible Society in Gujarat, India, with the home aspect resourcing a youth project in Donegal Town. The Project will support the distribution of Bible materials and discipling opportunities in both locations with children and young people.

Youth and Children's Workers

7. Full-time Youth and Children's Workers make a valuable contribution to the work of PCI as they seek to engage with children, young people and families within local Congregations. Special meetings are organised on a monthly basis to encourage these workers, and a retreat has been arranged for 7-8 May when Duffy and Maggie Robbins will be the speakers.

Guysmere Youth Centre

8. The Board agreed that the bungalow should be let whilst the Panel established under the General Board consider the long term options for the Centre. Some renovation work was necessary to bring the bungalow up to rentable standard, tenants secured and a twelve month lease has been signed.

9. The Board is very grateful for the work of the Rev Chris Aitcheson who has been employed as part-time caretaker (5 hours per week) at the Guysmere Centre in order to maintain the site and comply with insurance requirements.

Reconciliation

10. Participants in the Youth Ministry Certificate course continue to receive training in the topic of reconciliation. The recent 'flag protests' throughout the province have provided an additional context within which the use of PYP materials could be helpful.

Resource Development

12. **Generate Magazine:** This in-house publication highlights the work of the Board, and directs those involved in youth and children's ministry to appropriate resources. The magazine is available in hard copy from the YAC Office, or it can be downloaded from the YAC website.

13. **Youth Issues (Discipleship):** After a considerable amount of work and some field-testing, the 'Upside Down Kingdom' resource has been launched. Aimed at encouraging young people and their leaders to think about their relationship with God, themselves, humanity and the environment, this resource will help young people deal with the issues they face from a biblical perspective. 'Upside Down Kingdom' is being offered on CD, and is also available as a download from the YAC website.

14. **'Belong':** Understanding what it means to be part of the Presbyterian family. This new resource is aimed at giving young people a clearer understanding of what it means to be a Presbyterian and how together we can seek to live out God's call to share the Good News. It is hoped that this resource will be of use in a variety of settings including 'Church Membership' classes. The resource will be available for download from the YAC website.

15. **'Little Resources':** This resource is to help Congregations with their ministry to the under-5s. It is downloadable from the website and includes articles, event plans, teaching materials and resource reviews available for use in the wider Church.

16. **Catechism:** A children's competition was launched in March 2014 to redesign the cover of the Child's, Preparatory and Shorter catechisms. It is hoped that the updated resources will be available from the YAC Office in September 2014.

DAVID BROWNLOW, Convener

MINISTRY EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Ministry Events Committee of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry is actively engaged in organising and promoting a series of events which are relevant to the needs of children, young people and emerging adults across our denomination. Dedicated working groups have been putting preparations in place for our various events in 2014. The varied programme includes some long established events like Youth Night, MAD and Kids' Big Day Out, together with some more recent additions. The Committee is grateful to God for all that He has done through these events in the past and we wait in eager and prayerful anticipation to see how He will bless us this year.

Kids' Big Day Out

2. Following on from the success of last year's new format and venue, this event for children of primary school age, has once again been planned for Wellington Presbyterian Church in Ballymena on the afternoon of Saturday 5 April. The event has been organised to take the children on a journey through the Easter week from Palm Sunday to Resurrection Day and this will be accomplished through an interactive programme of music, drama, craft, games and prayer.

Youth Night

3. Youth Night is planned for Assembly Buildings on the evening of Saturday 7 June 2014. It is again hoped that there will be a tremendous turnout of young people from all parts of our island, gathering for praise led by Dave Dickinson and his band, as well as to hear what God would say through our speaker, Nate Morgan Locke who is the Youth Evangelist with Christianity Explored. Nate will speak on the theme 'Faith Discovered' as part of a three year plan looking at faith, hope and love.

The Word

4. The appeal and influence of this Bible teaching event for young adults seems to be growing year on year. This year the working group decided to organise an additional event to supplement the main conference in late August.

5. 'The Word Unplugged' has been planned for Friday 21 March in Café Grace at Queens University, Belfast. The evening aims to be relaxed with some acoustic music, leading into a talk by the Rev David Montgomery on the theme 'Lost and Found', based on Ephesians chapter 4. It is hoped that this evening will act as a platform to encourage young people to attend the main weekend event in August.

6. The Word will once again be held in the Faith Mission Centre in Portadown from 22-24 August. The Rev James Burnett has agreed to speak and the theme he has been given is based on the wanderings of the people of Israel, applying these Scriptures to young adults and their struggles today.

7. Once again Congregations are strongly urged to make these events known to your young adults and encourage them to come along – again it may be helpful if Congregations or individuals were prepared to part subsidise or fully sponsor the costs of those attending.

MAD Weekend

8. Plans are well advanced for the 16th anniversary of the MAD Weekend in Coleraine later this year. The whole Church has reason to be thankful to God in looking back over the years of this event. Many young people have come to faith or re-committed their lives to Christ during previous MAD weekends – indeed many of those same young people are now part of the MAD crew who help run the weekend or are even serving as members of the working group. The theme for this year is 'Belong', linking in with a new resource which has been produced by the Board to help young people understand more clearly what it is to belong to Christ and our Presbyterian family. The main speaker this year will be Duffy Robbins, who is a well-known face at MAD. Al Bennett and his band will again lead the worship and a varied programme of seminars, celebration and fun has been arranged. The dates for MAD are 24-26 October 2014.

The Mix

9. The Mix began as a pilot programme in 2012 with a remit to organise young adults' events at a local level which would provide a platform for developing fellowship for Christians and creating opportunities to share the Good News with non-Christians. The working group plans to re-run the events which were so successful last year, and so they have arranged a Spring Ball on Saturday 5 April at Corick House in Clogher and a tag rugby/ultimate frisbee competition at Magherafelt High School on Saturday 14 June. The working group is also looking at the possibility of a cinema night in December, as well as considering rolling out some other events in different parts of the country.

Little Day Out

10. The inaugural Little Day Out for pre-school children was run very successfully at Streamvale Farm in September 2013. Following on from this, a second event has been planned for Thursday 15 May 2014 in the grounds of Kilfennan Presbyterian Church in Londonderry, in partnership with the Congregation and Presbytery. The morning will be based around a Teddy Bears' picnic theme, looking at the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 through a programme consisting of a story, craft and games, finishing up with songs and eating a picnic together. The aim of the event is to show how a Presbytery gathering for this age group can be done in the grounds of a Church instead of at commercial premises, thus making it more cost effective.

11. The working group is currently looking into the possibility of running a Little Day Out Christmas event in November in the greater Belfast area. The plan is to have another 3 events, 1 in 2015 and 2 in 2016 after which it is hoped Churches will be encouraged to take on these events themselves with support from YAC in whatever way possible.

Thanks

12. As ever the Committee is so thankful to God for His guidance and provision, and places on record its gratitude to the extremely committed working group chairs and members, as well as the hard-working and efficient YAC field and office personnel.

ANDREW THOMPSON, Convener

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has not been active during the last year as the Board has sought to integrate research and education more fully into the on-going work of each of the other four Assembly Committees within YAC.

2. A range of small scale research projects have been undertaken by Board staff across Congregations and Presbyteries in the past year.

3. The task of educating the Church about the issues children, young people and young adults are facing has been delivered through the provision of Board events, training initiatives and the production of new resources for use in Congregations.

BARBARA McDADE, Acting Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That a grant of £9,931 be paid from the Incidental Fund to Youth Link:
NI.

3. That the General Assembly approve the Youth and Children's Project 'Emmaus' to support the work of the Bible Society in India and a youth project in Donegal town.

4. That the resignation of the Rev Jonathan Moxen as Convener of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that _____ be appointed in his place.

5. That the Research and Education Committee and the Convener, Ms Lynda Gould, be thanked for their service and discharged.

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 (BCT) continues through Union Theological College and its Committees to provide training for ministers, elders and Church members through a variety of courses and the provision of resources.

2. The **Committee on Ministerial Studies and Development** has been concentrating on the implementation of the revised Application and Assessment process, agreed by the General Assembly in 2013, and the putting in place of arrangements for the introduction of the changes in 2014. The Committee reports on the success of the Pre-Retirement Residential and the support offered to supervising Ministers who mentor student and licentiate assistants.

3. The **Committee on Training and Resources** fulfils its remit primarily through its panels and working groups. The Panel on Pastoral Care plans to organise strategic training for elders and pastoral care teams. The Panel on Leadership reports on training events and the special focus on producing new resources for ministers and Kirk Sessions. The Panel on Auxiliary Ministers reports the launch of the first course for auxiliary ministers and that eleven candidates have started their training. The Committee continues to be encouraged by the response to the Handling the Word course and the Accredited Preacher Scheme and is pleased to report that over 250 people have completed these courses.

4. The **Union Theological College Management Committee** reports a very busy and encouraging year. The new College Principal with executive responsibility, the Very Rev Dr JS Carson, was installed and there were a number of changes in administrative staff. The Curriculum Sub-Committee has been engaged in discussing changes to the curriculum and degree programmes that will subsequently affect the course of study for all ministry students. The Management Committee has been concentrating on the restoration of the stonework of the college and is able to report that Phase One is underway.

Board Convener's Introduction

5. In 2013 the General Assembly approved a revised scheme relating to the Pre-Application Process and Application Process for the Ordained Ministry, the Assessment of Ministry Candidates and the Licentiate Course and the Board has been preparing for the implementation of the proposed changes. The Application Process includes a number of strategic modifications and the plan is to see this take effect from 15 September 2014. The interview process is being radically altered and steps are being taken to form a revised panel of those who will conduct the interviews, with a training programme being introduced for those involved.

6. A Pre-Application Process was introduced in the 2013 report that expressed it was desirable that applicants in years 2014 and 2015 should complete the Accredited Preachers Course (APC) and that it would be normal from 2016 for all potential applicants for training for the ordained ministry to have completed the APC. There has been confirmation that this is being observed by those intending to make an application and prospective candidates are being certified as accredited preachers.

7. In the current year there are 39 students for the ministry being trained at Union Theological College (UTC) and in Resolution 2 at the end of this report there are 12 candidates being nominated to be accepted as students for the ordained ministry. It is pleasing that there continues to be a regular supply of students to be trained. There have been suggestions that there will be an over-supply of ministers in the future and that the number of candidates to be trained should be 'capped'. The Board has during the past year revisited this issue and continues to be very cautious in regard to introducing a 'cap' and the introduction of a form of competitiveness to the process. The Board's intention is to have ongoing discussions with the Union Commission on the wider implications of the issue of over-supply of ministers.

8. The Committee on Training and Resources has continued to produce some very helpful material for the training of elders and Church members. The Board commends these to the General Assembly and encourages ministers and Kirk Sessions to download these excellent courses and guidelines from the PCI website.

9. The Board was encouraged by the number of applicants for the Auxiliary Ministry Course and can report that there are 11 participants currently on the course. At the next Assembly in 2015 the BCT will be reporting on the completion of the first course and will be presenting the successful trainees to the General Assembly as those eligible to apply for auxiliary ministry posts. The first training scheme for auxiliary ministers has got off to a good start and the initial response by the trainees has been very positive. The Board waits with interest to see how the scheme is developed and what response there will be from the Church to the auxiliary ministers who are trained.

10. The 'Church in the Public Square' Conference held in Assembly Buildings in January 2014 was very successful and attracted a large attendance. The Board is grateful to the Panel that organised this symposium and invited such an esteemed team of speakers to participate. It is planned that there will be regular conferences of this form in the future and the BCT is indebted to the Faculty of Union College for their commitment to the promotion of these strategic forums.

11. Union Theological College Management Committee has had a demanding year as it has worked to progress the restoration of the College stonework. The initial task was securing the funding to commence the work and the Committee can be commended for its patience and fortitude as it successfully secured a Northern Ireland Environment Agency grant and received a grant of £450,000 from the General Assembly's Trustees. The restoration of the stonework is underway and it is hoped that the first phase will be completed in 2014. The restoration work will cause extensive upheaval at the College and the Board recognises the inconvenience the building work will create for the Faculty, the staff and students for the next few years. Ministers and Church members who

use the College facilities and library are asked to recognise the demands there are on parking space and to accept the disruption there will be for the duration of the restoration programme.

12. The Management Committee is constantly concerned that it provides the Principal, Faculty and students a first class environment to work in and supplies the necessary facilities to run a modern theological college. During the past year there have been new appointments to the ancillary staff and the appointment of a Registrar/Bursar to provide the required administrative support. Information technology is a natural requirement in modern educational institutions and it is necessary that the IT provision in the College is comparable to any other college and particularly is compatible with the provision at Queen's University. The BCT is concerned that the IT provision at UTC continues to be a perennial problem despite the regular support of the Church's IT Department. The current system is not adequate for a theological college and technology in university education will continue to advance while all at UTC will suffer regular frustration. The Board would encourage the General Assembly, through the Board of Finance and Personnel, to provide the resources to sustain a fit for purpose system.

13. The Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson was installed as Principal of UTC and Professor of Ministry in September 2013 and the Board acknowledges how smoothly he has settled into his executive role and is giving positive leadership in UTC. The General Assembly is asked to remember Dr Carson in prayer as he completes his first year as Principal and to pray for the Faculty as its members teach and train candidates for ministry in the Presbyterian Church and Queen's University students for their role in society.

14. The Rev Ronnie Hetherington has indicated that he will be retiring as Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS) at the end of the 2014 and the BCT expresses its gratitude to Ronnie for his dedication to his responsibility as DMS over the past 10 years. He fulfils his role constantly displaying good judgment, demonstrating concern for the students and complete commitment to and concentration on the ministry formation of students. Dr Joan McQuoid is also retiring in 2014 as the Board's Vocational Consultant and the Board conveys to Dr McQuoid its gratitude for the regular assistance she gave and the professional contributions she made to the application process of students for the ministry.

15. The Board congratulates its Executive Secretary for the past 6 years, the Rev Trevor Gribben, on his appointment as Clerk of the General Assembly. Trevor contributed an enormous amount of his time to the development of the Board's work and constantly contributed innovative ideas and radical thinking to many aspects of the Board's vision. His knowledge of ministerial training, his foresight in regard to training of Church members and his gifts in administration have been immensely valuable in the running of the Board.

QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE

16. The Qualifications Committee met to consider requests from Ministers to recognise the degrees that had been awarded to them. The Committee will normally recognise degrees awarded in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Directory of Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and General Assembly Reports, 2006 (pp 223,224). People considering studying for qualifications which may not fit the criteria, if they wish to have their degree

acknowledged in the Directory of Ministers, are advised to consult with the Committee before undertaking their study.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The Committee continues to seek to fulfil its broad responsibility which comprises overseeing: the selection process and college years of students for ordained ministry; licentiate training; in-service training for ordained ministers (including sabbaticals); pre-retirement courses for ministers. It met on two occasions since the last General Assembly. Several Panels that have been set up to progress the work of the Committee have been meeting as well and have made good progress in their areas of responsibility.

2. The Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS), the Rev Ronnie Hetherington, continues to act as Secretary to the Committee and also continues to advise prospective candidates and fulfil his duties in relation to students in training according to the Regulations of the General Assembly. Once again the Committee wishes to record its deep appreciation to Ronnie for the measure of expertise and experience he brings to the role of DMS through his pastoral sensitivity, wise counsel and administrative ability.

3. In the academic year 2013-2014 there were 47 students under the care of Presbyteries, as listed in the appended schedule (see Appendix 1).

MINISTERIAL STUDIES

Review of the Application and Assessment Process

4. In response to the resolution passed by the General Assembly in June 2013 (see 2013 Reports, p 222, res 3, and Appendix 2, pp 214-217) the Review Panel of the Committee has made good progress in considering the content, implications and implementation of the revised Pre-Application Process and the Application Process for the Ordained Ministry, the Assessment of Ministry Candidates and the Licentiate Course. Further work needs to be done by the Panel.

Assessment of Ministry Candidates and Review Facility

5. The Committee agreed that the Standing Panel for Ministerial Formation (see 2013 Reports, p 215) should be given authority to add specific requirements to a candidate's pathway, such as additional courses or an extra year, if it is deemed necessary. While recognising that only the General Assembly can terminate a Ministry Candidate's pathway, it was agreed that in the exceptional case of such action being necessary the Standing Panel is given authority to suspend a Ministry Candidate's studies in the meantime, pending a formal recommendation to the next General Assembly. The Committee recognised that Ministry candidates should have the facility of requesting a review of any

decision of the Standing Panel, especially when suspension or termination of their pathway is the issue. It was, therefore, agreed that the Standing Panel should consist of the Convener of the Committee on Ministerial Studies and Development (Convener), Director of Ministerial Studies, Principal of Union Theological College, Professor of Practical Theology, and one other person appointed by the BCT to provide further 'breadth and balance'. In the event of a Standing Panel decision being formally challenged, the BCT Convener and the Board Secretary will constitute the nucleus of a subsequent Review Panel, with further members being added by the BCT as appropriate.

'Cap' on Ministry Candidate Numbers

6. The Committee continued to discuss at length the concept of setting a 'cap' on student numbers where the Church would stipulate the maximum number of applicants for ordained ministry to be nominated each year with the selection procedure approving no more than this number. The DMS produced an excellent paper comparing and contrasting arguments that favour such a policy together with drawbacks associated with such a policy. The paper has been forwarded to the Union Commission for its information and consideration. In the meantime, the BCT is not persuaded that it should recommend such a 'cap' to the General Assembly.

Remuneration of Summer Assistants

7. The Committee agreed that the remuneration for summer assistants should be increased from £240 per week to £260 per week. (€330 to €360).

