

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY



# ANNUAL REPORTS





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### ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Notes:**
- (i) Business commences at different times each day. There are business sessions on the Tuesday and Thursday evenings.**
  - (ii) An “Introduction to Assembly Business” will be given in the Assembly Hall on Tuesday at 10am.**
  - (iii) Communion will be held on Tuesday at 11.45am and Worship on Wednesday and Thursday at 12.15pm and 2.45pm respectively.**
  - (iv) Figures in brackets refer to page numbers in the Annual Reports.**

#### **Tuesday**

GA Business Committee –  
Initial Report

Presbyteries

General Council (Section 1)

Global Mission

Beyond Ourselves

Linkage Commission

#### **Wednesday**

Public Affairs

Mission in Ireland

Listening to the Global Church

General Council (Section 2)

Memorials Transmitted

Congregational Life and Witness

#### **Thursday**

Life Always Matters

Training in Ministry

Social Witness

General Council (Section 3)

Overtures

#### **Friday**

Judicial Commission

Special Judicial Commission

Commission on Applications

General Council (Section 4)

GA Business Committee –  
Final Report

## NOTES

## MONDAY, JUNE 3

### Assembly Buildings

7pm –

Service of Worship  
Constitution of Assembly  
Election of Moderator

## TUESDAY, JUNE 4

10.30am –

1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE:  
Initial Report and Resolutions 1-7 (pages 4-10  
and 111-112).

2. Reports of Presbyteries (pages 117-124).

3. Reception of Corresponding Members and  
Delegates.

**Church of Ireland:** Ven David Huss; Mr Michael Johnston

**The Methodist Church in Ireland:** Rev Dr Laurence Graham

**Religious Society for Friends:** Pleasaunce M Perry; Fionnuala Carson  
Williams

**Irish Council of Churches:** Rev Brian Anderson; Major Paul Kingscott

**The Presbyterian Church of Wales:** Rev Brian Matthews; Mrs Beryl  
Matthews

**Transylvanian Reformed Church:** Bishop Béla Kató and Rev Tibor Kiss

**Greek Evangelical Church:** Rev Dimitris Boukis

**Presbyterian Church of East Africa:** Rev Peter Kaniah and Rev  
Elizabeth Githinji

**Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Blantyre:** Rev Alex  
Maulana

**Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera:** Pdt Deminaus Ice, Pdt  
Sirayandris Jitro Botara and Mr Herson Keradjaan

(Please note: some of the above are waiting on the granting of a Visa. Any  
changes or additions to the above will be reported in the Supplementary  
Reports.)

(11.30am) Short Intermission.

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

## NOTES

**11.45am      Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

including the Memorial Roll.

1pm            LUNCH.

**2pm –**

4.    GENERAL COUNCIL: Section 1 of Report and Resolutions 8-10 (pages 1-4, 10-34 and 112). Executive Summary; Memorial Record; Overview and Coordination Task Group; Implementation Task Group; Decision Making and Dissent Task group; Dialogue and Resources Task Group; Human Identity Task Group.

(3.45pm)      Tea/Coffee Break.

**4.15pm**

5.    COUNCIL FOR GLOBAL MISSION: Report and Resolutions (pages 125-147).

Lapsed Business (if any).

5.30pm    DINNER.

**7pm –**

6.    CCLW ALTERNATIVE PRESENTATION –  
**Beyond Ourselves**

8pm        7.    LINKAGE COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (pages 148-165).

(9pm)      Close of Business

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5**

**9.30am –**

8.    COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Report and Resolutions (pages 166-192).

(10.30am)    Tea/Coffee Break.

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

## NOTES



11am 9. COUNCIL FOR MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (pages 193-216).

12.15pm – Worship.

1pm LUNCH

**2pm –**

10. LISTENING TO THE GLOBAL CHURCH –  
**People on the Move**

(3pm) Tea/Coffee Break.

3.30pm 11. GENERAL COUNCIL: Section 2 of Report and Resolutions 11-19 (pages 35-62 and 112-113).  
Guysmere Centre Task Group; Church Relations Committee; Priorities Committee; Moderator's Advisory Committee; Doctrine Committee; Theological Engagement Task Group.

(4.15pm) 12. MEMORIAL OF SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY (pages 217-218).

4.45pm 13. COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (pages 219-246).

Lapsed Business (if any).

(6pm) Close of Business

6pm – The Youth Assembly Working Group is hosting a fringe event during the General Assembly on developing and building unity, within congregations and beyond. The fringe event will take place in the ground floor conference area. A light tea will be served. Admission to the event is by ticket only so booking is essential and can be completed online at the PCI website or through the CLW office.

**7.45pm – Evening Celebration: Enjoying God**

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

## NOTES

## THURSDAY, JUNE 6

**1.45pm –**

14. CPA ALTERNATIVE PRESENTATION –  
**Life Always Matters**

**2.45pm – Worship.**

(3.30pm) Tea/Coffee Break.

- 4pm 15. COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY: Report and Resolutions (pages 247-279).

Lapsed Business (if any).

5.30pm DINNER.

**7pm –**

16. COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and Resolutions (pages 280-307).

- 8pm 17. GENERAL COUNCIL: Section 3 of Report and Resolutions 20-27 (pages 63-86 and 113-114).  
Support Services Committee; United Appeal Committee;  
Holding Trustees Task Group; Charity Registration Task Group;  
General Data Protection Regulation Task Group; Engagement  
and Consultations Task Group.