Interviews

8. The interviews of 18 candidates were held in Union Theological College on Tuesday 15 April 2014. The Interviewing Panel comprised: Ministers – Robert Beggs, Amanda Best, Gordon Best, Robin Brown, Mervyn Burnside, Jim Campbell, Karen Campbell, John Coulter, Kenneth Crowe, Sam Finlay, Mark Goudy, William Henry, John Hutchinson, Philip McCrea, Nigel McCullough, Adrian McLernon, Ian McNie, Adrian Moffett, Colin Morrison, Ivan Patterson, James Rogers, William Sinclair, Alan Thompson, David Thompson; Elders – Joe Campbell, Isobel McAuley, Lena Morrow, Anne Taylor, Roy Thompson, Jayne Wright. Dr Joan McQuoid acted as Vocational Consultant, the Rev Noble McNeely as Chairman, the Rev Dr Bill Parker as Secretary, and the Rev Ronnie Hetherington as Co-ordinator. The Rev Trevor Gribben, Secretary to the Board, was also present.

Having completed the interviewing process, 12 candidates are being nominated to the General Assembly by the Board of Christian Training.

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Conference for Supervising Ministers

9. A mini-conference for supervising ministers was held in October 2013 at Union Theological College. The conference was facilitated by the Rev

Ronnie Hetherington (DMS), the Rev Prof Drew Gibson (Professor of Practical Theology), the Rev Noble McNeely (Board Convener), the Rev Dr Bill Parker (Committee Convener), and Mr Mark Johnston (licensed assistant at Abbot's Cross Presbyterian Church). Supervising ministers were guided through the *Handbook for Supervising Ministers*, Prof Gibson spoke on the subject of *A Reflective Assistantship* and elaborated on the Pastoral Cycle of *Experience, Analysis, Theological Reflection, Response*. The Rev Noble McNeely and the Rev Dr Bill Parker spoke from the perspective of supervising ministers while Mr Mark Johnston spoke from the perspective of a licensed assistant. A Question and Answer time followed.

Pre-Retirement Residentials

10. The Committee again wishes to recognise the continued success of the Pre-Retirement Residentials, which is open to ordained ministers and their spouses (including ordained ministers who are directly employed by Boards and Agencies of the Church), from the year in which the minister reaches the age of 63. The Very Rev Dr John and Mrs Rosemary Dunlop, the Rev Bill and Mrs Margaret Sanderson, and the Very Rev Dr David and Mrs Hazel Clarke facilitated another residential conference, with 20 attendees, from 12-14 November 2013. The success of the conferences is in no small part due to the efforts of those who facilitate in such a helpful and pastoral manner, and the Committee wishes to express its appreciation to the facilitators. The next residential is planned for November 2014.

Leadership

11. The Panel on Leadership, as a joint panel of the Committee for Ministerial Studies and Development, and the Committee for Training and Resources, continues to address leadership issues concerning ministers, ruling elders and Church members. The Committee approved an excellent resource for ministers presented to it by the Panel on Leadership called "Leading the Team as 'First Among Equals'". It is the prayer of the Committee that this resource will prove to be of great help to all serving ministers as they embrace their role of facilitating their Kirk Sessions to work together effectively as a leadership team, and, as they fulfil their leadership role in equipping their Kirk Sessions for Christ-centred team leadership.

Inter-Board Conference

12. A day conference for ministers addressing the important issue of whole-life discipleship is planned for October 2014. It will be a joint conference under the auspices of the Board of Christian Training and the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Students' Bursary Fund

The Rev David Irvine, Convener of the Students' Bursary Fund writes:

13. The Students' Bursary Fund (SBF) exists to make financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families, during their time of study.

14. In the academic year Sept 2013 – June 2014 there are 42 students in receipt of grants. The cost to the Fund of grants, fees and other expenses for this period is £520,801. This is being met through offerings at services of licensing, ordination and installation of ministers and elders, personal and congregational donations, and by congregational assessment. Thanks are due to all members of the Church who generously support the Students' Bursary Fund.

15. All those who have responsibility for planning services of licensing, ordination and installation are asked to ensure that full use is made of the SBF literature available from reception in Assembly Buildings, especially the Gift Aid envelope. Past experience has shown that where literature is handed out at an earlier service, those attending the special service are more likely to use a Gift Aid envelope.

WJM PARKER, Convener

COMMITTEE FOR TRAINING AND RESOURCES

1. The Committee continues to fulfil its remit through the work of its Panels which have met regularly. The significant progress that has been made in the various areas of its work is testimony to the hard work of those involved and the diligence of the Christian Training Development Officer, Tom Finnegan.

Panel on Pastoral Care

2. In 2011 the General Assembly endorsed three models of pastoral care in Congregations prepared by the Panel and requested Kirk Sessions to review their pastoral care in light of these three models by September 2013. The Panel has been encouraged by the extent to which this has been done, although would urge Kirk Sessions who have not carried out such an assessment to do so.

3. The model offered for medium sized Congregations is the one which a considerable number of Kirk Sessions have adopted. This model suggested the formation of pastoral care teams in Congregations to share with the Elders this important ministry. This model also suggested that pastoral care might be best carried out through small groups. This has been adopted helpfully by some Congregations. One other factor which has become clear is that the role of a Pastoral Care Coordinator is vital in the provision of the most effective pastoral care. A number of Congregations have availed themselves of the materials produced by the Panel for the training of pastoral care teams.

4. Recently the Panel has been considering the direction pastoral care should take. The issues of care being both proactive and reactive together with a consumer versus body ministry model are being examined by the Panel, and, at a later date, the Panel may produce or recommend materials on these issues.

5. Over the past couple of years the Panel on Leadership has held roadshows which have been very useful to elders and others involved in leadership. Along similar lines the Panel on Pastoral Care plans to organise a pilot training event for elders and pastoral care teams most likely in the autumn and on a Saturday. The event would begin with a keynote address giving a biblical rationale for pastoral care followed by seminars on specific aspects of pastoral care.

Panel on Leadership

6. The Panel's work is seen in three areas; resources, training and roadshows. This has mainly been a year of consolidation, but with some new resources and training.

7. Two new resources have been made available to download from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland website. 'Navigating to New Places' is a resource that aims to provide a set of tools rooted in biblical theology to help the leadership team of the Congregation, i.e. the Kirk Session, navigate and lead the way to successful change for the building up of the Church. In addition to the more lengthy and detailed main resource, a 'Quick Start' version is also available. This resource can be used in two ways. It can be used as a training resource (normally facilitated by the Moderator of Kirk Session) or it can be used to help the Kirk Session consider and plan a change that impacts the Congregation. 'Leading a Larger Congregation' is a resource designed to help ministers and Kirk Sessions understand some of the differences in structure and approach to leading a larger Congregations.

8. A further resource, 'Leading as First among Equals' giving guidelines to ministers about the particular dynamics of leading as 'first among equals', as Moderator of Kirk Session is also now available.

9. Attention is drawn to the list of many resources available to ministers and elders for the development of leadership within the Church which was published in the General Assembly Report 2013, Appendix 3 (pp 217-220). Work on the Elders' Training Scheme (outlined in GA Reports 2013, App 4, pp 220-1) is progressing.

10. The Panel is also not just concerned to produce resource materials; training is also delivered to ministers, elders and other leaders at various levels and in various situations. In early March 2014 a week's SYIS (Sharpening Your Inter-Personal Skills) training was held at Lorne House, Holywood for ministers and some spouses. This course aims to develop the softer skills of leadership and has been widely used, especially in cross-cultural situations. While the course was largely facilitated by International Training Partners the Panel would hope to train some in PCI to act as facilitators in the future.

11. Following several leadership roadshows held in 2012/2013, during autumn 2013 and early 2014 further roadshows were held for elders within the Belfast Presbyteries, Ards Presbytery, Ballymena Presbytery and Tyrone Presbytery. These aim to develop leadership and work by way of seminars, e.g. 'Rethinking the Kirk Session Meeting'; 'Leading Well from the Middle'; 'Encouraging Young Leaders'; 'Leading your Congregation in Mission to the Ends of the Earth'. The Panel is grateful to those who lead the seminars, especially those members of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the Board of Mission Overseas who assisted with these evenings. Other Presbyteries are invited to host a roadshow. For possible dates and available topics please contact Tom Finnegan, Christian Training Development Officer.

Working Group on Accredited Preacher Scheme and Handling the Word

12. There are now over 100 accredited preachers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with numbers of about 20 course participants per year being typical for 2013 and 2014. In 2014 the course was modified to include a substantial

module on biblical theology along with extra teaching on biblical genres. 2014 was also the first year that the Handling the Word course became a normal prerequisite for applying to the Accredited Preacher Scheme. The effect of this has been noticeable on the course with participants already having a well-grounded understanding of how to prepare a biblical talk.

13. Over 150 people have completed Handling the Word courses which have been run either over six evenings or two Saturdays. A course has been delivered centrally in Belfast organised by the Board of Christian Training and other courses have been delivered in 2013 and the first half of 2014 by Armagh, Coleraine and Limavady, Down, Derry and Donegal, Dublin and Munster, Omagh, Templepatrick and Tyrone Presbyteries. As originally envisaged by the Board of Christian Training, most people who attend Handling the Word see it as a way to develop in their area of service in their local Congregation with a small number progressing on to the Accredited Preacher Scheme. In turn, a small number of those who complete the Accredited Preacher Scheme progress on to the ordained ministry or to the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme.

14. Accredited preachers are required to submit annual reports of where and when they have preached. Ministers with Congregations receive an updated list of accredited preachers annually with contact details (accredited preachers have the option to be included or not included on this list). From the annual reports of accredited preachers, it is apparent that many are being used often especially in regions where there are more vacancies or two or three point charges. Not all accredited preachers are used equally and this may be partly to do with the importance of developing relationships and ministers getting to know accredited preachers better so that they can call upon them more readily to take services in their absence.

15. A new process for a final 'exit' interview for the Accredited Preacher Scheme has been agreed where areas of further development are explored with candidates and assurance of their confessional orthodoxy regarding the subordinate standards of the Church sought. This brings greater uniformity for all who have a recognised preaching ministry within our Church.

Panel on Auxiliary Ministers

16. There are now 11 participants on the first Auxiliary Ministry Course which commenced in January this year. The course runs for a year and a half and includes training, mentoring and reflective practice in the key aspects of the role of the auxiliary minister including preaching, biblical theology, doctrine, pastoral care, Church life and leadership. On successful completion of the course, these trainees will be eligible to apply to auxiliary ministry posts later in 2015. The Union Commission and Presbyteries have responsibility for the oversight of the creation of auxiliary ministry posts at the request of Congregations. The Panel has engaged in discussion with the Union Commission regarding the practical details of creating such posts.

17. When planning ahead to late 2015 ministers and Kirk Sessions of Congregations considering the various options for additional paid or unpaid staff are encouraged to consider the auxiliary ministry. In such planning, it should be noted that the role is flexible in terms of defining the number of hours worked a week (normally part time) and whether it is paid or unpaid. Also, it is emphasised

that auxiliary ministry is a ministry of the Word and regular preaching would therefore be a key part of that role as well as other responsibilities such as pastoral care, discipleship or outreach.

Updated Version of the Prepared to Serve Course

18. An updated version of 'Prepared to Serve' is planned for release in autumn 2014. The previous version of this resource was produced a number of years ago and has been used by more than 2,000 participants across the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. It is designed to help Church members discover the particular gifts they have been given by the Holy Spirit to serve God in the Church and in the world. The resource also provides a number of Bible studies giving the biblical framework for the use of these gifts in loving service as well as practical guidance on how to use the gifts and develop in them. This updated resource complements the resource being produced for this year's Fit for Purpose theme 'A People of Service and Outreach'. It is suggested that the best way to use the 'Prepared to Serve' resource by Congregations is following on from their use of the Fit for Purpose resource. 'Prepared to Serve' can also be used on its own.

NIGEL McCULLOUGH, Convener

UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. It has been an encouraging year for the College. At the beginning of September, the Very Rev Dr JS Carson was installed as Principal of UTC and Professor of Ministry. It is gratifying that the decision to appoint a Principal with executive responsibility, first agreed at the 2009 General Assembly, has been implemented at last. The Management Committee wishes to put on record its delight at this appointment and assures Principal Carson of its prayerful support in his leadership of the College. It also expresses its thanks to Prof JP Taylor for his service as Principal during the lengthy intervening period and his assistance to Dr Carson in the settling in period.

2. It has also been a challenging year, due to a number of significant changes in administrative staff. Mrs Sandra McKinney (Registrar/Administrator) and Mrs Linda Cameron (Senior Secretary and Secretary to the Principal) retired at the end of June, while Mr Donald Garvie (Deputy Librarian) resigned in the summer to serve with Mission Africa. Looking ahead, Mrs Norah Scott (Library Assistant) has indicated her desire to retire at the end of the current academic year. Mr Tony Holmes was appointed Registrar/Bursar, Miss Renee McCracken Senior Secretary and Secretary to the Principal, and Miss Joy Conkey full-time temporary Deputy Librarian pending a review of the Library staffing structure. The Management Committee is grateful to all the staff for their willingness to undertake additional duties during these changes.

3. The total student enrolment for the 2013/14 academic year is 248, of whom 39 are ministry students (15 first year students). The presence in the College of a member of the PCI IT support team during the registration and enrolment period was very valuable and much appreciated.

Curriculum Sub-Committee

4. As reported last year, the Sub-Committee has been considering issues connected with the delivery of the current curriculum. Following a review of the curriculum and the various degree programmes on offer, it was agreed to ask the Committee for Ministerial Studies and Development to give serious consideration to a 4-year programme of study for all ministry students that includes 3 years of full-time study (incorporating the BD degree programme) and a fourth year which incorporates a part-time assistantship along with continuing study that requires a dissertation. The advantage of this proposed pattern is that all ministry students would pursue the same course of study together and would have the opportunity for a significant learning experience in the preparation of a dissertation. However, it is recognised that the proposal may have financial implications which have yet to be investigated.

5. Discussion took place about issues surrounding the MDiv programme and how, in its current format, it is not fitting the needs of the denomination in its preparation of students for pastoral ministry. In the light of this it was decided that from September 2014 no new students will be admitted to the MDiv degree programme. However, the Sub-Committee affirms its desire to have a suitable Master's level degree programme which conforms to QAA standards and which meets the needs of PCI. The Sub-Committee believes that the MTh degree is an important step in nurturing and recruiting doctoral students, as well as overseas students, while it also encourages continuing education for ministers in the Church. There are significant changes taking place within Master's degree programmes at QUB which impinge on the MTh degree, and some possible module options within the new structures were considered. The Sub-Committee will continue to pursue these developments and consider the tuition fees structure for this degree. It will also bear in mind the implications of these developments for the MMin and DMin degrees.

6. Following last year's QAA visit, a follow-up visit of the QAA team took place in October 2013, leading again to a satisfactory outcome. Such visits are now regular events, with a further one scheduled for October 2014. UTC must continue to be diligent in the implementation of good practice in all areas of its work.

7. During the first semester of the 2013/14 academic year Dr DT Alexander was on sabbatical leave, with Prof JP Taylor on sabbatical leave during the second semester. Prof SN Williams is due to go on sabbatical leave during the first semester of the 2014/15 academic year. All of these require adjustments and flexibility within the curriculum.

8. A well-attended "Church in the Public Square" Conference was held in January in Assembly Buildings. The speakers were the Rev Prof Donald McLeod, Dr Jonathan Chaplin, and John Larkin QC. Thanks were expressed to the College administrative staff for their efficient organisation of the Conference. The Church and Society Committee are planning a CIPS 2 Conference in the autumn on the theme of equality, and consideration is being given to a CIPS 3 Conference in January 2015 on "end of life" issues.

9. A successful Religious Studies Forum was held in January for sixth formers and their teachers, with approximately 600 in attendance. It is planned to expand this forum next year and to give particular support to teachers of RE.

Finance, Property and Administration Sub-Committee

10. Stonework restoration began on 20 January following the offer on 25 November of a NIEA grant on Phase 1 of £403,610 and the award of the contract (Phase 1) to TAL Ltd. The completion date for Phase 1 is 21 November 2014, and the total Phase 1 cost is £1,051,650, some £122,850 more than anticipated. This is due largely to substantial structural support required around the 4 front pillars, work which had not initially been thought necessary, and it should also be noted that the original budget costs were based on 2011 estimates. The Architect has been asked to begin the application process for Phase 2 grant aid and to proceed with Phase 2 design work. Following the resolution of the 2013 General Assembly requesting the General Assembly's Trustees "to consider positively the request for a significant grant towards the schemes of repair of stonework at Union Theological College", the Trustees agreed a grant of £450,000.

11. The 2013 General Assembly decision to transfer pension commitment of the Board of Christian Training in respect of retired ministers who served as Assembly Professors to the Retired Ministers' Fund will result in a current saving to UTC of approximately £37,000 per year. This is intended to offset the loss of on-going annual income when shares are sold to fund the Stonework Project.

12. At the beginning of October, library staff discovered water seepage into the basement book store. Steps were taken to remove the effects of the water, to clear the basement for inspection, to identify books that need to be available for regular access and remove them to storage within the College, and to remove other books to off-site storage. Despite investigations, the cause of the flooding remains uncertain. The basement was constructed as a book store in 2008/9 and is a reinforced concrete box on top of which the Common Room is built. It has been dried out and has remained dry despite the heavy rainfall of January and February. A formal insurance claim was lodged, although it is not clear how much, if any, of the repair work will be covered by the insurance policy, as this will depend on the cause of the water ingress. The College is indebted to all staff who responded speedily and efficiently to the situation, and also to Harry Orr of Assembly Buildings and to Desmond Fulton of the Management Committee.

13. Routine maintenance continues to be carried out, e.g. replacement of the front barrier, repairs to the accommodation, painting of the Principal's office ceiling and third floor accommodation. Dry rot was discovered in a small area on the ground floor of 26 College Green and has been attended to.

14. There continue to be issues of concern relating to the IT systems. The support given to the College by the IT Department is very much appreciated, but it is apparent that demands will continue to grow and to outstrip capacity. More resources will be required if both PCI and the College are to function effectively and to be fit for purpose.

15. In consultation with College faculty and administration, significant progress has been made in the construction of a new College website. The process of construction is expected to be completed by June 2014.

16. All College staff are now on PCI contracts.

17. Agreement had been reached with Fitzroy Presbyterian Church on rent for the use of 26 College Green.

HA DUNLOP, Convener

APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	Robert Hamilton	Union
	Stephen Lowry	Union
	Craig Lynn	Union
	Alan Marsh	Union
	Jeffrey McWatters	Union
ARMAGH	Edwin Frazer	Union
	Craig Jackson	Union
BALLYMENA	Jonathan Boyd	Union
	Matthew Boyd	-
	Ross Kernohan	Union
	Norman Kennedy	-
	David McMillan	Union
NORTH BELFAST	Richard Patton	Union
	Jonathan Newell	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	John Martin	Union
	Susan Moore	Union
EAST BELFAST	Brent van der Linde	Union
	Seth Wright	-
	Alan Dickey	Union
	David Gray	Union
	Ben Johnston	WTS
	David Kelly	Union
	Alistair McCracken	Union
CARRICKFERGUS	Mark McMaw	Union
	Alan McQuade	Union
	Ian Cahoon	Union
	Stuart Hawthorne	Union
	Robert Orr	Union
COLERAINE & LIMAVADY	James Warburton	Union
	Alan Burke	Union
	Robert McClure	Union
	John Torrens	-
DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Gerard Clinton	Union
	Richard Cronin	Union
	Andrew Gill	Union
	Marty Gray	Union
	Kevin Hargaden	-
	John O'Donnell	Union
IVEAGH	Joanne Smith	Union
	Graham Mullan	Union
	Michael Rutledge	WTS
MONAGHAN	Jonathan Porter	-
NEWRY	Jeffrey Blue	Union
	Stephen Kennedy	Union

TYRONE	David Clarke	Union
	Bryan Kee	Union
	Philip Leonard	Union

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
Robin Aiken	Railway Street	Dromore
Andre Alves-Areias	Saintfield Road	South Belfast
John Brogan	Drogheda	Dublin & Munster
David Curran	Wexford	Dublin & Munster
Andrew Downey	Knock	East Belfast
Steve Kennedy	Orangefield	East Belfast
James Maguire	Banbridge Road	Dromore
Hanneke Marshall	1 st Broughshane	Ballymena
Michael McCormick	Clough	Down
Jonny McKane	Kilfennan	Derry & Donegal
Keith Parke	Gilford	Iveagh
Richard Tregaskis	Hamilton Road	Ards

3. That the General Assembly ask Presbyteries to encourage ministers to engage in leadership training, at a level appropriate to their stage in ministry, and ask the Panel reviewing the Consultation Process to consider how this matter might be best dealt with.

4. That the General Assembly welcome the commencement of training for the first candidates for the Auxiliary Ministry and commend the scheme to the Church and especially to those ministers and Kirk Sessions considering whether this role could enhance the ministry in their Congregation.

5. That the General Assembly commend the updated Prepared to Serve course to the Church and encourages its use by all church members in order to identify or affirm the gifts they have been given by the Holy Spirit to serve God in the Church and in the world.

6. That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme be set to raise £25,000.

7. That the assessment for the Students' Bursary Fund be set to raise £400,000.

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 30(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 30(1) of the Code the following words be added at the end of the paragraph:

“In exercising this leadership the Kirk Session shall oversee and work along with other members who have leadership roles in the congregation.”

Anent Par 30(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 30(3) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

“(3) In the discharge of their duties each elder should be assigned by the Kirk Session pastoral responsibilities and/or other leadership roles in the congregation.”

Anent Par 30 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that following Par 30(3) of the Code a new paragraph be added:

“(4) The Kirk Session, along with the Minister, should seek to ensure that all elders are equipped to fulfil their duties.”

Anent Par 35 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 35 of the Code the following new paragraph be added and subsequent paragraphs be renumbered accordingly:

“(b) ensure a scheme for pastoral care is in place in the congregation, in line with current General Assembly guidelines.”

Anent Par 73(b) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 73(b) of the Code the word “discharged;” be deleted and the words “discharged and that elders are suitably equipped;” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 177(2) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 177(2) of the Code the words “in the matter” be deleted and the words “in line with current General Assembly guidelines in the matter” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 180(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 180(1) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

“The name of every ruling elder elect shall be reported to the appointed Presbytery commission, who, in line with General Assembly guidelines, shall confer with the elder elect respecting their acquaintance with divine truth, their personal faith and character, their sense of the responsibilities and duties of the office and their gifting and availability for the exercise of that office.”

Anent Par 201(1) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 201(1) of the Code the word “deaconesses” be deleted and the words “deaconesses, auxiliary ministers” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 202(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 202(3) of the Code the word “deaconesses” be deleted and the words “deaconesses, auxiliary ministers” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 202(7) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 202(7) of the Code the word “deaconess” be deleted and the words “deaconess, auxiliary minister” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 72(e) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 72(e) of the Code the word “deaconesses” be deleted and the words “deaconesses, auxiliary ministers” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 285 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 285 of the Code the following new paragraph be added and the subsequent paragraph be renumbered accordingly:

“(2)(f) oversee the selection process, training course and on-going accreditation for the Accredited Preacher and Auxiliary Ministry Schemes;”

Anent Par 217(1)(b)(iii) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 217(1)(b)(iii) of the Code the word “Elocution” be deleted and the words “Public Speaking” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 217(2)(b) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 217(2)(b) of the Code the word “Elocution” be deleted and the words “Public Speaking” be substituted in its place.

Anent Par 217(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 217(3) of the Code the word “Elocution” be deleted and the words “Public Speaking” be substituted in its place.

JNI McNEELY

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev Dr CD McCLURE
Secretary: Rev TD GRIBBEN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Supporting Christians in Education and Supporting Your Local School

1. Furtherance of the “Back to School with God” programme with resources for 2104 entitled “Earth Calling Heaven”.

Republic of Ireland

2. Apprehension is expressed about the vulnerabilities felt by many schools with a Protestant ethos.

Northern Ireland: Review of Public Administration

3. A review of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI)’s role, as part of the Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC), in the ongoing shaping of educational administration. Concerns are raised about the provision of educational services in general and the particular vulnerability and inequities experienced by Controlled schools.

Common Funding Scheme for Schools in Northern Ireland

4. Uncertainty about actual budgets has curtailed schools’ ability to strategically plan. Proposed changes could produce inequitable budget allocations for many schools.

Shared Education

5. Several reports and initiatives are assessed and progress noted and welcomed.

Religious Education

6. Recognition of challenges to be faced and opportunities to be grasped in resourcing the professionals who deliver quality RE to children in all our schools.

Teacher Training in Northern Ireland

7. Through the TRC, response has been made to discussions relating to the reshaping of teacher education in Northern Ireland.

INTRODUCTION

8. Since the last Assembly the Board has met on two occasions to receive reports, consider on-going issues and originate appropriate action. Whilst much of the Board’s agenda is directed towards statutory and institutional engagement this is undertaken so that Christian values remain at the core of

our educational provision. The Board is therefore only a part of our personal and corporate commitment, made at baptismal services, to ensure that our children and young people can fulfil their God-given potential. In recent years, recognising the strategic input to education made by individuals (as staff, pupils, parents, grandparents etc), the Board has actively sought to resource members and Congregations in service and outreach to schools in their neighbourhood and beyond so that they can intentionally enact Christian values and ethos as appropriate.

9. Through its representatives the Board continues to liaise closely with a wide variety of relevant stake-holders. In particular the considerable remit and the fast-changing circumstances in both jurisdictions make it essential that the PCI works with transferor partners in the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) in Northern Ireland and other Protestant Churches in the Republic of Ireland. This cooperation is referred to throughout this report. However, examples are the detailed responses to consultations via the TRC which carry more authority because they express the unified consideration of a much larger constituency e.g. Reform of the Common Funding Scheme; Review of Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure in NI; Review of GCSEs and A Levels; Review of Home-School Transport Policy.

Supporting Christians in Education and Supporting Your Local School

10. A Working Group, convened by the Rev James Rogers, continues to listen to and liaise with agencies and individual teachers to develop appropriate resources so that members and Congregations can serve and outreach to schools in their area and/or where they work in an informed manner which goes beyond tokenism.

11. After last year's well-received "Back to School With God" material, arising from a collaboration with Scripture Union, the Group have again collaborated to develop a similar resource. Therefore, for "Back to School Sunday 2014" the Board offer to Congregations "**Earth Calling Heaven.**" This material is based on the first two chapters of Nehemiah, highlighting that he PRAYed hard and then ACTed. The downloadable resource will probably include an All-Age Service outline, a Children's Talk and accompanying prayers for the service and beyond.

12. The Board wishes to acknowledge the active partnership of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the receptiveness of the editors of our denominational magazines to ideas for articles.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Post Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland

Mrs Eleanor Petrie reports:

Secondary Education Committee

13. The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a corporate body comprising representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends.

14. The functions of the SEC are twofold. 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 and the representation of the interests of the member Churches in the post-primary education system.

Budget 2014

15. There will be no increase in the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in 2014, in either fee-charging or schools in the “Free Scheme”. This has come as a considerable relief to all schools, although we continue to deal with the redeployment of ‘over quota’ teachers, which has placed considerable pressures on faith schools.

Block Grant Scheme

16. In the school year 2013-14 the total amount received from the DE&S, was €6,500,000, the grant in aid of fees totalled €6,457,363. The numbers of grants awarded were 1,505 day grants, 821 boarding grants, in total 2,326. There was a drop in Day Grants over last year caused by the entry of Kilkenny College into the ‘Free Scheme’

17. While retaining the maximum grants, the Committee were forced to reduce the ceiling of reckonable income to €40,000 (€50,000), and to revise the grants for the school year 2013-14 on a scale for boarding from €1,095 to €7,767 (€1,074-€7,767); day €399-€2,820 (€414-€2,820). This resulted in reduced access to grants for a number of families.

18. The Memorandum of Agreement between the SEC and the DE&S will conclude in January 2015. The SEC is in discussions regarding its renewal and the DE&S has assured the SEC that the annual amount of €6.5 million is secure. However, the SEC will naturally be seeking an increase on this amount in its negotiations with the DE&S.

Submissions made on behalf of the Committee on Management

19. The Committee on Management, made a detailed submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education regarding the Draft General Scheme on an Education Act (Admissions to School) Bill, 2013. This ‘Admissions’ Bill proposes a number of changes to the operation of admissions to schools and is particularly relevant to Protestant secondary schools as it deals with such factors as the admissions of siblings, past pupils and restrictions on boarding numbers. The Bill also makes provision for the enrolment policy of a school to be determined by the Minister and, in certain circumstances, for admissions to the school to be controlled by the Minister. It also proposes the abolition of the “Section 29” appeals process. The Bill has been considered at the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education who have made a number of observations. The Bill has gone back to the Department of Education and Skills for re-consideration before being introduced in the Oireachtas at a later date.

20. A Submission was also made to the Equality Authority on the Proposed amendment to section 37 of the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011, this may have significant implications for faith schools, and the Committee awaits developments.

Schools 500 Reformation

21. The 500th Anniversary of the promulgation by the Rev Martin Luther of his “95 thesis” by nailing them to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral on 31 October 1517, commonly understood as the beginnings of the Reformation movement in Western Christianity is also highlighted. To mark the anniversary the Protestant Churches in Europe are promoting an international project to connect online Protestant schools across Europe and beyond. Special events are also being planned to mark the anniversary, including a youth camp in Wittenberg, Germany in 2017. Further information can be found at www.schools500reformation.net

Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland

22. The Board noted that the combination of cutbacks, due to the difficult economic environment in the Republic, combined with a policy of school rationalisation, has led to severe pressure on many schools under Protestant Patronage, which are often adversely affected because they tend to be small schools serving a minority community.

23. The Board, while recognising it was difficult to be actively involved in negotiations regarding individual schools, affirmed the view that the state has a responsibility to provide accessible education with a reformed Christian ethos for those parents and children who wished to avail of such, both at primary and secondary level.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Review of Public Administration

24. Although this section of the report has a somewhat repetitive content, reflective of the apparent inertia of political developments, the Board has sought to constructively engage with the widest range of educational stake-holders. Along with partners in the Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC) the Board has continued to proactively advocate for Controlled schools.

25. The Education Bill to set up the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) – proposed to rationalise the existing Education and Library Boards (ELB), the Youth Council for NI, Staff Commission for ELBs, and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) – has still not achieved the political agreement necessary to proceed through the Executive and Assembly process. This prolonged hiatus has undoubtedly sapped morale throughout education and inevitably impacts on a range of essential functions such as raising standards, planning the schools’ estate, support for teachers and governors and other key services, such as school transport, maintenance, meals and youth services. It is noted that in February 2014 the Education Minister responded to serious concerns expressed by representatives of the ELBs and undertook to review the control of vacancies to ensure their adequate staffing for on-going needs.

26. The TRC has now been working over several years to engage with the legislative process. Through negotiation and clarification the TRC is satisfied that the proposed legislation does broadly acknowledge and protect the established legal rights of Transferors. Indeed, since last year’s General Assembly the four Transferor nominees to the ESA Board have been identified, submitted and approved by the Minister.

27. However, the Board, along with TRC partners, has identified the emergence of an inequality of treatment and lack of parity of esteem which is seriously undermining the capacity of Controlled schools to have meaningful participation in significant developments with serious implications for the sector locally and regionally. The most obvious example is the “parking” of the establishment of the Controlled Schools’ Support Council (CSSC), to offer professional support and advocacy in line with other sectors. The Minister, in withdrawing funding, has made it clear that funding for the Support Council’s development is contingent on the passage of the Education Bill. However, the result is that the Controlled sector is the only sector with no specific staffed advocacy body. As a result, Controlled schools continue to be effectively excluded from some vital processes, such as area planning. Furthermore, the absence of a direct link between the proposed CSSC and the ownership or trustee body for Controlled Schools, not only means that there will be a lack of coherence in the sector, but also creates a glaring inequality of treatment compared to other sectors. This is unacceptable.

28. Despite this regrettable circumstance the working party charged with establishing the CSSC has successfully registered (during July 2013) the CSSC as a company limited by guarantee in Companies House.

Common Funding Scheme for Schools

29. Proposals were consulted on in 2013 to reform the Common Funding Scheme for Schools. The Department received an astounding 15,000 responses. The free school meals (FSM) index was to be used to target additional resources to schools in socially deprived areas. In the scheme initially proposed over 600 other schools were to receive a reduced allocation of funds. However, there seems to have been a reprieve.

30. In a response to a consultation on the Scheme the TRC asserted the inadequacy of FSM as an indicator of educational disadvantage and highlighted the need for a more accurate mechanism.

31. At the time of writing (just a few weeks before the end of the financial year) schools had still not been supplied with their revised budgets. This adds further stress to the already existing pressures of uncertainty.

Shared Education

32. In July 2012 the Education Minister appointed an *Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education* chaired by Prof Paul Connolly of Queen’s University, Belfast. The group defined shared education as involving “two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion”. The group produced twenty recommendations. Although three recommendations relating to academic selection received most publicity, the majority of the recommendations were directed towards mainstreaming and supporting shared education. This recognised the current situation whereby a number of shared education programmes have been involved in interesting developments but have substantially depended on “external” funding from various philanthropic organisations.

33. The Minister undertook to include a statutory definition of shared education within the Education Bill thereby ensuring its encouragement and facilitation by the ESA.

34. Shared education could be expressed in a variety of formats. One such subset would be the possibility of jointly managed Church schools. As with all such innovations there are issues requiring identification and clarification. Representatives of the TRC, the Catholic Trustees and the Department of Education (DE) have discussed draft guidelines specifically applicable to any such arrangement.

35. In January 2014 the Minister invited applications for capital assistance from schools under a *Shared Education Campus Scheme*. The campuses, which must be cross-community and have local support, could utilise existing infrastructure, enhance what already exists or produce new facilities. The *Lisanelly Education Campus* scheme has already explored the practicalities for the potential of up to six existing schools (Controlled, Maintained, Voluntary Grammar and Special Education) locating to a former military site in Omagh. Collaboration would be greatly facilitated whilst each school would retain its own identity and work within its own ethos. Progress in such innovative projects only comes after lengthy and detailed discussion amongst a range of interested parties. The input of the ELB and school management authorities, with the active support of local Churches, has required considerable commitment and tenacity. Experience has shown that the progress of this visionary development and any realisation of shared education opportunities elsewhere can only thrive when there is on-going respect and recognition of each sector's ethos.

Religious Education

36. The RE Advisory Group of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) (co-chaired by the Board Convener representing the TRC Churches) is tasked with developing resources supportive of RE teaching. The current focus is upon providing non-statutory guidance for the revised RE syllabus. Working within stringent budgetary parameters the members of this group are to be commended for the active commitment they have been making to produce a resource fit for purpose. The web-based material will soon be launched and become available to schools.

37. The Board, along with its TRC partners, is deeply concerned about the present and future provision of curriculum support for RE teachers; once more there appears to be a differential disadvantage within the Controlled sector. Formerly this work was undertaken by a professional and committed team of RE Advisors within each ELB. Presently there is only one named RE Advisor in Northern Ireland – but due to the ELB staffing requirements and in common with ELB colleagues he seems to have a work schedule filled with general school improvement duties, probably leaving little or no time for the work as described in his job description. It was hoped that the creation of a Controlled Sector support body might alleviate the disparity in provision between sectors. However, as outlined previously, this, along with so much else of educational importance, has also stalled.

38. Within the educational community there is much that could dishearten and frustrate dedicated practitioners who simply want to deliver the highest

possible standard of education for students with a wide range of needs. In spite of this atmosphere the TRC has sought to engage proactively and positively on a range of matters, some already described. RE provision is another of those areas, especially in anticipation of a range of emerging models of educational management at local and national level. Therefore, representatives of the transferor Churches with a special interest in RE have begun meeting with counterparts in the Roman Catholic system to consider how our Churches can further enhance the resourcing and standing of RE. In particular, there appears to be scope for bringing together the insights and experience of RE teachers in a mutually beneficial sharing of good practice and resources.

Teacher Training in Northern Ireland

39. In response to an invitation from a panel of international educationalists set up by the Department for Employment and Learning the TRC made a detailed submission. Before publishing findings the panel is consulting widely in an effort to clarify how best to structure a world-renowned system of initial teacher education which can consolidate and optimise sharing and integration in the development of educational professionals.