18. OVERTURES: On the Books (pages 308-309)

19. OVERTURES: New (pages 310-313).

Lapsed Business (if any).

(9pm) Close of Business.

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

## NOTES

## FRIDAY, JUNE 7

### In Private 9.30am –

20. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolution (pages 314-318).
21. SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolution (page 319).
22. COMMISSION ON APPLICATIONS: Report and Resolution (page 320).

### In Public

- (10am) 23. GENERAL COUNCIL: Section 4 of Report and Resolutions 28-39 (pages 87-111 and 114-116).  
General Assembly Business Committee (Second Report);  
Nominations Committee; Deputy Clerk Task Group; Voting  
Membership Task Group; Historical Archiving Task Group;  
Central Prayer Coordination Task Group; Ad-Hoc Business;  
Reports of bodies not under the General Assembly.
24. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (pages 321-325).
25. MEMORIAL RE PRESBYTERIAN RELIEF FUND (page 326-327)
- (11am) Tea/Coffee Break.
- 11.30am Lapsed Business (if any).
- (1pm) 26. GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE:  
Final Report and Resolutions (to be tabled).
- Closing Worship
- CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

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

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

### 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. The Assembly quorum is fifty members.
  - (a) Deaconesses, licentiates, presbytery representatives of Presbyterian Women and youth, representatives of the Youth Assembly and some others are invited to 'sit and deliberate' as associates – i.e., to take part with members freely in debate but without voting. In addition to a representative elder, kirk sessions have been given permission to name a further person aged up to 30 years of age who may sit and deliberate. This person may be an elder or simply a communicant member.
  - (b) 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.
  
2. **The Moderator** chairs the Assembly and is in charge of proceedings, but should not take sides in debates. Former Moderators may deputise from time to time, should the Moderator wish to take part in debate or to withdraw from the House.
  - (a) When the Moderator rises to speak at any point all other members must yield to the Chair.
  - (b) 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.
  - (c) 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.

3. **Councils and Commissions:** Work for which the Assembly is responsible is generally entrusted to various General Assembly councils and commissions. These must each present a report to the Assembly. Councils normally have a number of General Assembly committees working under them, along with permanent panels and ad-hoc task groups. A Commission of Assembly is entrusted with the executive powers of the Assembly, within the terms of its appointment. Members of commissions, councils and General Assembly committees are appointed by the Assembly itself, on the nomination of the General Assembly's Nominations Committee. Councils and commissions are led by a convener, supported by a secretary, with the latter often being a senior member of staff. In what follows the word 'councils' covers councils, commissions and the General Assembly Business Committee.
  
4. **Reports of Councils:** While the Assembly is obliged to 'receive' the report of each council, it does not 'adopt' or accept responsibility for the contents of any report. Reports carry only the authority of the council concerned and not of the Assembly.
  - (a) If found too unsatisfactory the report, or a section of it, may be received and referred back. This is done by an amendment to the resolution "That the report of the [name of council] be received". 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 reports and speeches. Similarly, speeches in the Assembly carry the authority only of the speaker.
  - (b) Reports are first of all 'presented' and the appended resolutions 'proposed' en bloc, usually by a council convener who will make a speech in support highlighting aspects of the council's work. The resolutions are then 'seconded' en bloc, usually by another officer of the council, who again speaks in support and usually addresses a different aspect of the council's work. There is then an opportunity for questions to be asked. Routine and non-controversial resolutions have been grouped into one consolidated resolution for each council, where appropriate.

5. **Questions to Commissions or Councils:** 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 council carries responsibility; they should not be rhetorical or debating ‘questions’ to score a point. Questions should be written out and placed in the box provided as early as possible during the Assembly. They may also be submitted by e-mail to the Deputy Clerk ([deputyclerk@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:deputyclerk@presbyterianireland.org)) in advance of the Assembly or during the Assembly, up to 15 minutes before the report in question is scheduled. Questions 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.
6. **Resolutions of Councils:** These are then taken in succession, as printed in the General Assembly Reports, and on occasion also in the Supplementary Reports. Resolutions are called by number. Those wishing to speak should at once come forward, or otherwise indicate to the Moderator their desire to speak: it will be helpful if they move in good time to sit on one of the seats reserved for the purpose on the front row, ready for the Moderator to call them. The final resolution of a council is “that the report of the [name of council] be received”. This is the point where members may discuss (not ask questions about) any matters in the report or for which the Council should bear responsibility, but which do not arise under any previous resolution.
7. **Timings during debate:** Unless otherwise arranged, speeches are limited as follows:
- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Presenting a group of reports and resolutions | 7 minutes |
| Seconding a group of reports and resolutions  | 7 minutes |
| All other speeches                            | 4 minutes |
- (a) If lapsed business accumulates, these timings may be shortened.
- (b) 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 PW, SPUD etc) 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.



8. **Alternative format:** The Assembly may decide from time to time to conduct a particular item of business using an alternative format. This is usually on the recommendation of the General Assembly Business Committee. In such circumstances alternative rules of debate and timings may apply.
9. **Amendments:** These 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 debate on an amendment commences, the amendment must be given in writing to the Clerk's desk (or be submitted electronically to [deputyclerk@presbyterianireland.org](mailto:deputyclerk@presbyterianireland.org)).
  - (a) Amendments may be submitted to the Clerk of Assembly in advance of the business concerned, and if received in sufficient time and licensed by the General Assembly Business Committee, will take precedence over any other amendments.
  - (b) 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.
  - (c) 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.
10. **Additional resolutions:** When a matter is not covered by existing resolutions from a council an additional 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.