40. The TRC submission welcomed the opportunity to evaluate teacher education in the various institutions in Northern Ireland. Practitioners should be primed to take their place in a profession accorded a high status and resourced by structures, pathways and expectations affirming continuing professional development. In what has sometimes been described as a “clinical practice model” teacher education programmes are evidencing a greater focus on linking theory and practice during and beyond initial preparation. Consequently there should be augmented access and prospect for research right through to tailored Masters’ and Doctoral programmes.

41. Given the realities of the specific educational landscape and the wider cultural and political context, the TRC submission made clear its support for the closer integration of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers. Building on the considerable collaboration already in place in such institutions, and the commitment to sharing education in schools, this would seem desirable and inevitable if better synergies are to be realised between teacher education, research and professional development. Such a progression will appreciate and respect the ethos and needs of the various constituent school sectors.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note with deep concern the continuing disadvantaged position of Controlled Schools throughout Northern Ireland due to a lack of a dedicated advocacy and support body and call upon the Minister of Education to take steps to resolve this injustice and ensure equality of treatment for all schools.
3. That the General Assembly warmly support the on-going development of Shared Education in Northern Ireland and call upon the Department of Education to ensure that its policies and schemes provide a range of incentivised options to encourage and facilitate schools to participate in models of sharing appropriate for their local community.

4. That the General Assembly express thanks to those who fulfill demanding responsibilities in the oversight of the small but significant number of schools in the Republic of Ireland under Presbyterian Patronage and call upon the Government to ensure that its policy protects minority rights and enables on-going access to, and the sustainability of, schools with a Protestant ethos.

5. That the General Assembly welcome the on-going cooperation with Scripture Union in the production of *Back to School with God 2104* “**Earth Calling Heaven**” materials and encourage all Congregations to use this resource as a valuable means of encouraging Christians engaged in education and in supporting their local school/s.

BOARD OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Convener: MR JOHN HUNTER, CB

Executive Summary

1. The Board is seeking the General Assembly's approval for:
 - (i) The overall rate of assessment for 2014 to be applied to Congregational assessable income and the allocation of amounts collected to the various assessment funds;
 - (ii) Recommendations in the report of the Tyrone Memorial Appraisal Panel.
2. The report also contains a summary of the work of the Board's four Committees.
3. The Board is presently reviewing the Central Ministry Fund Bonus and intends to include a report in Supplementary Reports to the General Assembly.

The Board's Report

Background

1. The Board of Finance and Personnel exists to underpin the wider mission and ministry of the Church through its stewardship of resources. It operates through four Committees, whose reports are appended covering Pensions and Assessments; Finance, Legal and IT; Personnel; and Property Management. In addition over the past year the Board has contributed to the deliberations of the General Board and its Priorities Committee on the Central Ministry Fund bonus, family grants and the differential in Sterling and Euro stipends.

2. The Board remains conscious of the very difficult financial circumstances facing many Congregations and members. It has continued to seek to keep assessments at the minimum level consistent with the need to provide necessary financial support to those who serve the Church in both Congregations and Assembly Buildings. However, there are two recommendations in the report which could have significant financial implications:

- (a) increased rates of "employers" National Insurance contributions if government proposal to withdraw the contracting out rebate are introduced in 2016 as part of the arrangement for a flat rate state pension;
- (b) changes to the minimum service increments for ministers serving in Congregations' flowing from the proposals in the Tyrone Memorial Appraisal Panel's report.

Assessments

3. The 2013 financial year saw the completion of the transition from assessments based on stipend to assessments based on congregational "assessable income". The Board wishes to pay tribute to all those involved in the transition

from Congregational Treasurers, through Presbytery Finance Clerks, to the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office. The mainly smooth transition reflects great credit on all involved.

4. Once again the Board faced a difficult decision during the year over the Ministerial Minimum and Executive and Administrative pay scales for 2014. After considerable debate, which took into account the current rate of inflation and affordability, the Board decided to approve for the second year in a row a flat rate increase to ministers and staff in Assembly Buildings of £500 (€700) for 2014. This small increase reflects a wish to compensate those who conscientiously and diligently serve PCI and are already paid at a lower rate than their professional counterparts, particularly when seniority is taken into account. The level of the Ministerial Minimum was also considered by the Tyrone Memorial Appraisal Panel, which concluded against a significant increase on the grounds of affordability (see Appendix).

5. The table in the Pensions and Assessments Committee Report shows the Board's budgeted income requirement for 2014 for the various assessment funds. This reflects the impact on costs of the increase in the Basic Ministerial Minimum. The budgeted income requirement is £4,550,000. As will be seen from the assessment categories, the overwhelming bulk of the expenditure is non-discretionary in regard to grants and pensions. The Board's proposals for meeting this overall assessment are contained in the Pensions and Committee Report.

6. During the year the Board also gave consideration to an emerging financial pressure from the reform of the UK State Pension Scheme, which is subject to approval by the Northern Ireland Assembly. A new flat rate state pension, to be introduced from 2016, will remove the facility for employer sponsored defined benefit pension schemes to contract out and will also result in higher National Insurance contributions for employees. The Board decided to cover the additional cost to the employer rather than make any further change to member pension benefits. It is estimated that the additional cost to PCI will be some £400k or 2.7% of pensionable payroll.

Committee Matters

7. The small IT Department in Assembly Buildings continues to be under significant pressure, despite the appointment last year of an additional IT support person. The challenges and workload facing the Department constitute a major risk to the effective working of the Church as a whole. The Board has agreed to a comprehensive independent review of the Department, but it is already clear additional resources will be required, including possibly the outsourcing of some of the Department's development work.

8. The Board has continued to develop its auto-enrolment pension scheme, to meet legislative requirements. On the basis of professional advice, the Board moved from setting up a scheme with Aegon (as reported to the General Assembly last year) to one with Standard Life. The Board agreed that 1 February 2014 would be used as a common staging date for the various payrolls which are operated. The scheme has now been established and "eligible jobholders" auto-enrolled. However, it will probably take a few months for the scheme membership to stabilise as members "opt in" and "opt out" and for the level of take up to be

established. At this point the full cost implication, in particular for the Board of Social Witness, will become clearer. The Board wishes to remind Congregations that this scheme cannot be extended to Congregations. Congregations need to establish their own arrangements with various options, including the National Employment Savings Trust, being available.

9. Considerable work was undertaken during the year to support the Panel appointed by the General Board to consider the implications of the new Charities legislation. Discussions were held with the Charity Commission and preliminary advice was issued to Congregations. Discussions are continuing with the Commission over a variety of matters, including the identification of Charity Trustees for the various PCI charities.

10. The Board also supported the Priorities Committee in its consideration of three issues: the Bonus; Family Grants; and the Sterling/Euro Differential. The Board considered independent evidence on comparative costs of living in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and concluded that the current differential between Sterling and Euro stipends, of approximately 1 to 1.6 was about right. In regard to Family Grants, the Board considered a helpful analysis of the costs of third level education north and south and decided to extend the analysis to other education levels through the issue of a short questionnaire to those currently in receipt of education grants. Finally, the Board commissioned further work on the mechanism for the proposed transfer of the non-Regium Donum part of the Bonus (currently £1,158) to the Basic Ministerial Minimum and the implications for those receiving a pension under the Retired Ministers' Fund. It is planned to include recommendations in a Supplementary Report..

11. Other matters considered by the Board included progress reports on the development of personnel policies in regard to "Stress at Work" and "Redundancy". The Board approved a new equality policy in respect of the hire of rooms in Assembly Buildings, with the Moderator's Advisory Panel being asked, via the Clerk, to advise on letting issues if requested. The Board also monitored progress in regard to the letting of office accommodation and was pleased to note that Fisherwick Building is now nearly fully let. The market for Mall lettings continues to be very difficult, but letting income from conferences and room hire is slightly above projected income, thanks to the efforts of our part-time marketing consultant, Michael McCormick, whose contract has been extended for a further year, and Harry Orr.

Tyrone Memorial Review

12. In the autumn of 2013 the Board appointed an Appraisal Panel to follow up the Resolution adopted by the 2013 General Assembly: "That in the light of the report of the Doctrine Committee, the Board of Finance and Personnel requests the permission of the Assembly to withdraw the report of the Tyrone Memorial Panel for further consideration and examination and to report with recommendations to the 2014 General Assembly."

13. The Report of the original Review Panel contained a number of recommendations designed to reduce the stipend differentials between ministers, which then ranged from the Ministerial Minimum to some two and a half times the Minimum. The Review Panel proposed that a minister's remuneration should be made up of four elements:

- (i) a Basic Ministerial Minimum;
- (ii) an Incremental Allowance reflecting years of service;
- (iii) a Local Allowance (where appropriate) reflecting local congregational circumstances; and
- (iv) a Discretionary Grant which would include the amount due from the Regium Donum.

14. A brief description of these elements is summarised in the report of the Appraisal Panel to the Board, attached as Appendix 1

15. The original report of the Review Panel was not discussed at the General Assembly in 2012 or in 2013, given a resolution asking the Doctrine Committee to bring to the 2013 General Assembly “a report containing further reflection upon, and elucidation of the biblical principles governing the financial support of the Church’s ministers.” The subsequent report of the Doctrine Committee identified five Principles on which basis that financial support should be provided. They were:

- (i) an appreciation of the worth of the ministry;
- (ii) a close connection between the minister and the people;
- (iii) proportionality in the giving;
- (iv) flexibility of approach; and
- (v) ministry is not about seeking financial gain.

The full report of the Doctrine Committee is included in the Assembly Reports 2013.

16. The Appraisal Panel examined the recommendations of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel against each of these five Principles, as described in Appendix 1. Its conclusions, set out below, replace those in the original Tyrone Memorial Review Panel’s report. They were endorsed by the Board of Finance and Personnel, which commends them to the General Assembly. In summary it is proposed that:

- (i) there should be no increase in the Basic Ministerial Minimum over and above the appropriate annual increase;
- (ii) the Incremental Allowance (or years of service allowance) should be 1% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum for every additional year of service, with the maximum reached after twenty years’ of service;
- (iii) the Union Commission should continue to exercise its judgement in setting the terms of new “Calls”, ensuring that the current stipend differential should not increase and taking into account the factors referred to in the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel’s Report, together with information on appropriate comparator Congregations;
- (iv) Where a Congregation chooses to increase its Minister’s stipend by an amount above that recommended by the Board of Finance and Personnel it should make an equivalent one-off payment in that year to the Central Ministry Fund;
- (v) The Board of Finance and Personnel should review the stipend bands on an annual basis;
- (vi) The non Regium Donum part of the Bonus should be incorporated into the Basic Ministerial Minimum and/or the Incremental Allowance; and
- (vii) The new system for paying Ministers should be described as “Stipend Review”.

17. In endorsing the recommendation that the Incremental Allowance should be an additional 1% per annum with the maximum reached after 20 years of service, the Board noted that the estimated additional cost to the Church would be over £250k.

18. Finally, the Board is grateful to the four Conveners of its Pensions and Assessments Committee (Mr Basil McCorriston), Finance, Legal and IT Committee (Mr Bob McCullagh), Personnel Committee (Mr Robert Campton) and Property Management Committee (the Rev Adrian McLernon) for all their work on behalf of the Board. The Board also wishes to thank the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for their advice and commitment last year, not only to the Board but also to ministers, treasurers and their colleagues in Assembly Buildings, whose work they support.

APPENDIX 1

REPORT OF THE TYRONE MEMORIAL APPRAISAL PANEL

Introduction

1. The Appraisal Panel appointed by the Board to appraise the report of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel has met four times. The Panel was established to follow up the 2013 General Assembly Resolution:

“That in the light of the report of the Doctrine Committee, the Board of Finance and Personnel requests the permission of the Assembly to withdraw the report of the Tyrone Memorial Panel for further consideration and examination and to report with recommendation to the 2014 General Assembly”.

2. At the Board meeting on 8 October 2013 the Board passed the following resolution:

“That the Panel meet and consider the implications, if any, of the Doctrine Committee report on the “Support of Ministers” for the Tyrone Memorial Review Report, currently on the books of the General Assembly.”

Tyrone Memorial Review Report

3. The Report of the original Review Panel contained a number of recommendations, which had been the subject of extensive consultation both at Congregational and Presbytery level. In summary, the Report recommended a series of measures designed to reduce the stipend differentials between ministers, which then ranged from the Ministerial Minimum to some two and a half times the Minimum. That Review Panel proposed that a Minister's remuneration should be made up of four elements:

- (i) a Basic Ministerial Minimum;
- (ii) an Incremental Allowance reflecting years of service;
- (iii) a Local Allowance (where appropriate) reflecting local congregational circumstances; and
- (iv) a Discretionary Grant which would include the amount due from the Regium Donum.

4. The mechanism to reduce the differential was the introduction of a Local Allowance above the Minimum to reflect the “size of Congregation, any specific Ministerial responsibilities, local additional responsibilities and the general resources and needs of the Congregation”, to be set by the Union Commission and subject to its seven yearly review. The Report proposed a ceiling for the Local Allowance of 30% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum. The full Report of the Review Panel can be found on pages 260 to 279 of the General Assembly 2013 Annual Reports.

5. The Report made a number of other related recommendations, in particular reducing the period for ministers on the Minimum Stipend to reach the top of the scale from 30 years of service to 20 years. The Report envisaged an increase in the Incremental Allowance to 5% of stipend paid every five years up to 20 years of service, (giving an overall increase of 20%), in place of the present 2.5% of stipend paid every five years up to 30 years (giving an overall increase of 15%).

Doctrine Committee Report

6. It is against that backdrop that the Doctrine Committee was asked to bring to the 2013 General Assembly “*a report containing further theological reflection upon, and elucidation of the biblical principles governing the financial support of the Church’s ministers*”. Its Report identified five Principles on which basis that financial support should be provided. They were:

- (a) an appreciation of the worth of the ministry;
- (b) a close connection between the minister and people;
- (c) proportionality in the Giving;
- (d) flexibility of approach; and
- (e) ministry is not about seeking financial gain.

The full Report of the Doctrine Committee can be found on pages 30 to 36 of the General Assembly 2013 Annual Reports. The Appraisal Panel appointed by the Board of Finance and Personnel has examined the report of the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel against these five Principles.

7. Taking these five Principles in turn, the Appraisal Panel began by exploring the challenging question of how to measure “worth”. Associated with this was the question whether the current value of the Minimum Stipend and the associated progression arrangements were a fair indication of “worth”. The Appraisal Panel agreed with the conclusion in the original Tyrone Memorial Review Report that many ministers are underpaid compared to their counterparts in other professions, but that affordability issues precluded an increase in the Minimum at this time. The Appraisal Panel welcomed the proposed increase in the Incremental Allowance from 2.5% to 5% over 20 years rather than 30 years, payable in five yearly increments. However, the Panel noted that staff on Board of Finance and Personnel scales in Assembly Buildings reached their maximum within a ten year period with annual increments. It would have wished to recommend a similar period for ministers on the basic/appropriate minimum scale to reach the maximum scale point, but concluded that this was not affordable. Instead it recommends that the Minimum scale should increase by 1% per annum for twenty years. In recommending this level of increase, the Appraisal Panel was conscious that this will result in an increased cost to the Central Ministry Fund,

as well as to individual Congregations. Appendix 1 and 2 to this report illustrate the changes envisaged to the Ministerial/Appropriate Minimum scale assuming the Board of Finance and Personnel, and ultimately the General Assembly, accept the Panel's recommendations. The Appendices show estimates of the cost of the change in Northern Ireland of £225,616 and in the Republic of Ireland of €51,859. This cost will be borne by the Central Ministry Fund and/or Congregations. The Appraisal Panel also endorsed the original Review Panel's wish that the Personnel Committee of the Board should consider the position of ministers in Church House and Union College in the light of decisions on the Report.

8. The Appraisal Panel confirmed the importance attached by the Doctrine Committee to a close connection between the Minister and people. It concurred with the Committee's conclusion that "admission to the Ministry should only take place where there are specific vacancies to be filled." The Appraisal Panel noted that this was not an issue explored by the original Review Panel: it was taken for granted in the context of the "Call".

9. In regard to "proportionality" in giving, the Doctrine Committee noted that "those who ministered the Gospel should receive support at a level that released them from other remunerated activity and sustained wife along with husband", with the added implication of "a comparable standard of living". The Appraisal Panel noted that this begged the question of whether the comparable standard of living should be Congregation based or Church-wide based? It was sympathetic to the conclusion of the original Review Panel that a purely congregational basis would lead to unjustified disparities between ministerial stipends, without regard to workload.

10. The Doctrine Committee noted that the "Scriptures do not prescribe one authorised form by which the Church's ministers are to be supported financially and in all places." It noted the desire of the original Review Panel to build in flexibility through the payment of a Local Allowance based on certain factors which contributed to workload, the elements of which were described earlier in this report. It also noted the broad support for this proposal in the extensive consultation exercise undertaken prior to the presentation of the Review Panel's final report to the 2011 General Assembly. In considering this crucial recommendation of the original Review Panel, the Appraisal Panel commissioned some updated information on Ministerial stipends. This research indicated that since the last analysis had been undertaken for the original Review Panel the differential between ministerial stipends had narrowed to less than 2:1. The Appraisal Panel attributed this narrowing of the differential to the work of the Union Commission in setting the terms of new "Calls". Moreover there was an expectation that the work of the Union Commission would continue to exercise its judgement on the terms of new "Calls", ensuring that the differential should not widen. The Appraisal Panel agreed that the deliberations of the Commission on the terms of the "Call" could not be reduced to a formulaic exercise, but should continue to take into account those elements identified by the original Review Panel in its report as constituting the basis for the payment of a Local Allowance, together with appropriate information on comparator Congregations.