11. **Voting:** This will normally be by voice, when the Moderator calls for those in favour to say “Aye” and those against to say “No”. The Moderator may also call for a standing vote, with voting cards displayed, to be counted. A vote by ballot will be held when asked for by not fewer than twenty-five members or at the discretion of the Moderator, by the use of voting tickets, to be counted by tellers. Only the votes of those present on the ground floor of the Assembly Hall will be counted. Proxy voting for an absent member is not allowed. A member who has spoken or voted against any decision may intimate his or her personal dissent or protest immediately after the decision has been pronounced, but does not thereby free himself or herself from obligation loyally to implement the decision taken.
  
12. **Overtures:** These are proposals for a change in the Code, 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 with no one voting against. If approved by a lesser majority it is ‘placed on the books’, to be decided upon 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 significant constitutional change it must also be sent down to presbyteries to be voted on during the intervening year.
  
13. **Memorials:** These are petitions 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.

# GENERAL COUNCIL

## SECTION 1

**Tuesday afternoon – 2pm**

Convener: Very Rev Dr J.N.I. McNEELY

Secretary: THE CLERK

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On behalf of the General Assembly, the General Council has been conducting its business through eight General Assembly committees and fifteen task groups. The Council normally meets three times between Assemblies however in the past year an additional meeting took place on 21 June 2018.
2. At the June meeting of the Council it was agreed that the Moderator in accepting an invitation regarding the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland should attend on the occasions that were outlined in the Supplementary Report to the General Assembly, these being namely, to be present at a State Reception and the Saturday evening 'Festival of Families' event in Croke Park.

#### **Task Groups formed 2018-2019**

3. The Council at the June meeting addressed the remit from the General Assembly, "that appropriate training be offered to Kirk Sessions on the theology and practice of the Church's understanding of a 'credible profession of faith' and the pastoral guidelines on homosexuality". An Implementation Task Group was appointed and directed to put together a resource with a clear pastoral tone to be used by kirk sessions. The task group, in order to inform its work, conducted a successful Presbytery Consultation Dday in January 2019 and is proposing to present a resource on 'credible profession' and pastoral guidelines for consideration at the 2021 General Assembly (see pages 21-24).
4. Following last year's report of the Doctrine Committee and the decision of the General Assembly to no longer accept an invitation to the Moderator to attend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, there was considerable reaction across the church, some of which attracted the interest of the news media. Over the summer months the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen and the Clerk of the General Assembly were required to respond to many queries, and cope with the huge pressure of dealing with the many forms of correspondence and electronic communication they received. The Council recognised the

stress this created for the Moderator and the Clerk and acknowledged the wisdom and discernment demonstrated in how they dealt with the tensions and demands made of them.

5. The General Council at the October meeting, having received a report of the matters arising from the 2018 General Assembly, which had been in the public domain, and of the extent, contents and tenor of subsequent correspondence, agreed that there was the need for a group to support and assist the Moderator and the Clerk. The Council appointed an Overview and Coordination Task Group to continue to take an overview of the evolving situation since 2018 General Assembly and act in a coordinating role, taking any necessary decisions (as appropriate) between meetings of the General Council (see pages 19-20).
6. Correspondence to the Clerk from kirk sessions and presbyteries regarding reports and decisions of the General Assembly demonstrated there was general confusion across the church related to their standing and authority. There was also ambiguity being expressed about what can be discussed in the public domain and what scope there is for expressions of disagreement on policy adopted by the General Assembly. The Council accepted that clarification was necessary regarding the issues of decision making and dissent within the church. A Decision Making and Dissent Task Group was established to draw up a report on 'Presbyterian decision making and the place of dissent' (see pages 24-30).
7. The Deputy Clerk indicated at the March 2019 meeting of the Council that he intended to retire from his post in September 2020. A Deputy Clerk Task Group was formed to consider the arrangements for the appointment of a successor to the position held by Rev Jim Stothers (see pages 89-94).
8. One of the highlights of the year, that has had its difficulties, was the completion of the visitor exhibition in the reception area of Assembly Buildings. The Council is grateful to the members of the Property Services Panel for the creation of an exceptional display incorporating historical artefacts and multimedia presentations. It is hoped that this exhibition will create interest and attract many into Assembly Buildings.