11. In the light of this new evidence, the Appraisal Panel was reluctant to define a ceiling figure on the level of stipend payable, preferring instead to rely on the Union Commission to exercise its authority in a fair and consistent manner – taking into account its added responsibility for undertaking regular reviews every

seven years. However, the Appraisal Panel was conscious that the Commission had no authority to intervene where a Congregation nonetheless decided to pay its minister above the level set by the Commission, taking into account any inflationary or other increase approved by the Board of Finance and Personnel. It therefore decided to recommend that a Congregation acting in this way should make a one-off special payment to the Central Ministry Fund at the level of 100% of the additional amount over and above the recommended increase. This would serve to reinforce the (Presbyterian) belief that the financially strong should support the weak through a transfer of resources.

12. The Appraisal Panel was also conscious of the need for the Board of Finance and Personnel to recommend new stipend bands to cover future inflationary or other increases, to take account of the changes envisaged above and assuming their acceptance by the General Assembly.

13. The Appraisal Panel noted and concurred with the Doctrine Committee's fifth Principle that "Ministry is not about seeking financial gain."

14. The Appraisal Panel also considered the recommendation of the original Review Panel in regard to the payment of a "Discretionary Grant" and concluded the non Regium Donum part of the Bonus should be incorporated into the Basic Ministerial Minimum and/or the Incremental Allowance.

15. Finally, the Appraisal Panel concluded that the time had come to remove the designation "Tyrone Memorial" from the system for determining Ministerial stipends. It recommends that in future the system should be described as "Stipend Review".

Summary of Recommendations

16. The Appraisal Panel has carefully considered the five Principles in the Doctrine Committee's Report and recommends:

- (i) there should be no increase in the Basic Ministerial Minimum over and above the appropriate annual increase;
- (ii) the Incremental Allowance should be 1% for every additional year of service, with the maximum reached after twenty years' service. Details are set out in the Appendices to this report;
- (iii) The Union Commission should continue to exercise its judgement in setting the terms of new "Calls", ensuring that the current stipend differential should not increase and taking into account the factors referred to in the Tyrone Memorial Review Panel's Report together with information on appropriate comparator Congregations – thereby removing the need for a Local Allowance;
- (iv) Where a Congregation chooses to increase its Minister's stipend by an amount above that recommended by the Board of Finance and Personnel it should make an equivalent one-off payment in that year to the Central Ministry Fund;
- (v) The Board of Finance and Personnel should review the stipend bands on an annual basis;
- (vi) The non Regium Donum part of the Bonus should be incorporated into the Basic Ministerial Minimum and/or the Incremental Allowance; and
- (vii) The new system for paying Ministers should be described as "Stipend Review".

APPENDIX 1(a)

TO THE REPORT OF THE TYRONE MEMORIAL
APPRAISALS PANEL

(STERLING Increments - 1% per year for 20 years)

Years of Service	Current £	Original Proposal £	Years of Service	Revised Proposal £
Service Increments	5 years	5 years		1 year
Service Increments %	2.5%	5.0%		1.0%
Service Increments	585	1,170		234
No. of Increments	6	4		20
Total Increments %	15.0%	20.0%		20.0%
Total Increments	£3,510	£4,681		£4,680
1 to 5	23,416	23,416	1	23,416
			2	23,650
			3	23,884
			4	24,118
			5	24,352
6 to 10	24,001	24,586	6	24,586
			7	24,820
			8	25,054
			9	25,288
			10	25,522
11 to 15	24,586	25,756	11	25,756
			12	25,990
			13	26,224
			14	26,458
			15	26,692

Years of Service	Current £	Original Proposal £	Years of Service	Revised Proposal £
16 to 20	25,171	26,926	16	26,926
			17	27,160
			18	27,394
			19	27,628
			20	27,862
21 to 25	25,756	28,097	21 to 25	28,097
26 to 30	26,341	28,097	26 to 30	28,097
31 +	26,926	28,097	31+	28,097

Anticipated cost of advancing increments from 30 years to 20 years

Current Band	Current	No. in Band	New Band mid-point	Extra Cost
1 to 5	23,416	66	23,884	30,888
6 to 10	24,001	17	25,054	17,901
11 to 15	24,586	24	26,224	39,312
16 to 20	25,171	30	27,394	66,690
21 to 25	25,756	13	28,097	30,433
26 to 30	26,341	15	28,097	26,340
31 +	26,926	12	28,097	14,052
		177		225,616

APPENDIX 1(b)

TO THE REPORT OF THE TYRONE MEMORIAL
APPRAISALS PANEL

(EURO Increments - 1% per year for 20 years)

Years of Service	Current €	Original Proposal €	Years of Service	Revised Proposal €
Service Increments	5 years	5 years		2 years
Service Increments %	2.5%	5.0%		1.0%
Service Increments £	899	1,798		359
No. of Increments	6	4		20
Total Increments %	15.0%	20.0%		20.0%
Total Increments £	€5,394	€7,192		€7,192
1 to 5	35,941	35,941	1	35,941
			2	36,300
			3	36,659
			4	37,018
			5	37,377
6 to 10	36,840	37,739	6	37,736
			7	38,095
			8	38,454
			9	38,813
			10	39,172

11 to 15	37,739	39,537	11	39,531
			12	39,890
			13	40,249
			14	40,608
			15	40,967
16 to 20	38,638	41,335	16	41,326
			17	41,685
			18	42,044
			19	42,403
			20	42,762
21 to 25	39,537	43,133	21 to 25	43,133
26 to 30	40,436	43,133	26 to 30	43,133
31 +	41,335	43,133	31+	43,133

Anticipated cost of advancing increments from 30 years to 10 years

Current Band	Current	No. in Band	New Band mid-point	Extra Cost
1 to 5	35,941	51	36,659	36,618
6 to 10	36,840	2	38,454	3,228
11 to 15	37,739	0	40,249	-
16 to 20	38,638	3	42,044	10,218
21 to 25	39,537	0	43,133	-
26 to 30	40,436	1	43,133	2,697
31 +	41,335	1	43,133	1,798
		109		51,859

PENSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Pensions and Assessments Committee continues to face difficult challenges, namely

- (a) ensuring there is sufficient income for the various assessment funds to meet their financial commitments while being conscious of the financial burden placed on Congregations through the assessments system.
- (b) the annual review of minimum stipends and the cost of pension contributions to congregations with the need to make suitable financial provision for ministers during their ministry and in retirement.

The recent economic climate has impacted on these issues but the Committee continues to seek God's guidance as it tries to address these important matters.

CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

2. The Committee is pleased to report that the transition in 2013 from stipend to assessable income as the basis for congregational assessments was reasonably smooth. The Committee would in particular like to thank Treasurers and Presbytery Finance Conveners for their assistance with the changeover arrangements.

3. With regard to 2014 the Committee has budgeted for a total assessment, excluding the Pension Fund, of £4,550,000. The bands and rates designed to collect this amount are set out in the table below. Band 1 shows an increase of 0.5% over 2013, with bands 2 and 3 an increase of 0.25% and bands 4 and 5 remaining as 2013.

Assessment Band	Assessable Income (£/€)		Assessment Rate
	From	To	
1.	0	65,000	14.50%
2.	65,000	130,000	10.75%
3.	130,000	195,000	7.25%
4.	195,000	260,000	3.50%
5.	260,000	and above	0.00%

The income received through the assessments system is allocated to the various assessment funds in proportion to the following budgeted requirements for each fund:

Assessment	2014 £	2014 %
Central Ministry Fund	£2,700,000	8.61%
Retired Ministers Fund	£50,000	0.16%
Widows of Ministers Fund	£300,000	0.96%
Prolonged Disability Fund	£29,000	0.09%
Incidental Fund	£650,000	2.07%
Ministerial Development Fund	£25,000	0.08%
Church House External Work	£370,000	1.18%
Sick Supply Fund	£26,000	0.08%
Students Bursary Fund	£400,000	1.27%
	<hr/> £4,500,000	14.50%

4. During the past year a small 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 continues to monitor this area carefully.

5. Currently five Congregations have defaulted on payments of Assessments and Stipend totaling £47,353.58. One Congregation is under review, one is paying the arrears by installments, one has been referred to Presbytery and the other two to Union Commission.

Central Ministry Fund

6. At the end of 2013, CMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £2,092,605 a decrease of £84,323. This represents less than one year's regular outgoings. The year-end position was better than budgeted.

7. The percentage of assessed income to be allocated to CMF in 2014 is 8.61% which is estimated to equate to £2,700,000.

Retired Ministers Fund

8. At the end of 2013, RMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £397,556, a decrease of £332,539 on 2012.

9. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2014:

- (a) That the percentage of assessed income to be allocated to RMF in 2014 be 0.16% which is estimated to equate to £50,000;
- (b) That the maximum Basic Retirement Allowance for 2014 be £11,708 (2013 £11,454);
- (c) That Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension shall be £9,160 married, £5,728 single.

Widows of Ministers Fund

10 At the end of 2013, WMF had a retained balance (excluding investments) of £672,889, a decrease of £55,175 on 2012.

11. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2014:

- (a) That the percentage of assessed income to be allocated to WMF in 2014 be 0.96% which is estimated to equate to £300,000;
- (b) That the maximum Widows Pension be £6,439 (27.5% of Basic Ministerial Minimum);
- (c) That widows, not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension, receive a maximum of £6,439;
- (d) That widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWF A receive a maximum of £6,439 plus £500;
- (e) That widows, whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension receive a maximum of £6,439 plus £5,728.

Ministers Prolonged Disability Fund

12. At the end of 2013, the fund had a retained balance of £714,316 a decrease of £7,897 on 2012.

13. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2014:

- (a) That the percentage of assessed income to be allocated to PDF in 2014 be 0.09%, which is estimated to equate to £29,000;
 - (b) That the maximum level of grant for 2014 be £11,775.
14. In 2013, 3 ministers were in receipt of the grant for all or part of the year.
15. In addition to annual grants, employers National Insurance and Pension contributions to PCI Pension Scheme are paid by the fund until the beneficiary returns to work or attains his or her normal retirement age. The total cost to the fund, for each person receiving benefit, is approx. £20,000 pa.

Incidental Fund

16. 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.

17. At the end of 2013, the Incidental Fund had a deficit of £1,602 a decrease of £145,114 on 2012. This was due to a reallocation of staff funding, following the establishment of the Creative Production Unit, and internal rent charges.

18. The Committee continues to review requests for grant payments in setting the assessment requirement for the fund.

19. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2014:

- (a) That the percentage of assessed income to be allocated to the fund be 2.07% which is estimated to equate to £650,000.

The Ministerial Development Fund

20. At the end of 2013, the Ministerial Development Fund had a retained balance of £223,107. The budgeted income for 2014 is estimated to equate to £25,000 based on 0.08% of assessable income and as recommended by the Board of Christian Training.

Sick Supply Fund

21. At the end of 2013, the fund had a retained balance of £31,375, an increase of £10,447 on 2012.

22. The following recommendation was approved by the Board for 2014:

- (a) That the percentage of assessed income to be allocated to the fund be 0.08% which is estimated to equate to £26,000.

The Students Bursary Fund

23. The budget for the Students Bursary Fund for 2014 is estimated to equate to £400,000 (1.27% of assessed income) as recommended by the Board of Christian Training.

Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension (2009) Fund

24. This fund is separate from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) and receives the income from the Pension Fund assessment which is intended to cover the “employers” pension contributions on stipends.

25. Congregation contributions to the fund are collected by an assessment on stipend paid in the current year and has been set at 27.5% for 2014. This is in line with the schedule of contributions prepared in connection with the actuarial valuation of the Pension Scheme as at 31 December 2011 and as agreed with Scheme Trustees.

26. The assessment rate will be reviewed following the next Actuarial Valuation of the Pension Scheme which is due as at 31 December 2014.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND PENSION SCHEME (2009)

27. The “employers” pension contribution cost as determined by the actuarial valuation as at 31 December 2011 increased from 27.4% to 27.5% with effect from 1 January 2013. The cost of the scheme continues to be a significant financial commitment for the Church. The Committee will review the position after the next actuarial valuation which is due as at 31 December 2014.

28. The Committee were made aware that under UK State Pension Reform it is proposed that a new flat rate State Pension of £144.00 per week is to be introduced on 6 April 2016. These proposals will see the removal of the facility for employer sponsored defined benefit pensions schemes to contract out of the additional earnings element of the State Pension. This will result in higher National Insurance Contributions for employers and employees. It is estimated that the additional annual cost of employer’s national insurance contributions could be in the region of £400,000. The Committee considered a number of options and agreed that rather than reduce or tamper with existing pension benefits, the increase in NIC be accepted as a Government requirement and that the additional employers national insurance cost borne by the Church. The matter will however be kept under review.

29. With regard to pension in payment under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) statutory increases have been applied. However for pension accrued in the period from 1976 to 1997 any increase is at the discretion of the Scheme Trustees. Since 2005, and in light of the funding position, the Scheme Trustees have not awarded an increase for the discretionary part of the pension. The Committee want to ensure that our retired ministers do feel valued for the contribution they have made to the Church and will continue to keep the matter under review and liaise with the scheme trustees as required.

Applications for Retirement

30. Since the last Assembly the following ministers were granted leave to retire, at or over the age of 65, by their Presbyteries: Rev J Holmes (Duneane and First Randallstown), Rev JI Davey (Hillsborough), Very Rev Dr N Hamilton (Ballysillan), Rev Dr RA Russell (Ballywalter), Rev D Hillen (Magheramason), Rev GD Campbell (Blackrock), Rev J Gordon (Second Keady and Drumhillery), Rev HR Quinn (Board of Mission Overseas), Very Rev Dr T Morrow (Lucan), Rev D Bradley (Ballycrochan), Rev AL Kirk (First Ahoghill) and Rev CM Hunter (Rathgar).

31. Unanimous approval was given to the Very Rev Dr William Donald Patton, Randalstown OC, to seek the permission of the General Assembly to retire at the age of 64 with a retirement date on or after 31 January 2015.

REVIEW OF BASIC MINISTERIAL MINIMUM, FAMILY GRANTS ETC

32. The annual review of the minimum stipend was widely discussed by the Committee and also the Board. In accordance with agreed procedures the Committee consulted with the Boards' Personnel Committee which is responsible for making a recommendation in relation to the review of Church House staff salaries scales. The Committee, in deciding to recommend that a £500 (€700) increase in Ministerial Minimum be awarded for 2014 were conscious of genuine difficulties being faced by ministers and staff at the lower end of the scales, particularly those with children.

33. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2014:

(a) Ministerial Minimum

	Northern Ireland		Rep of Ireland	
	2014	2013	2014	2013
Ministerial Minimum	£23,416	£22,916	€36,641	€35,941
After 5 years service	£24,001	£23,489	€37,557	€36,840
After 10 years service	£24,586	£24,062	€38,473	€37,739
After 15 years service	£25,171	£24,635	€39,839	€37,638
After 20 years service	£25,756	£25,208	€40,305	€39,537
After 25 years service	£26,341	£25,781	€41,221	€40,436
After 30 years service	£26,926	£26,354	€42,137	€41,335

(b) Family Grants 2014

The Committee agreed that family grants for 2014 would be adjusted by the increase in the percentage increases in the Ministerial Minimums and as a result the figures for 2014 are as follows:

	2014		2013	
	£	€	£	€
Birth to 10 years	347	1,019	340	1,000
11 to 15 years	523	1,610	512	1,579
16 years and over				
At school	784	2,976	767	2,919
At university	2,609	4,964	2,553	4,869
Bands – Joint Incomes				
Reduction - Nil	27,887	42,566	27,324	41,753
Reduction - £1 for every £5	37,517	57,254	36,760	56,160 (up to)
Reduction - £1 for every £2	37,517	57,254	36,760	56,160 (above)

- (c) The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years + and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 for 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 £4,885 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code, or £2,400 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under the above paragraphs shall be £4,855. In reckoning augmentation for 2014, the CMF shall not take account of a sum, not exceeding the annual bonus, being income from Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. Code Par 316(2)(e).

The Central Ministry Fund Bonus

34. The Committee recommended and the Board agreed that the CMF Bonus remain at £1,518 for 2014.

Tyrone Memorial Increases

35. The increases for 2014 are as follows:

BAND	Percentage 2014	Increase on mid point
0 - £25,000	2.20%	£500 (£23,225)
£25,001 - £30,000	1.82%	£500 (£27,500)
£30,001 - £35,000	1.54%	£500 (£32,500)
£35,001 - £40,000	1.33%	£500 (£37,500)
£40,001 and over	1.18%	£500 (£42,500)

Euro Stipends to increase by €700 (approx. 2.0%) under Tyrone Memorial

PRIORITIES COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL BOARD

36. In 2013 the Priorities Committee of the General Board reviewed the major cost of the various assessments funds. In relation to the Central Ministry Fund it asked the Board of Finance and Personnel to look at three specific issues:

- The significant cost of the bonus to the Central Ministry Fund and whether the present arrangements should be reviewed;
- The present Family Grants system and whether it should be reviewed;
- The differential between the Ministerial Minimums in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

37. The review was referred to the Pensions and Assessments Committee. Following the review and in summary it was agreed that:

- The present arrangements in relation to the bonus should be changed. Full details will be included in the Board of Finance and Personnel Supplementary Report. In summary it is proposed that a significant proportion of the present bonus be transferred to stipend and that the additional cost to Congregations be offset by a reduction in the CMF assessment.
- Further information on educational and related costs needs to be obtained and to that end ministers presently in receipt of a grant be asked to provide some factual information to assist the Committee in its review. It is anticipated this will be completed by the end of 2014.
- In light of information obtained regarding salary comparisons, cost of living etc. that the present differential between minimum stipends in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is at an appropriate level and does not need to be altered at this time.

PRESBYTERIAN WIDOWS FUND ASSOCIATION

(for information - does not fall under the responsibility of the Committee).

38. 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.

BASIL McCORRISTON, 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 Ms Laura Kelly, Head of Personnel, and thanks are due to all of them.
3. Thanks are also due to Mr Ian McElhinny for the sterling work carried out to further to work of the Retired Ministers' House Fund.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

4. Work on the completion of the Job Evaluation Scheme has continued. Clerical and Administrative posts have been completed and reviewed. A few Executive posts remain to be completed but the bank of job descriptions and evaluations are already providing a valuable input into the work of the review of structures and the application of resources.