### **Debate on General Council Business**

9. The report of the General Council to the General Assembly is the longest of the Annual Reports and to facilitate the ordering of business in the Assembly it will be taken in four sections. The General Assembly Business Committee will however report in its own right at the beginning and the end of the Assembly (10.30am on Tuesday and on Friday respectively). This year the Business Committee will also have a part of its report considered in Section 4 of the main General Council report. The separate sections of the report are as follows:

**Section 1 (2pm on Tuesday 4 June):**

- Executive Summary
- Memorial Record
- Overview and Coordination Task Group
- Implementation Task Group
- Decision Making and Dissent Task Group
- Dialogue and Resources Task Group
- Human Identity Task Group

**Section 2 (3.30pm on Wednesday 5 June):**

- Guysmere Centre Task Group
- Church Relations Committee
- Priorities Committee
- Moderator’s Advisory Committee
- Doctrine Committee
- Theological Engagement Task Group

**Section 3 (8pm Thursday 6 June):**

- Support Services Committee
- United Appeal Committee
- Holding Trustees Task Group
- Charity Registration Task Group
- GDPR Task Group
- Engagement and Consultations Task Group

**Section 4 (Friday morning 7 June, approx. 10am):**

- General Assembly Business Committee (Second Report)
- Nominations Committee
- Deputy Clerk Task Group
- Voting Membership Task Group
- Historical Archiving Task Group
- Central Prayer Coordination Task Group
- Ad-Hoc Business:
  - Finance and Staffing Commission (2019)
  - Council for Global Mission Structures
  - Peacehaven Transfer
- Reports of bodies not under the General Assembly
  - Presbyterian Children’s Society
  - Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland
  - Old Age, Women’s, and Indigent Ladies’ Funds

10. In conclusion, the General Council has been efficiently served and judiciously guided by Rev Trevor Gribben, the General Secretary and Rev Jim Stothers, Deputy General Secretary. The Council is indebted to both of them for their devotion to their jobs and the wise counsel they provide to ministers and members throughout the church. In the past year the demands upon them have been immense and they have put in many extra hours in serving the church. The staff in the General Secretary's Department are also recognised for the systematic administration and reliable support they provide for the Council. The Council also recognises the wise advice and measured statements conveyed to the media by the General Assembly Press Officer, Mr Mark Smith, during the past year.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

### **INITIAL REPORT**

**Tuesday Morning – 10.30am**

1. The Business Committee has continued to review the work and arrangements of the General Assembly.
2. A **Draft Order of Business for 2019** was agreed and approved by the committee. This includes the following:
  - (a) As on previous occasions a Friday morning has again been included.
  - (b) Again there will be two evening business sessions, Tuesday and Thursday as well as the Evening Celebration on the Wednesday. The assembly business will start at 10.30am on the Tuesday morning and there will be no business session on Thursday morning, instead starting after lunch with business followed by worship. The General Council business is split over four sessions.
  - (c) There will be 'alternative presentations' on Tuesday evening and Thursday afternoon featuring, respectively, the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, and the Council for Public Affairs.
  - (d) 'Listening to the Global Church' will again feature on Wednesday afternoon.
  - (e) Attendance at the Tuesday communion service has been growing each year and so in addition to the ground floor, communion will be served in the central section of the gallery.
3. The **Arrangements Panel** has appropriate matters in hand and a budget of £20,000 has been agreed for recommendation to the Assembly.

4. **Registration Procedure:** the committee acknowledges the work of the IT Department in enabling the electronic registration of Representative Elders' Commissions and also the registration of 'under 30' persons.
5. The **Wednesday Evening Celebration** will be addressed by Rev Glen Scrivener and, at the invitation of the Moderator, he will also speak at the Wednesday and Thursday afternoon worship sessions.
6. **Youth Assembly:** the Youth Assembly plans a Wednesday teatime event.
7. **Appointment of Delegations to other Assemblies etc.:** delegates have been appointed to other church assemblies and meetings:
  - (a) Church of Ireland Synod in May 2019: the Very Rev Dr Noble McNeely and a local elder.
  - (b) The Methodist Conference in June 2109: the Very Rev Dr Charles McMullen and a local elder.
  - (c) The annual meeting of the Society of Friends in April 2019: the Rev Alastair J Dunlop.
8. The Committee recommends that the Rt Rev Dr William Henry and his wife be appointed to attend the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales in July 2019.

ROY PATTON, Convener

## INITIAL REPORT – APPENDIX

### Reports from other Church Assemblies etc.

#### **Methodist Conference 2018 Report**

*The Very Rev Dr Noble McNeely reports:*

1. The Methodist Church in Ireland Annual Conference met in Londonderry from 13th to 17th June 2018. The business meetings of the conference were conducted in Kilfennan Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland was represented by Dr Noble McNeely and Mr David McClean, an Elder in Kilfennan Presbyterian Church. Mrs Florence McNeely also attended as a guest. Mr McClean is on the staff of the Clooney Hall Methodist Church and as the local person he acted as host to the Conference and must be thanked for his contribution towards the smooth running of the arrangements in Kilfennan Church halls.
2. The opening service for the constitution of the Conference was held in Carlisle Road Methodist Church and included the election and installation of the President for 2018-19 and Lay Leader 2018-2020. The Rev William A Davison, BD, addressed the Conference as President on his theme for the year of office, 'Living with Gospel Focus'. Mrs Lynda Neilands was inducted as the Lay Leader of the Conference.