5. Work on policy development has been progressed through the Personnel Advisory Panel. Work is currently being finalised in relation to policies on Bribery, Stress at Work and Redundancy.

6. Following a further review of proposals for a Childcare Voucher Scheme for staff the Committee recommended that in view of current financial constraints a decision on introducing the scheme should be deferred for a further year. This recommendation was approved by the Board of Finance and Personnel.

7. The Committee is also considering the introduction of a staff appraisal scheme and guidance to Congregations in relation to data protection is under consideration.

8. Following consideration the Committee agreed that the Group Prudential Health Scheme (which is entirely member funded) and currently available to ministers should also be made available to all staff interested in joining.

9. Following submission of its 3-year Equality Commission Review, Personnel have had further discussions with the Equality Commission and have received a positive response in relation to our employment practices and record over the period.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

10. The Health and Safety Panel has continued to make progress on this important area of work. A checklist for Congregations in relation to running events on Church property has been issued and Congregations have been advised as to how to access the Peninsula Health and Safety helpline and also their manual via the website.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND

11. The Committee continues to oversee the management and rental of the properties within its portfolio.

12. The land in Cullybackey continues to be held and routine maintenance carried out as necessary, awaiting sale in better market conditions. Planning approval on this site for development has been renewed to 2014. For the present some of the land is let to a local farmer for agricultural purposes.

13. 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.

14. The Committee are currently considering the guidelines and circumstances under which equity sharing arrangements may be considered, including the minimum rates of contribution required from applicants.

15. At the end of December 2013 the funds available were £113,490 with the current value of loans advanced £818,465.

ROBERT J CAMPTON, Convener

COMMITTEE APPENDIX 1

Sterling Salary Scales of Staff in post in Assembly Buildings on 1 January 2014.

EXECUTIVE POSTS

Scale 1 (£23,200 - £27,565)

Communications Officer, BMI
IT Support Manager, BFP

Scale 2 (£26,201 - £31,519)

Editor of the Presbyterian Herald and Staff Writer (GSO)
Payroll & Assessment Manager, BFP
Financial Manager, BSW
Taking Care Trainer and Co-Ordinator, BSW
Assistant Residential Services Manager, BSW
Children's Development Officer, YAC
Young Adults Development Officer, YAC
Youth Development Officer, YAC
Mission Training Officer, BMO
Finance Manager, BMI
General Secretary, PW
Support Officer, BMI

Scale 3 (£29,316 - £35,730)

Education in Mission Officer, BMO
Mission Development Officer, BMI
Personnel Officer, BMO
Buildings Manager & Safety Officer, BFP
Head of Creative Production, GB

Scale 4 (£32,311 - £40,367)

Head of Personnel, BFP
Senior Financial Accountant, BFP
IT Development & Support Manager, BFP
Residential Services Manager, BSW

Scale 5 (£35,730 - £43,539)

Communications Secretary and Press Officer, GB
Acting Director of Youth & Children's Ministry, YAC

Scale 6 (£38,374 - £46,750)

Executive Secretary, BMO
Director of Social Service, BSW
Executive Secretary, BMI
Deputy General Secretary, GB

Scale 7 (£43,539 - £56,066)

General Secretary, GB
Financial Secretary, BFP

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS**Scale 1 (£13,205 - £15,250)**

Clerical Officer (FSO)
Secretary/Receptionist (BSW)
Telephonist (GSO)

Scale 2 (£14,208 - £16,431)

Secretary (GSO)
Clerical/Secretarial Assistant (FSO)
Handyperson (BFP)
Personnel Assistant (BFP)
Secretary/Receptionist (PW)
Taking Care Administrator (BSW)
Office Secretary, (BMI)
Secretary (JS), (BMI)

Scale 3 (£15,944 - £18,435)

Clerical Officer (BFP)
Deputy Building Manager (BFP)
Senior Personnel Assistant (BFP)
Personnel Assistant (BMI)
Senior Secretary (BMI)
Senior Secretary (BSW) (JS)
Senior Secretary (PW)
Senior Secretary – Publications & Information (BMO)
Senior Secretary - Mission Training & External Funding (BMO)
Senior Secretary (GSO)
Information Officer/Receptionist (GSO)
Secretary (YACM)
Senior Secretary, Finance (YACM)

Scale 4 (£18,066 - £20,805)

Administrative Assistant (JS) (YACM)
 Senior Secretary (JS) (YACM)
 Communications Administrator (GSO)
 Senior Secretary (GSO)
 Payroll and Clerical Assistant (BFP)
 Personnel Administrator (BFP)
 Personal Secretary (BFP)
 Wages Clerk (BSW)

Scale 5 (£19,766 - £22,819)

Production Manager (GSO)
 Assistant Accountant (BFP)
 Financial Assistant (BFP)
 IT Support Assistant x 2 (BFP)
 Office Supervisor and Personal Secretary (BMI)
 Personal Assistant to the Director of Social Service (BSW)
 Development Officer, (PW)

Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£21,828 - £24,953)

Personal Secretary & Office Supervisor (GSO)
 Personnel Officer (BFP)
 Senior Administrative Officer (BMO)
 Senior Administrative Officer (YACM)

Sterling Salary Scales of Staff in post in other locations on 1 January 2014**EXECUTIVE POSTS****Scale 2 (£26,201 - £31,519)**

University Chaplain UUJ, BSW
 Minister/Ministry Co-ordinator, Kinghan Church, BSW
 Project Manager, Willow Brook, BSW
 Chaplain in Residence, Queens University, Stranmillis/Union College, BSW
 College Librarian, Union College
 Registrar/Administrator, Union College

Scale 4 (£32,311 - £40,367)

Christian Training Development Officer, Union

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS**Scale 1 (£13,205 - £15,250)**

Clerical Officer (5) OPS (BSW)
 Receptionist (Term Time), Union College

Scale 2 (£14,208 - £16,431)

Clerical and Resource Officer, Nightlight, (BMI)
Clerical Officer - Carlisle House (PT 3) (BSW)
Clerical Officer, (1 FT & 2 PT) OPS (BSW)
Clerical Officer, Kinghan Church (BSW)
Custodian, Union College
Library Assistant, Union College

Scale 3 (£15,944 - £18,435)

Co-ordinator-Counselling Services (BSW)
Administrative Assistant, Union College

Scale 4 (£18,066 - £20,805)

Administrator, Derryvolgie (BSW)
Senior Secretary, (2 posts) Union College
Deputy Librarian, Union College

Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£21,828 - £24,953)

Assistant Chaplain, QUB (BSW)
Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale) (BSW)

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to be responsible for the development, management and maintenance of Assembly and Fisherwick Buildings. Following the completion of external stonework and roof repairs and subsequent internal refurbishment on-going maintenance issues are, thankfully, minimal. Therefore priorities have been focused on the management of commercial lettable space and the development of the Conference and meeting space.

2. The Spires Shopping Mall continues to operate in a very challenging and ever changing retail scene. However in the last year there has been an upturn in interest in vacant units and a number of short term licence/tenancy agreements have been agreed. The commercial office accommodation in Fisherwick Buildings is now occupied by two tenants on long term leases.

3. Developing the Conference and meeting space is an opportunity to generate additional income and help shape business and leisure in Belfast. Assembly Buildings is an excellent conference facility that is not only architecturally unique but also provides 21st century facilities. Given that it is possible to host a major conference for over 1,000 delegates, or an intimate meeting for just a handful of people, the Assembly Buildings Conference Centre is now recognised as a key player in the conference and meeting space market.

4. Assembly Buildings can accommodate Conferences; Seminars; Exhibitions; Board Meetings; Interviews; Trade Shows; Presentations; Training Courses; Recruitment Events; Fundraising Events; Concerts; Theatrical Performances; Rehearsal Space; Lectures; Breakfast Meetings; Private Receptions and Award Ceremonies.

5. In the last 18 months a number of major Conferences have been hosted, including the British Association of Urological Surgeons – Section of Oncology, The Community Foundation International and Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Such bodies are recognising Assembly Buildings as a very cost effective solution both locally and nationally.

6. Aware of the need to develop a marketing strategy Michael McCormick, AzurEurope, was appointed in January 2013 on a 12 month contract as Head of Sales and Marketing of Assembly Buildings with the following 5 strategic objectives –

- (i) creating and building awareness of Assembly Buildings as a unique conference and meeting space in Belfast;
- (ii) increasing revenue streams through greater use of Assembly Buildings;
- (iii) developing relationships and partnerships with Belfast City Council, Visit Belfast and NITB so that Assembly Buildings is viewed as one of the key conference venues locally, nationally and internationally;
- (iv) Building on existing partnerships with Europa Hotel, Fitzwilliam Hotel and Jurys Inn;
- (v) Developing awareness of Assembly Buildings within the Presbyterian Church community as a meetings and conference space.

7. The Committee is delighted to report that the sales target set has been significantly exceeded in 2013 and has appointed AzurEurope for a further twelve months.

8. Through this Report the Committee would remind the PCI family of the facilities available and encourage each member of the General Assembly to be an ambassador for Assembly Buildings by promoting it in your Congregations and work place.

9. The Committee wishes to thank all staff directly involved in the daily management of Assembly Buildings.

ADRIAN McLERNON, Convener

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 (including Personnel and IT)) for the year ended 31 December, 2013 were some £196k above budget. However, the majority of the overrun was due to a post budget agreed reallocation of personnel staff costs, movement of the press officer post into the General Secretary's Office, and a reallocation of Assembly Buildings' internal rental charges. When these reallocations were eliminated the actual result for the year was more in line with budget and on this basis the Committee considered the outcome to be satisfactory.

2. Budgeted expenses for the year ended 31 December, 2014 show an increase of just over 4% compared with 2013. The main increase will be in salary costs which are projected to rise by just over £14k in total reflecting the agreed annual increase and salary increment rises. In addition a further reallocation of IT charges amounting to £27k has been budgeted for. In future, this budget head will be renamed as 'support services' with the costs of the General Secretary's Office

being charged directly to the Incidental Fund rather than going through General Expenses.

3. **Auditors/General Investment Fund** – The Financial Secretary reported that the auditors have completed the audit of the Trustees Accounts and other funds. A separate account has been prepared for the General Investment Fund as requested in the prior year. No issues of note have been raised to date.

4. **Statistics** – see appended tables

5. **Pension Auto-enrolment** – Following introduction of new legislation, 142 people have been auto-enrolled during February from the Board of Social Witness payroll and a further 27 from the Church House staff payroll. Contributions to date indicate that the annual cost to the Church will be around £120k per annum. Auto enrolled staff had 30 days to advise Standard Life, provider of the auto-enrolment scheme, if they wish to opt-out of the scheme.

6. All other staff i.e. those who do not meet the salary threshold to be auto-enrolled and who are not in an existing scheme are entitled to join the scheme voluntarily. Should they decide to join, the Church is obliged to pay employer contributions. The overall cost to the Church could therefore rise if the uptake is high. A clearer position on the financial cost should become evident over the next few months as staff opt in or out of the scheme.

7. **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.

8. **Regulation of Charities** – Implementation of the regulations in The Charities (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 has commenced and registration of Presbyterian Churches is likely to commence in 2014. Further details are provided in the report of the General Board Panel set up to deal with this matter.

9. **Risk Assessment** – Risk Assessment is on-going. A questionnaire was passed to all Board Conveners/Secretaries to enable them to report to the Committee on the key risks previously identified. Returns are awaited and if any issues arise they will be included in supplementary reports.

10. **Bank Overdrafts and deposit accounts** – The Committee continued to receive reports on overdrafts and deposit accounts. The four banks used continue to meet the agreed minimum credit ratings in accordance with the Board's policy set in 2009.

11. **Ministerial expenses** – A small number of Treasurers failed to submit Ministerial Expenses Returns in 2012 and their names were reported to Presbytery Clerks accordingly.

12. **Handbook for Treasurers** – The update of the handbook, last updated in 2002, has been deferred until the introduction of the Charities legislation.

13. **Insurance** – Overall premiums are expected to be £166,000 for 2014, compared with £158,000 for 2013. The main reason for the increase is the claims experience within older people's services of the Board of Social Witness. A further €31k is expected to be paid in insurance premiums in ROI, in line with the previous year.

14. **Information Technology** – The Committee monitored the implementation of new accounting software and other IT developments during 2013. While the IT Department has had some increase in staffing there remains a backlog of issues to be dealt with by senior staff.

An external independent review of the IT arrangements is being sought and initial discussions have been held to this effect.

15. **Annual statistical return 2014**

(i) **Definition of families**

Additional guidance has been requested for collection of data in respect of Box 2.10 of the statistical return, namely, the number of families connected with a congregation. It was agreed that the guidance be amended to clarify that, where more than one member of the family contributes, the additional contributors should only be reckoned as separate families if they are adult children of a marriage still living in the family home but contributing separately.

(ii) The Committee discussed the guidance and considered that this statistic, in its current form, was potentially misleading and may be applied inconsistently, since it does not cater easily for a number of different types of family units and would artificially increase the number of families even if overall membership didn't change. It was agreed that the measure be amended to collect information on the number of 'households' rather than 'families' as currently defined. A resolution to implement this change is included.

(iii) **Ruling Elders**

The Committee discussed the recording of statistics in respect of Ruling Elders and concluded that an 'elder emeritus' should not be included in the number of ruling elders. A resolution seeking approval for elders emeritus to be counted separately from ruling elders is included.

16. **The Code** – approval of congregational accounts

Following discussion on the governance arrangements applicable to Church accounts at congregational level, the Committee agreed that an amendment should be made to Par 257(2)(a) of The Code to the effect that the annual report of the Congregational Committee, including the full statement of accounts, will be submitted to the Congregation for 'adoption', rather than 'approval', as stated at present. An overtone to implement the change is included.

17. **Other matters** – The Committee continues to work on a number of other tax, finance, legal and IT matters.

18. **Thanks** – Special thanks go to the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for their hard work and assistance to the Committee during the year.

ROBERT McCULLAGH, Convener

TABLE ONE

PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	2012	2013	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	230	225	0	5
Ministers in Active Duty	392	403	11	0
Retired Missionaries	15	15	0	0
Missionaries in Active Duty	39	37	0	2
Total Ministers and Missionaries	676	680	4	0
Licensings during year	17	17	0	0
Congregations	545	545	0	0
Total Families	102,273	100,339	0	1,934
Persons of All Ages	237,481	233,602	0	3,879
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	79,939	78,414	0	1,525
Baptisms	1600	1,571	0	29
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	1,635	2,044	409	0
Communicants Attended at Least One Communion during year	101,242	100,721	0	521
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	63,722	62,715	0	1,007
Number on Rolls in Sunday School and Bible Classes (Note 1)	6,461	6,313	0	148
	39,976	41,074	1098	0

Note 1 - from 2011 includes numbers enrolled in childrens and youth ministries under control of Kirk Sessions

TABLE TWO
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

	2012		2013		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Assessable Income (gross)	34,057,830	3,637,919	34,045,794	3,575,006	0.0%	-1.7%
Building Fund etc	15,012,686	1,257,497	15,775,145	1,090,594	5.1%	-13.3%
Missions and Charities	7,112,855	425,233	7,556,339	555,722	6.2%	30.7%
Raised from other sources	6,825,913	1,597,267	6,967,793	1,280,575	2.1%	-19.8%
Organisational Income	6,284,394	354,682	6,530,720	290,918	3.9%	-18.0%
Total Receipts	69,293,678	7,272,598	70,875,791	6,792,815	2.3%	-6.6%

TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

	2012		2013		€	N.I.	% Difference	R. of I.
	£	€	£	€				
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	17,658,708	1,472,965	18,133,291	1,515,247		2.7%	2.9%	
Payments under Assembly Assessments	6,668,320	702,849	6,443,791	732,124		-3.4%	4.2%	
Building, Repairs etc.	15,929,854	1,894,946	16,922,552	1,123,635		6.2%	-40.7%	
United Appeal Schemes	2,944,008	243,028	2,961,981	229,615		0.6%	-5.5%	
Supplementary Schemes								
Other Religious and Charitable Objects	7,601,373	1,005,713	8,335,971	830,667		9.7%	-17.4%	
Organisations	6,005,623	325,589	6,202,307	291,618		3.3%	-10.4%	
General Expenses	11,267,530	1,329,527	11,220,830	1,325,722		-0.4%	-0.3%	
Total Payments	68,075,416	6,974,617	70,220,723	6,048,628		3.2%	-13.3%	

TABLE FOUR

CONGREGATIONAL FUND BALANCES

	Opening 2013		Closing 2013		% Difference	
	£	€	£	€	N.I.	R. of I.
Unrestricted Funds	22,745,075	2,117,776	22,364,890	2,028,276	-1.7%	-4.2%
Restricted Funds	66,973,220	5,682,426	69,197,224	6,037,861	3.3%	6.3%
Total Fund Balances	89,718,295	7,800,202	91,562,114	8,066,137	2.1%	3.4%

TABLE FIVE**MINISTERS' INCOME AND ALLOWANCES (SEE NOTES)**

	2012	2013	
	£	£	% Difference
Total Ministerial Income (active Duty - Note 2)	11,077,240	11,343,583	2.4%
Stipend Paid	9,362,832	9,687,552	3.5%
Allowances			
Light, Heat, etc			
Ministerial Duties			
Total	2,720,707	2,783,403	2.3%

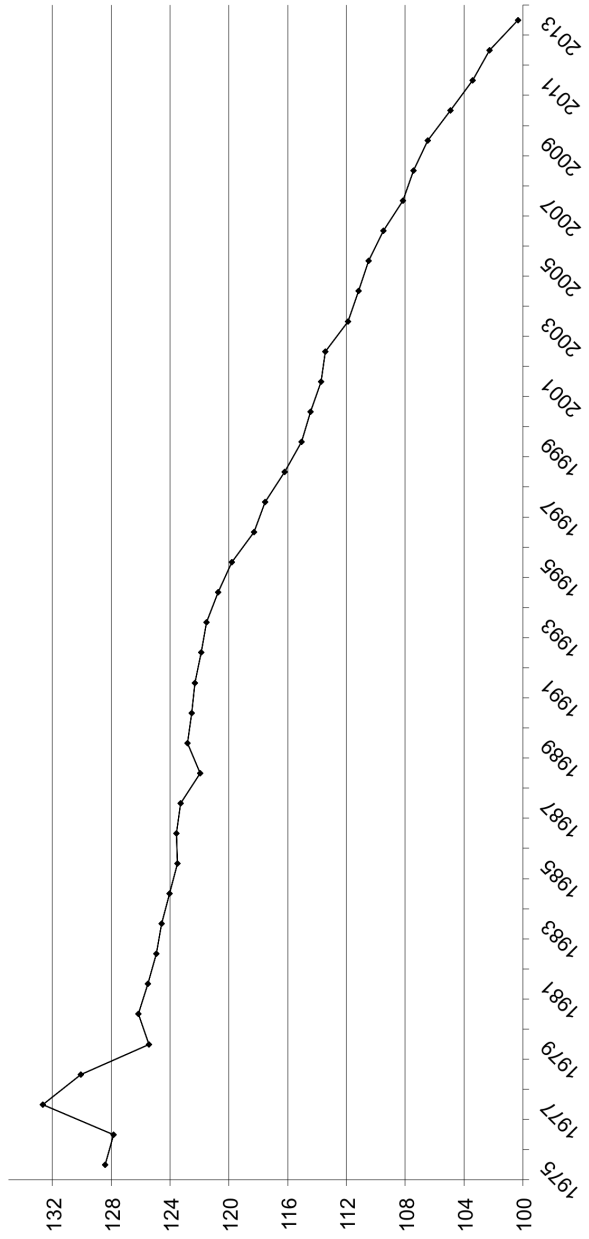
Note 1 Figures for the Republic of Ireland have been converted into £STG using the average value of the Euro for the relevant year (£1/€1.1962)

Note 2 This refers only to 344 ministers in charge of Congregations, excluding Assistants, Chaplains, Missionaries, Professors, Administrative Officers and Ministers in recognised service in special work.

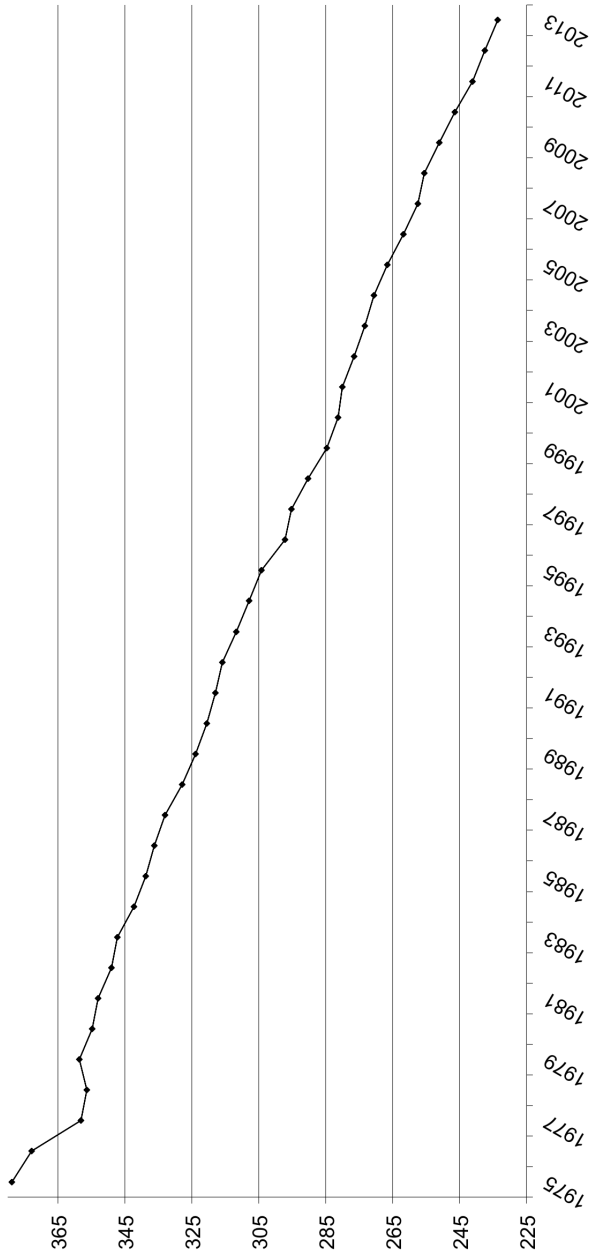
TABLE SIX**PERSONS**

	2012	2013
Persons who are aged 18 and under	42,485	41,801
Average attendance at Sunday Worship - Morning	76,409	74,956
- Evening	18,036	18,327

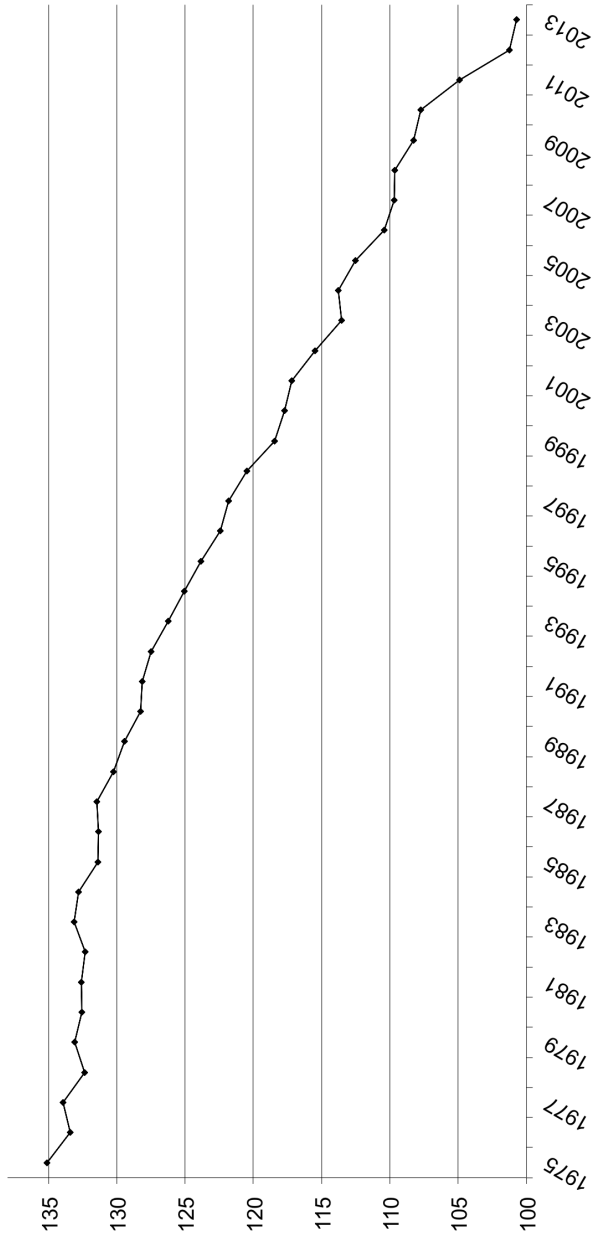
FAMILIES ('000)



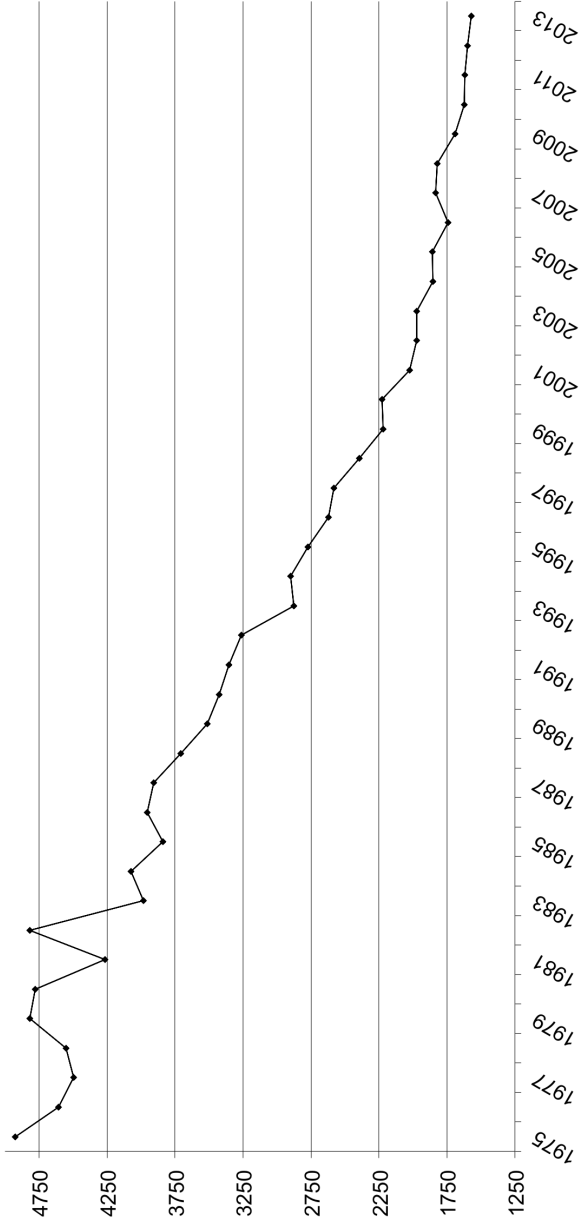
PERSONS ('000)



COMMUNICANTS ('000)



BAPTISMS



RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the overall rate of assessment on Congregations for 2014 based on Congregations' assessable income for 2012 be (*comparative figures for 2013 shown for information*)

Assessment Band	Assessable Income (3)		Assessment Rate 2014	Assessment Rate 2013
	From	To		
1	0	64,999	14.50%	14.00%
2	65,000	129,999	10.75%	10.50%
3	130,000	194,999	7.25%	7.00%
4	195,000	259,000	3.50	3.50%
5	260,000	and above	0.00%	0.00%

and that amounts collected be allocated to the various assessment funds based on the on the following budgeted collected amounts (*comparative figures for 2013 shown for information*)

	2014	Allocation of first band %	2013	Allocation of first band %
Central Ministry Fund	£2,700,000	8.61%	£2,532,000	8.17%
Retired Ministers Fund	£50,000	0.16%	£155,000	0.50%
Widows of Ministers Fund	£300,000	0.96%	£410,000	1.32%
Prolonged Disability Fund	£29,000	0.09%	£28,000	0.09%
Incidental Fund	£650,000	2.07%	£519,000	1.68%
Ministerial Development Fund	£25,000	0.08%	£27,000	0.09%
Church House External Work	£370,000	1.18%	£370,000	1.20%
Sick Supply Fund	£26,000	0.08%	£26,000	0.08%
Students Bursary Fund	£400,000	1.27%	£425,000	1.37%
TOTAL	£4,550,000	14.50%	£4,492,000	14.50%

3. That the rate of assessment for the PCI Pension (2009) Fund for 2013 be 27.5% of stipend.

4. That under the provisions of the Code Par 556(3) the Very Rev Dr William Donald Patton (Randalstown OC) be given permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday, i.e. 31 January 2015.

5. That the recommendations set out in the Report of the Tyrone Memorial Appraisals Panel, other than recommendation (vi) be adopted with effect from 1 January 2015.

6. That the Board keeps under review government proposals for the introduction of a flat rate state pension and the possible withdrawal of the contracting out national insurance rebate and report to the 2015 General Assembly with any cost implications.

7. That for the purposes of the Annual Statistical Return a family should be regarded as the members of the household irrespective of age or whether there are contributing members.

8. That the Annual Statistical Return should include a request for the number of elders emeritus connected with the congregation.

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 257(2)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 257(2)(a) if the Code the word “approval” be deleted and the word “adoption” substituted in its place.

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Rev RIA ALLELY

Secretary: THE CLERK

1. The United Appeal Board was relieved but also and especially grateful to God that there was only a small deficit when the books closed at the end of January 2014. The total received from Congregations was £3,038,713, £141,287 short of the Target of Honour. However, when the late receipts from 2013 were added (£139,555), the overall deficit was only £1,732. This meant that 99.9% of the Target was realised.

2. When a statistical analysis of Congregation's givings was examined, the following figures emerged: 6 Congregations gave nothing; 135 gave less than their Target, 140 met their Target exactly (presumably doing this by transferring from their General Funds – and perhaps restricting Mission locally), and the rest exceeded their Target by varying amounts (5p to £11,265.00!) The Board acknowledges and applauds the generous givings of a good number of Congregations – 13 exceeding their Targets by at least £2,000.00.

3. The Mission Boards collectively sought a total of £3,506,000 for 2015, considerably more than what was received from Congregations for 2013. The Finance Committee again appreciate the fact that the Mission Boards are doing all that they can to streamline their budgets. When the representatives were interviewed the Committee was impressed by the vision and serious application of their Boards to the request that budgets be not increased by more than 2%.

4. The Board brought a resolution last year to the Assembly: "That the General Assembly designate the 1st Sunday in March as United Appeal for Mission Sunday." A similar resolution is being brought this year as the Board became aware that many Congregations simply ignored this directive from the Assembly, although some Congregations had offerings on other Sundays, more appropriate to them.

5. The Board commends the Promotions Committee for their efforts to communicate better with Congregations and acknowledges the expertise of the Creative Production Unit in assisting them to achieve better results. The Board reminds ministers especially of the resources available on the PCI website. It would be interesting to discover how many Congregations have actually seen one of the downloadable videos!

6. The Board accepted the Finance Committee's recommendation that the various Mission Boards receive the Grants outlined in Schedule IV and regrets that certain Boards appear to have been penalised. This is not so – as serious contemplation and prayer was involved in the final decision. It goes without saying that we cannot give what we do not have! Some years ago an examination of what our people gave to the United Appeal in 3 Presbyteries showed that only about 10% gave anything to the Appeal.

7. The Board is aware that some Congregations do not pay their Target because they have a heavy responsibility to members who are working with other Missionary Societies. While it is wonderful that men and women are responding to the call of God to serve overseas (and in the Republic of Ireland) there is a

danger of such Congregations being more “Congregational” than Presbyterian. Our practise has always been to help each other!

8. The Board again would thank the Financial Secretary and his Department for their assistance in every area of the United Appeal’s work. Treasurers were reminded in December that it was imperative to have their United Appeal money with this Department long before 31 January. Sadly, many appear not to have done this. The Board appreciates that Accounts have to be audited before Congregational Committees are able to finalise their figures. However, any monies received for United Appeal should be remitted as soon as possible after it is collected. In no case should United Appeal money be used to compliment the cash flow of Congregations.

9. The Board commends the “Grace of Giving” initiative to Congregations and call on Ministers to teach their Congregations about biblical giving as soon as possible.

10. The Board has budgeted to release another £100,000 from reserves in 2015 in order to restrict the Appeal to the Church. It is obvious to those speaking about the United Appeal in Congregations across the land that many of our members just don’t understand the whole concept of “United Appeal for Mission” – this problem is being attended to by the Promotions Committee, which is constantly reviewing ways and means of changing this perception.

PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

The Very Rev Dr John Dunlop reports:

1. In preparation for the ‘United Appeal for Mission Sunday’ on 2 March 2014, the following resources were made available for ministers and members of the Church.

- (a) The Spring edition of ‘Briefings’ was distributed at the February Presbyteries.
- (b) A comprehensive Power Point presentation and accompanying commentary was sent by email.
- (c) The *Herald* and *ReachOut* magazines carried explanatory articles. Thanks are expressed to the editors, Sarah Harding and Robin Fairbairn.
- (d) Two Children’s Addresses were prepared by the Board of Youth and Children.
- (e) An exciting and explanatory ‘animation’ was made available on the PCI website.

2. This material provided an overview of the way in which the United Appeal for Mission works and the way the Appeal supports the exciting mission work which the General Assembly accomplishes through its six Mission Boards. The work of each Board was summarised.

3. Explanation was given of how the overall United Appeal for Mission Target is arrived at by the General Assembly; how Presbyteries are given targets depending on their size and how Presbyteries set the ‘Targets of Honour’ for congregations.

4. This is how we Presbyterians ‘Do things together’ at congregational, Presbytery and General Assembly levels. We are able to do things together which we could never do on our own.

5. “Briefings” are distributed twice each year, at the February and September Presbyteries. Accompanying DVDs are available on the PCI website. Our thanks to James McCormick, the General Assembly’s Head of Creative Production, who has taken over this work and to Stephen Lynas who served the Committee for many years.

6. Deputation work reveals that many of our members do not know how the Appeal works nor do they understand the wide-ranging and magnificent mission work done through the six Mission Boards. Other Missionary Societies explain what they do and gain enthusiastic support. We should do the same.

7. The United Appeal for Mission Board and the Promotions’ Committee are wholly dependent on ministers explaining this to congregations. Sadly we have to report that many ministers do not see this as important. How are people to know if the material is not both distributed and explained? This is a good news story which our members deserve to hear and be thereby encouraged.

8. Let us thank God for what is accomplished and encourage and challenge one another.

APPRAISALS COMMITTEE

The Clerk reports:

The Appraisals Committee has approved the following posts or projects since it last reported:

- Additional Support Worker (15 hours) at Gray’s Court for the Board of Social Witness, funded by Supporting People;
- Temporary additional Personnel Officer (1 year) for the Board of Finance and Personnel;
- Increased hours (to 4 days) for the Herald Editor and Creative Production Adviser, General Board;
- Grant to Mullingar New Church Project (up to €171,000) from the Board of Mission in Ireland;
- Temporary appointment of a Mission Training and Leadership Development Officer (to 31 December 2014) for the Board of Mission Overseas;
- Refurbishment of apartments at Tritonville Close, Dublin, by the Board of Social Witness;
- Purchase of a manse in Donabate (up to €250,000) by the Board of Mission in Ireland.

At the time of writing a proposal by the Board of Social Witness for the transfer of Lawnfield House, Newcastle to the BSW from the Disabled Christians’ Fellowship Ireland is awaiting more detailed information.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal for 2015 be as set out in the Schedules (iii) and (iv).
3. That the General Assembly encourage all Congregations to make use of the available promotional materials, especially the downloadable videos.