3. The Conference began each morning with worship and Bible study. The guest speaker was Rev Keith V. Garner AM, Superintendent/CEO, Wesley Mission, Sydney, and a minister of the Uniting Church of Australia. Keith Garner is recognised for his evangelistic and welfare ministry and he chose 'Calling and Compassion' as the theme for his addresses.
4. The Conference recorded its appreciation of the service of Dr John Stephens as Secretary of the Conference who unexpectedly had to step aside from his office due to illness. Rev Thomas R. McKnight served as Secretary to the Conference for 2018 and Rev Dr Heather Morris was appointed as Conference Secretary Designate for 2019-2020.
5. Restructuring of the District system of the Methodist Church was agreed to take effect from July 2019. The previous eight Districts have been rearranged to form three districts identified as Southern District, North Western District and North Eastern District.
6. Generally the reports were uncontroversial and delivered in a fashion to encourage the church. There were some very passionate speeches made to challenge its ministers and lay leaders to mission and prayer. It was recognised that the church is reducing in membership but it was emphasised that the perceived decline was not to be feared but to be responded to with enduring faith.
7. It was reported that new material was being provided to inspire Bible study and local emphasis on 'Discipleship, Mission and Prayer.' It was hoped that the congregations would use the material and that people of all ages would make greater commitment in these areas of ministry.
8. Dr Heather Morris delivered an impassioned speech introducing the Connexional Year of Prayer. A candle was made available for every society which included a pledge to be prayerful. Districts were also instructed to set aside a month for concentrated prayer. The emphasis was on intergenerational prayer and the Conference was asked to consider the question, "What does the call to prayer mean in your place?"
9. The Faith and Order Committee reported on the district conversations on issues of human sexuality using the material, 'Sexuality: Developing Good Conversations on Difficult Questions.' An appeal was made for a wider response to the discussion material to be conveyed to the committee.
10. The Council on Social Responsibility proposed a project on the theme: 'How can we face the future if we are bogged down in the past?' This is to be a multi-faceted process over a period of two connexional years 2018-2020. The process will include (1) Listening Process of victims/survivors in Methodist congregations, (2) Pastoral Process, to provide emotional support and counselling, (3) Policy Development Process considering what has been learned from the listening and pastoral approaches.



11. The Conference held the election for the President of the Conference for 2019-2020. The President elect is the Rev David H. Nixon, superintendent in the Dublin North Circuit. The 2018 Conference ran very smoothly and all business was conducted in a very congenial and amicable manner.

### **The Society of Friends**

*The Rev John Faris writes:*

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 Limerick for the first time in July 2018. The Limerick Meeting, although small in numbers, made careful, detailed arrangements which seemed to go well in all aspects.
2. This was my second time to represent PCI at the Yearly Meeting and I was again struck with the friendliness of the 'Friends', not least, but not only, some former Presbyterians, including the daughter of a minister of Limerick Presbyterian Church and sons of two previous Moderators.
3. The commitment of Friends to justice and peace was again evident. One speaker passionately wanted to make the Republic a 'country of peace' building on its neutrality, but another speaker drew attention to serious social inequalities which also need to be addressed.
4. The Yearly Meeting agreed to the holding of same-sex marriages in Quaker meetings for worship, currently legal in the Republic of Ireland. If any Quaker Meetings, solemnisers or members do not wish to participate in meetings for worship for same-sex-marriages as a matter of conscience, there is no obligation to do so. The diversity of views held within the Society was acknowledged.
5. The Annual Lecture 'Living our Faith Daily: the practice of testimony' was given by an English Quaker scholar, Ben Pink Dandelion. (<https://quakersireland.files.wordpress.com/2018/07/ben-pink-dandelions-public-lecture-iyf-2018.pdf>) This was a fascinating overview of Quakerism from its origins, with its distinctive identifying marks in dress and speech and specific dos and don'ts, to a more privatised individualistic version in our day.
6. The lecturer concluded: "When we lose our sense of being a worshipping community, when we lose our spiritual connection, nothing works as it should. We are left with reason, fear and mistrust. We become contractual and not covenantal. We develop fortified lines and stop listening or hearing. We need to try and hold to the line of Spirit-led space, and continually keep moving towards it. Always we need to see our worshipping community as our central focus and resource which supports all else, rather than see Meeting as the optional add-on to a personal spiritual life, if we are to avoid the destructive singularities of individualism."

7. One example he gave was of his meeting deciding on the relocation of their meeting house, by asking a question “that took our own preferences out of the picture. Asking whether we should move or not put the focus on us, on our preferences and dreams in the here and now, and we couldn’t find unity. When we asked what was best for the future of the Quaker community in the area, we experienced a truly gathered meeting, a deep sense of unity that it was right to move.” There are resonances here for any Christian community.
8. Quakerism arose in the post Civil War ferment of the 1650s, as one expression of the radical Reformation, whereas Irish Presbyterians identify with the confessional Reformation (Westminster Assembly of Divines met in 1646.) It was good, however to meet across that difference and not least with a significant number of Irish Quakers who identify as evangelical and share our commitment to the Scriptures.

### **Presbyterian Church of Wales – Eglwys Bresbyteriaidd Cymru**

*The Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen writes:*

1. The 2018 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales (PCW) was held in the Capel y Groes, Wrexham (9–11 July). From the moment we arrived, we were very impressed by the warm welcome and generous hospitality. There are many links of friendship and family between our two churches and we had the strong sense of being among kindred spirits – part of a denomination grappling with many similar issues to our own. The intimacy and relaxed atmosphere of the Assembly was very striking. Overall, PCW has a membership of approximately 20,000, located in 60 churches with 45 serving ministers.
2. After the opening act of worship and the reception of visiting delegates, one of the first items on the agenda was a Christian Aid presentation noting that £203,000 had been raised as a result of Typhoon of Love, a church-wide appeal focusing on bringing storm relief to the Philippines and helping some of the poorest in the region, especially in isolated rural areas and city slums.
3. Much of the Assembly was about routine business, including General Data Protection Regulation. It sounded familiar that training sessions had been organised later in the year to support churches, but what was different was the mention of the difficulties being experienced because of the lack of official Welsh terms. We were given the benefit of a bilingual booklet extending to over eighty pages. I have passed my copy on to our own General Secretary’s Department!
4. The Welsh Church has also been reviewing its structures. Rev Meirion Morris, the General Secretary, noted in his written report the ‘congregationalist’ inclinations of a number of churches which had seemingly divorced themselves from presbytery, association, department or Assembly. He voiced the frustrations of those who set time aside to travel only to discover either that the work had already been done or, at the other extreme, meetings that were long and arduous. He spoke of directing the work in a manner which is alive to today’s context:

“Our wish is to ensure a trellis which will facilitate this, to release those who have been called in each church to engage in ministry, to announce Jesus and call people to a relationship with him....How do we encourage ownership of the process?”

5. The most contentious item of business was whether or not PCW should accept money from the National Lottery Fund. Part of the dilemma was having to maintain empty buildings, some of which had been listed, and graveyards. There was never any doubt which way the debate would go with the vast majority of speakers wanting to draw the very clear distinction between God and mammon, stressing how the lottery led to poverty and the need for teaching in their churches on tithing. What was surprising was the manner in which the matter was referred down to the various courts for further discussion, the rationale being that a greater number of members would own the arguments.
6. Although I do not fully understand the mechanisms, the Welsh Assembly is divided into three associations – North, East and South. These seem to function like our old synods, but carry more weight and have the advantage of ensuring that any potentially difficult or controversial business has been well aired before it suddenly reaches the floor of Assembly. While this might appear to slow down the passage of resolutions and be therefore frustrating, there are lessons to be learned.
7. The Assembly met for seven sessions altogether. Much of that time concentrated on worship. It has been said many times that Welsh is the language of heaven and there was a certain unmistakable cadence and fervour when it came to the wholehearted praise. The Tuesday evening service was very moving as the ceremonial preaching robe was passed from the outgoing to the incoming moderator. The Rev Brian Huw Jones was thanked for his year in office as Rev Brian Matthews succeeded him.
8. Part of the Assembly is given over to the annual Davies Lecture, which this year looked at the life of Richard Williams Morgan (1815-1889), ‘Historical romanticist and ecclesiastical politician’, who campaigned tirelessly for the use of the Welsh language in schools and in 1861 published ‘St. Paul in Britain’ or, ‘The Origin of British as opposed to Papal Christianity.’ Morgan’s thesis was that the Apostle Paul himself had evangelised Britain, thereby establishing an apostolic succession independent of Rome. Historical lectures are informative and give the opportunity to evaluate the influence of ideas or events on our own understanding of Christian faith.
9. A particular highlight was a devotional and deeply moving address given by the Rev Dr Robert Cunville of North-East India. A member of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, he spoke of his close personal association and friendship with the late evangelist, describing him as a man of complete humility and total integrity. He mentioned Billy Graham’s commitment to the Bible, his meticulous preparation before preaching and the simplicity of his message. There was his influence as

an ecumenical leader, reaching out to various denominations with a big heart for preachers around the world. Billy Graham took a courageous stance against racism and apartheid. He also embraced his family with unconditional love. When asked about his death, Billy noted that he was merely changing his address.

10. Also at the Assembly from India was the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of India, Rev Lalramliana Pachuau. PCW is seen as the mother church and there are very deep bonds of love, affection and loyalty.
11. My wife Barbara and I very much enjoyed and were enriched by our time in Wrexham. I had the impression of a denomination conscious of its decline, but nevertheless in good heart, seeking to consolidate itself and looking at various outreach initiatives. There are deep similarities between our denominations, which are essentially conservative in theology and outlook. I couldn't help but reflect on the fact, however, that PCW has chosen to maintain its relationship with a large number of ecumenical agencies, including the World Council of Churches, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. This is reflected in the election of Rev Marcus Wyn Robinson as the next Moderator, who as a former forces' chaplain and serves as the Assembly's Ecumenical Officer.
12. Overall we gained the sense of a denomination in good heart as it seeks to consolidate itself and look outward in fresh new ways to win souls for Christ.

## MEMORIAL RECORD 2019

*The Very Rev Dr Donald Patton reports:*

The Rev Margaret Louise Johnston, MA, Dip.Th, Minister Emerita, Fortwilliam Park, Belfast, died on 23 August 2018, in the eighty-seventh year of her age and the thirty-first year of her ministry. She was born at Buckna, County Antrim, on 28 April 1932, the second of three sisters, to the Rev John Worthington Johnston and his wife, Mary, née McFadden. Both of her grandfathers were presbyterian ministers; the Rev Dr John Corry Johnston, Abbey, Dublin, and the Rev Jackson McFadden, Badoney and Corrick, Co.Tyrone. The family moved to Belfast in 1935 when the Rev John Johnston was installed as Minister of Townsend Street congregation on 28th March of that year. In her early adult years Ms Johnston became a choir member and Sunday School teacher in the congregation. She was educated privately in her childhood years and, later, attended Victoria College and Richmond Lodge, Belfast. She proceeded to St Andrews University, Scotland, in 1950, to study History and graduated MA with honours in 1954. This was followed by a year of study at Mount Holyoke College for women, Mass., USA, as a Fulbright scholar. On returning home, in 1955, she was appointed an Assistant Archivist in the Public Record Office,