4. That the General Assembly designate the 1st Sunday in March, or other suitable Sunday, as United Appeal for Mission Sunday.

SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2012	Assessable Income 2012 £	United Appeal 2014 £
Ards	7,472	3,341,864	299,701
Armagh	3,793	2,008,468	165,939
Ballymena	6,950	3,200,231	282,826
Belfast North	5,003	2,116,975	195,335
Belfast South	3,266	1,820,051	146,892
Belfast East	5,594	3,039,655	248,159
Carrickfergus	4,940	1,913,654	185,062
Coleraine and Limavady	5,543	2,491,807	222,890
Derry and Donegal	4,935	2,066,228	191,708
Down	4,715	1,751,945	173,335
Dromore	4,637	2,103,332	187,292
Dublin and Munster	987	1,350,791	79,809
Iveagh	3,510	1,529,612	139,007
Monaghan	1,007	660,624	49,690
Newry	2,838	1,199,071	110,726
Omagh	3,498	1,448,429	135,172
Route	3,515	1,401,824	133,456
Templepatrick	4,075	1,621,748	154,567
Tyrone	3,661	1,673,355	148,434
	<u>79,939</u>	<u>36,739,664</u>	<u>3,250,000</u>

50% of the allocation for 2014 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2012 of 1.2222.

SCHEDULE II

	Requested 2014 £	Proposed Grant 2014 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,030,000	1,000,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	40,000	40,000
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	427,000	410,000
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	420,000	410,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	445,000	415,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	1,000,000	1,000,000
GENERAL BOARD – COMMUNICATIONS	150,000	130,000
	<hr/> 3,512,000	3,405,000
Allocation from reserves		<hr/> (155,000)
Appeal to Congregations		<hr/> 3,250,000

SCHEDULE III

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2013	Assessable Income 2013 £	United Appeal 2015 £
Ards	7,241	3,382,769	307,368
Armagh	3,674	2,023,957	169,945
Ballymena	6,909	3,333,817	298,103
Belfast North	4,773	2,107,135	197,028
Belfast South	3,129	1,754,933	146,154
Belfast East	5,526	3,061,902	256,414
Carrickfergus	4,682	1,817,105	181,908
Coleraine and Limavady	5,383	2,480,844	226,956
Derry and Donegal	4,742	2,058,180	194,145
Down	4,597	1,701,911	174,867
Dromore	4,844	2,124,566	199,325
Dublin and Munster	989	1,397,740	84,538
Iveagh	3,598	1,410,336	140,426
Monaghan	1,106	668,962	53,874
Newry	2,602	1,113,437	105,806
Omagh	3,474	1,465,713	140,316
Route	3,572	1,416,896	140,173
Templepatrick	3,955	1,622,899	157,662
Tyrone	3,618	1,611,338	149,992
	<u>78,414</u>	<u>36,554,440</u>	<u>3,325,000</u>

50% of the allocation for 2015 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2013 of 1.1962.

SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 2015 £	Proposed Grant 2015 £
BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND	1,020,000	1,000,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	40,000	40,000
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN TRAINING	427,000	410,000
BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	420,000	430,000
BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS	454,000	415,000
BOARD OF MISSION OVERSEAS	1,000,000	1,000,000
GENERAL BOARD – COMMUNICATIONS	145,000	130,000
	<u>3,506,000</u>	<u>3,425,000</u>
Allocation from reserves		<u>(100,000)</u>
Appeal to Congregations		<u>3,325,000</u>

COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

Convener: AJ RANKIN

1. In accordance with Para 130(2) of The Code the Commission has *“Assembly powers to deal with all cases where trustees or others desire to transfer any property, real or personal, to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, under the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Acts, 1871 and 1901, and to authorise the Trustees to accept any such transfer on such terms as it deems expedient”*.

2. A list of deeds held by the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in relation to various properties and trust funds is set out in the annual certificate, given by the General Assembly Solicitor, which is printed in the General Assembly Accounts Book.

3. During 2013 the Trustees received various bequests designated for a specific Board or Agency of the General Assembly, “The Presbyterian Church in Ireland” or “The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland”. In accordance with the provisions of the Code Par 130(3) the Commission has received and reviewed an abstract of bequests received during 2013 and has authorised their acceptance.

4. The Commission authorised the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to accept a transfer of the legal ownership of the former premises of the Shankill Road Mission, previously held in the name of individual trustees. The property will continue to be managed and maintained by the Board of Mission in Ireland.

5. The Commission has reviewed its responsibilities as set out in The Code Pars 130(2) to 130(4) and the present arrangements for discharging these. The Commission has concluded that it would be more appropriate if its responsibilities were transferred to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Commission discharged. The Commission note that it has not been asked to “advise Congregations as to trusts affecting their properties” as set out in Par 130(4) and therefore propose that this provision in the Code be removed. Overtures to effect these proposals are appended.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts be discharged and thanked for its services.

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 122 of the Code**

that in Par 122 of the Code the following be added:

“(7) The Trustees shall have Assembly powers to deal with all cases where trustees or others desire to transfer any property, real or personal, to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland under the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Acts, 1871 and 1901 and to accept any such transfer on such terms as it deems expedient.”

“(8) The Trustees shall provide for a compilation annually of an abstract of bequests received by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and an abstract of bequests notified but not yet received.”

Anent Par 126(5) of the Code

that in Par 126(5) of the Code the words “the Union Commission and the Commission on Trusts” be deleted and the words “and the Union Commission” substituted in their place.

Anent Par 130 of the Code

that Par 130 of the Code be deleted.

ALASTAIR J RANKIN

TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

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 18 March, 2014.

2. Moved by Rev T D Gribben, seconded by Mrs M Guiler, that Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson be appointed Chairman until the 2015 General Assembly.

3. The Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2013 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

- The General Investment Fund

- The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

(Incorporating 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 and Various other Trust Funds)

4. Moved by Mr B Robinson, seconded by Mr N Bennett and unanimously agreed that the Report and the Statements of Accounts be adopted, and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were signed and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

5. The Trustees also received and examined the Accounts for 2013 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.

6. Mr Lex Ross tendered his resignation with effect from the General Assembly in June 2014 and this was accepted with regret. Mr Ross had faithfully served since 1998 and made an extremely important contribution to the work of the Trustees. His expertise and experience in the legal profession were of particular help when the Trustees considered such matters. A new nomination will be brought in the Supplementary Reports.

7. On the proposal of Rev TD Gribben, seconded by Mr D Crowe, Mr Norman Bennett was nominated as the Trustee representative on the College Management Committee. Rev WJ Orr who had previously served in this capacity was thanked for his services.

8. The Trustees nominated Sir Bruce Robinson and Mrs M Guiler as members to attend the General Assembly according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iv).

Trust Funds

9. A summary Account of the various Trust Funds is included in the Book of Accounts 2013. The following Trust Funds are distributed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Trustees.

As in 2013, 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.

Mrs A M Davidson Trust: The total income for 2013 available for distribution is £6,627.40. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£6,627.40
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Sir Wm V McCleery Estate: The total income for 2013 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 2013 available for distribution is £7,169.24. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£7,169.24
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Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown: The total income for 2013 available for distribution is £4,600.96. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£4,600.96
---------------	-----------

Estate of Mr Victor Morrow: The total income for 2013 available for distribution is £1,499.68. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£1,499.68
---------------	-----------

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH INVESTMENT FUND**(commonly known as The General Investment Fund)**

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. As reported to the General Assembly in 2013 the Trustees have reviewed the preparation and format of the accounts of the General Investment Fund. For the year ended 31 December 2013 the Trustees have prepared the accounts in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Financial Statement of Authorised Funds (October 2010). These are included in the Book of Accounts presented to the General Assembly. These account provided detailed information regarding the Fund and in particular its performance, investment allocation, level of income and distributions during the year.

15. Declaration of Dividend	15.4.13	15.10.13
Number of shares qualifying	5,355,169	5,386,131
Income from investment for distribution and tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees	£571,305	£813,029
Dividend per share	11.00p	15.00p

16. During 2013, £5,109 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve, in accordance with the Scheme Rules, and the balance on the Reserve at 31 December, 2013 is £511,810.

17. The combined annual Dividend of 26.00p per share for 2013 is to be compared with 26.00p for 2012, 25.00p for 2011, 26.00p for 2010; 28.00p for 2009; 33.00p for 2008; 31.00p for 2007; 30.00p for 2006; 27.00p for 2005; 27.00p for 2004.

18. Valuation	15.4.13	15.10.13
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	43,039,959	43,609,277
Cash on Deposit	167,751	614,533
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	488,938	511,810
	<u>£43,696,648</u>	<u>£44,735,620</u>
No of Shares Issued	5,364,291	5,422,830
Share Value	£8.1458	£8.2495

In addition to the official valuations at 15 April and 15 October the Trustee's also carry out a valuation of the shares as at 31 December. This is an "internal" valuation which is used by Boards and Agencies and the Trustees to value investments held by various funds in the General Investment Fund for year-end accounting purposes. At 31 December the valuation was £8.4940 per share (2012, £7.5115).

19. The Trustees meet with Investment Managers, Newton Investment Management Limited, three times a year to review investment performance. During 2013, there was a return of 17.78% compared to a benchmark return of 14.57%. Newton Investment Management Limited was appointed advisers to the Trustees Funds in June 2006 and from then to 31 December 2013, the General Investment Fund returned 6.29% per annum compared to the benchmark of 6.24%.

20. Newton Investment Management have advised the Trustees that they are no longer able to act as an agent in the appointment of a custodian for the Fund and that the Trustees will need to appoint a custodian directly. The Trustees are reviewing the position at the time of writing this report.

Trustees Discretionary Fund

21. 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 the “Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland”. The present policy of the Trustees is to invest these as 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. During 2013, the Trustees did not receive any bequests which they have included in their Discretionary Fund. At 31 December 2013 the Fund held 104,557 shares in the General Investment Fund which valued the holding at £888,447.

22. The Trustees have considered the resolution of the 2013 General Assembly “that the General Assembly request the General Assembly’s Trustees to positively consider the request for a significant grant towards the schemes of repair of stonework at Union Theological College”. The Trustees have asked the College to investigate the terms of investments held by the college to establish if any of these could be used to fund the stonework repairs. In the interim the Trustees have agreed to give a grant of £450,000 from their Discretionary Fund.

Crescent Church Loan Fund

23. The Crescent Church Loan Fund was established following the sale of the Crescent Church premises in 1975 and provides low interest loans to Congregations having short term financial problems.

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

The maximum loan normally provided by the Fund is £25,000 and this has to be repaid normally within 3 years, although a loan over 5 years can be provided in certain circumstances. Further information about loans from the Fund is available from the Financial Secretary’s Office.

During 2013 a loan request of £20,000 was approved. Loans outstanding at 31 December 2013 were £173,301 and at that time, the fund had £185,542 available to meet loan requests.

Getty Bequest

24. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2013 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	£2,330
Overseas – Jewish	£1,270
Home Mission	£3,070
Belfast City Mission	£2,330
TOTAL	£9,000

Governance Arrangements

25. In 2013 The General Assembly agreed to a single governing Trustees body of 15 members and the Clerk of the General Assembly who would be an ex-officio member. Five of the members are ministers and 10 are non-ministers. Members are appointed for a term of five years renewable for one further term of five years. Disciplines such as banking, accountancy, law, etc. are represented among the 10 non-ministers.

26. The Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson was appointed Chairman at the first meeting on the new body and Mr Clive Knox, Financial Secretary, as Secretary. All new Trustees were invited to an induction session.

Bequests

27. The Trustees were advised of a substantial bequest at the end of 2012 to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with the expression that “due regard be paid to poorer congregation in Eire”. Following discussion with the Board of Mission in Ireland the Trustees agreed to allocate a large proportion of the bequest to the Board of Mission in Ireland to provide a grant to assist with the building of a new Church building in Mullingar. The remaining funds have been allocated to the Board of Mission in Ireland for their property repair fund.

28. The Trustees took over the administration of the Florence Beatrice Jamison deceased Will Trust during the year. The funds have been invested in the General Investment Funds and the income will be distributed in line with the terms of the Will “equally to Home and Foreign Mission”

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs AM 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:

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 97(h)(iv) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 97(h)(iv) of the Code the words “Executive Committee” be deleted and the word “Trustees” substituted in their place.

SPUD YOUTH ASSEMBLY

Convener: Mr ANDREW DOWNEY
Secretary: Miss HELEN FORSYTHE

Mr Andrew Downey writes:

1. The SPUD Youth Assembly has been working hard since last year's General Assembly, developing and supporting youth participation within local Congregations and continuing its work at denominational level. There are a number of areas to report on and to give thanks to God for.

Working Group Membership

2. One of the highlights of the year has been the addition of new members to the SPUD Working Group. In last year's report the working group highlighted the need for new members and God has answered our prayers! Our new members are, Peter Bowden, Hayley Cullen, Louise Meek, Olivia Moore, Victoria White and Owen Wilson.

3. The end of this year of SPUD (2013/14) sees a change in leadership of the working group. The Convener, Andy Downey, is stepping down (due to old age!) and Helen Macaulay will be the new Convener in his place. The Secretary, Helen Forsythe, will also be stepping down and she will be replaced by Owen Wilson. Please pray for Helen and Owen as they begin their new roles and seek to lead the working group into the future.

4. Thanks are extended to the staff of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry for their support and the time they have invested in the working group.

Grow Your Own SPUDs

5. The Grow Your Own SPUDs resource has been reviewed, refreshed and added to over the last year. The resource now includes a Sunday service, a session to be used with a Kirk Session, another to be used with a youth fellowship and a session which can be used with a mixture of both.

6. The working group have been working alongside various Congregations throughout the year. Members have led Sunday morning services in Second Ballyeaston and Moira and delivered the programme with Kirk Sessions and youth fellowships in Moira and West Church, Ballymena. A training night was facilitated in Kilfennan Presbyterian Church which was attended by representatives of 6 Churches in the North West.

7. The working group would encourage any Minister or Elder who wishes to find out more about Grow Your Own SPUDs to contact the YAC office or speak to a member of the group.

Communication

8. With the help of James McCormick (Head of Creative Productions), the working group has developed a communications strategy which provided the group with the opportunity to consider how to communicate more effectively to those throughout the denomination. The group extend their thanks to James for his input into this process.

9. As part of that strategy a series of 4 postcards were produced, these outline what each of the letters in the SPUD acronym stands for (Speaking, Participating, Understanding and Deciding). The purpose of the postcards is to inform members of the Church about the aims and purpose of the SPUD Youth Assembly.

10. The cards highlight the following:

- **Speaking:** to give young people a platform to speak into their Church family and beyond.
- **Participating:** to help young people use their gifts to actively serve their Church family.
- **Understanding:** to help young people and the Church understand each other's importance.
- **Deciding:** to equip young people to get involved and take responsibility within their Church.

11. Other methods of communicating more effectively include greater use of Twitter and Facebook and there are plans to create a new SPUD video to inform the wider Church about the work of the Youth Assembly.

Miss Ruth Spratt, YAC Intern, writes:

SPUD Overnight

12. This year, we have had a name change from the 'Blue Book Overnight' to the 'SPUD Overnight' to make this residential more accessible to the young people and young adults who want to engage with the mission and ministry of our Church. At the weekend in April, young people will come together to look at the reports in this year's Blue Book and to discuss the issues in the reports.

13. The SPUD Working Group believes that it is important for young people to be engaging with the issues that our denomination is facing. This residential was created to provide a forum where young people could discuss these important issues and report their views at the General Assembly.

14. Plans are underway for the 2014 residential, please pray for the working group as they organise this event and for the young people who will attend.

Miss Helen Macaulay, incoming Convener, writes:

Breaking the Silence

15. Breaking the Silence is the name of the collaboration between the SPUD Youth Assembly and the Board of Social Witness which aims to begin and facilitate a conversation about mental illness within the PCI. It was established after a resolution was passed at the General Assembly in June 2013. This resolution was a response to the debate brought to the Assembly by two SPUD delegates, Helen Forsythe and Helen Macaulay, to address a resolution in the BSW report in support of the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (Northern Ireland). Both delegates had personal reasons and Gospel-based convictions for bringing the taboo of mental illness to the fore of the Assembly debate.

16. A Working Group of BSW and SPUD members was formed to organise an event which was held in early February. This Conference highlighted the picture and statistics surrounding adolescent mental health in Northern Ireland

as well as projecting a vision for mental health-friendly Churches across our denomination. We were honoured to have Dr Gavin Davidson (lecturer in Social Work at QUB), Dr Ken Yeow (NHS Consultant Psychiatrist with a special interest in eating disorders) and Professor Peter McBride (CEO of NIAMH) as our speakers. Approximately 200 people had the opportunity to consider the implications of the content from the keynote talks through the forum of facilitated discussion groups. The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive and serves as a motivation to continue with the theme of “Breaking the Silence”. Watch this space!

Mr Andrew Downey

17. The SPUD Youth Assembly extend their sincere thanks to Mr Andrew Downey for his 3 years of service as the Convener of the SPUD Youth Assembly. Andy had previously been a SPUD delegate in the pilot year and a member of the SPUD Working Group (since 2009); in this role he had been involved in hosting The BIG Event and leading discussion groups at the Mash Up. He was invited into the Convener role in August 2011 and has steered the work of the group through a time of change and development. Throughout his time Andy encouraged a grass-roots approach to the work and was a huge advocate of the Grow Your Own SPUDs programme and its development. The working group wish him well in this next stage of life and ministry.

Miss Helen Forsythe

18. Thanks are also extended to Miss Helen Forsythe for her 3 years of service. Her work with SPUD began in 2011 when she was appointed as the YAC Intern through the Volunteers and Interns Programme (VIP) and then became Secretary of the Youth Assembly in 2012. Helen has been involved in hosting The BIG Event and in the piloting and development of the Grow Your Own SPUDs programme. She has also delivered numerous speeches at the General Assembly – most notably in 2013 which resulted in the Breaking the Silence project with the Board of Social Witness. The working group are indebted to her time, commitment and vision for the work and wish her well in the future.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

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