Belfast, and a year later she entered the Northern Ireland Civil Service to embark on a successful career at management level. She served in the Departments of, Home Affairs, Education and Finance, and Economic Development where she was appointed Assistant Secretary with responsibility for managing a large staff and budget. During these years she worshipped, firstly, in Malone congregation, Belfast, where she became a member of the Congregational Committee, and, in 1971, on moving to reside at Killinchy on the shores of Strangford Lough, she joined Killinchy congregation where she was elected and ordained an elder in 1975 and served as Clerk of Session from 1982 to 1986. Further promotion was open to her in the Civil Service but she chose to study for the ordained ministry and entered Union Theological College, Belfast, in 1985, graduating Dip.Th. in 1987. She was licensed by the Presbytery of Down on 28 June 1987, and continued as Assistant to the Minister of St John's, Newtownbreda, the Rev Wilfred Orr, to whom she had been assigned in her final student year. She was ordained by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 17 January 1988. In April 1990 Ms Johnston returned to the USA as a Mission Specialist with the Global Mission Unit of the Presbyterian Church, USA, where she sought to present a more positive picture of Ulster and the church than the 'Troubles' portrayed. The vacant congregation of Fortwilliam Park, Belfast, issued a call to her to become their new minister and she was installed there by the Presbytery of North Belfast on 8 March 1991. Ms Johnston's experience, organisational skills, drive and commitment, were devoted unreservedly to the service of Christ and His Church. She was conscientious in preparation for pulpit ministry and, with a warm pastoral heart for her people, she was attentive to visitation especially of the lonely and vulnerable, supplemented by a lay pastoral visitation team which she organised. The central Church benefitted from her talents through her membership of several boards and committees, in particular, the Union Theological College Management Committee, of which she was convener 1992-1999. On her retirement on 19 July 1997, she settled again at Killinchy and renewed her active membership with the local congregation among her many friends in church and community. Beyond church ministry Ms Johnston pursued a variety of other interests. She had a fine contralto voice and had the opportunity to train with Helen Olheim, the Principal Mezzo Soprano, Metropolitan Opera House, New York, and, later, with the local and well-known singing teacher, Frank Capper. She was a Concert Singer, a Vocal Adjudicator at Music Festivals, a Choral Conductor, and Chairperson of the Belfast Music Festival from 1974. She was a member of the RUC Part-time Reserve, 1973-1976; Chairperson of the Killinchy Residents Association; a member of the William Keown Trust Awards Committee for the Disabled 1976-1985; Joint Chairperson of the Irish Council of Churches' group which published 'The Church in the Technological Age'; a Cruse Bereavement Care Counsellor; National Vice President, the Girls' Brigade, Northern Ireland. She listed as her hobbies, swimming, sailing, gardening, painting, and bee-

keeping, becoming President of the Western Beekeepers' Association. Ms Johnston lived a full life, generously sharing her gifts, humanity, and Christian faith with many, and all in the service of her Lord and Saviour, Christ Jesus. She survived her two sisters, Professor E.M Johnston-Liik and Mrs Elizabeth Ann Attridge, who also had distinguished careers in academia and the British Civil Service, respectively. We give thanks to God for her life and ministry and assure her family circle of our sympathy and prayers.

The Rev David Cyril Scott BA, Minister Emeritus of Cremore and Tyrone's Ditches congregations, County Armagh, died on 27 December 2018, in the eighty-fifth year of his age and the sixtieth year of his ministry. He was born on 25 May 1934, the eldest of five children, to David Herbert Scott, a grocer, and his wife Margaret, née Faith, of Tullyear Terrace, Rathfriland Road, Banbridge. The family worshipped in Scarva Street congregation, Banbridge, where the children grew up in the Christian faith, and received their secular education at the Abercorn Primary School in the town. The death of their father in 1944 placed a burden of responsibility on Cyril, aged only ten years. He later attended Lisburn Technical College, 1947-1949, and Shaftesbury House Tutorial College, University Street, Belfast, 1949-1951. The Minister of Scarva Street at this time was the Rev William Moore who encouraged Mr Scott in his studies and perceived his potential for ordained ministry. Responding to the call of God, he followed the well-trodden path of preparation, to train at the Magee University College, Londonderry, successfully graduating BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1955. He pursued his theological studies at New College, Edinburgh, 1955-1956, and the Assembly's College, Belfast, 1956-1957. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Banbridge on 9 June 1957, and assisted the Rev Ronald Craig, Minister of Woodvale congregation, North Belfast, from 1956 to 1959. The congregations of Cremore and Tyrone's Ditches gave him a unanimous call, and he was ordained and installed there by the Presbytery of Newry, on 30 October 1959. Mr Scott served these two congregations for forty years, establishing a strong bond with the people which lasted through retirement until his decease. He never married – his congregations were his family. He was a constant visitor and faithful pastor often joining families at meal times, and, sometimes, as a late-night visitor being left 'to turn the light off' before he went home. He had a wide circle of friends, and was also a hospitable host – one student remembers being invited to the manse for a substantial tea. The gloomiest day would be lightened by his infectious laughter. He was committed to the old presbyterian tradition of unaccompanied metrical psalm-singing in worship at Tyrone's Ditches. A knowledgeable man, with a keen eye for detail, he contributed to the wider committees and meetings of which he was a part – Newry Presbytery and the local clerical club, Poyntzpass Historical Society, Markethill Festival Committee – often giving others pause for thought with incisive comment or question. He

was a regular attender of the lectures and meetings of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, and contributed to the business of the annual meeting. He died suddenly at his home in Markethill, and is mourned by his people, and friends far and wide. To all these we extend our sympathy, and, most especially, to his sisters Velma and Margaret, and brothers Herbert and Rodney, giving thanks to God in Christian faith inspired by the ‘great cloud of witnesses’ of those who have reached ‘the better country – a heavenly one’ and join in the praises of the ‘Lamb upon the throne’ (Hebrews 12:1, 11:16; Revelation 7:9,10)

**The Rev Robert Harkness BD BA**, Minister Emeritus, Sinclair Seamen’s congregation, Belfast, died on 2 January 2019, in the ninety-first year of his age and the forty-third year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast, off the Shankill Road, on 29 September 1928, the eldest of eleven children, to Alexander Harkness, a foreman in the Sirocco Engineering Works, and his wife, Anne, née Farmer. He was educated at Glenwood Primary School and Belfast College of Technology. He left school at age fourteen for a job in the machine shop of the Sirocco Engineering Works, but, after a few months, he moved to James Mackie and Sons Engineering. Later, he took up a five year apprenticeship, as a joiner, at the Belfast Shipyard, followed by spells at several of the major shipyards in the UK. In 1950 he emigrated to Australia, where he worked at different jobs in several places, before returning home in 1952. A year later, he met Mary Baillie Wilson Dunlop, who lived nearby, and romance blossomed, leading to their marriage on the 5th April 1958. A son, John, was born in 1959, and a daughter, Ann, in 1962. Mr Harkness had been churched in early years and attended Sunday School and Church Boys’ groups, but it was in 1960 that he gave his life to Christ in response to the witness of a Christian workmate – Mary followed a few months later. They were members of the Shankill Road Mission congregation where Mr Harkness gave service as a Bible Class leader, a member of the congregational committee, and then as an elder. The minister, the Rev Ivor Lewis, encouraged Mr Harkness to believe that he had the qualities and ability to become a minister. Being convinced that God was in this, he applied to be accepted as a mature student for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, at the age of forty, and studied for five O-levels at the Belfast College of Technology. Then followed several years of further study, at the Queen’s University, Belfast, 1968 to 1970, Stranmillis College, 1970-1971, and the Assembly’s College, Belfast, 1971-1974, graduating BD. During his studies, from 1970, he assisted in the congregation of Mersey Street, and on completion of his course, he was licensed by the Presbytery of South Belfast on 23 June 1974, and, on 5 January 1975, he was ordained by the Presbytery of East Belfast in Megain Memorial, Newtownards Road, as Assistant to the Minister, the Rev James McAllister. The following year, this city man, was called to the country congregation of Muckamore, where he was installed on 30 March 1976 by the Presbytery of Templepatrick. As well as diligently

attending to his pulpit and pastoral duties, he studied for a BA degree with the Open University, graduating in 1983. After seven years he moved back to Belfast to be installed in Belvoir Park congregation on 31 March 1983 by the Presbytery of East Belfast, where he remained until 1986, in which year he was installed in Sinclair Seamen's on 17 January, by the Presbytery of North Belfast, ministering there until his retirement on 30 June 1995. In these three spheres of ministry, Mr Harkness evidenced a deep-seated devotion to His Saviour, to the Word of God, and to his passion to witness to the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave service to the wider church as convener of the committee overseeing the work of the Shankill Road Mission, a place and a people he knew and loved so well. Throughout these years he was fully supported and assisted by his wife, Mary, and to her, their children, John and Anne, their six grand-children, and surviving siblings, Ruby, Lucy, Charlie, Joe, and Tommy, together with the wider family circle, we extend our sympathy, as we thank God who called our brother into His service and has called him to the home prepared and assured through the Word he loved so well.

The Rev James Walker Neilly, BA, Dip.Ed, M.Phil, Minister Emeritus, Immanuel, Belfast, died on 31 January 2019, in the eighty-ninth year of his age and the sixtieth year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast, on 22 April 1930, to William Ernest Neilly, an estate agent, and his wife Margaret, née Walker. He was raised in the congregation of Seaview, Shore Road, where he came to faith in Christ as his Saviour. Following Primary School education, he attended the Belfast Royal Academy. Being convinced of a call of God to the ordained ministry, he studied at the Magee University College, Londonderry, and graduated BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1954. This was followed by theological study at the Assembly's College, Belfast. On 25 May 1956, Mr Neilly was licensed by the Presbytery of North Belfast and served an assistantship in the congregation of Nelson Memorial, Shankill Road, with the minister, the Rev Robert Milford. He was called by the congregation of Tobermore, and ordained there by the Presbytery of Tyrone, on 29 April 1958, and he, and his new wife, Margaret Florence Weir, whom he married on 15 April, 1958, settled to manse life in this rural setting. He pastored his people through the varied experiences that life brings, and was committed to an evangelical theology. He preached conversion to Christ as Saviour and Lord, and sought to nurture new Christians in their faith and daily living, an emphasis he continued throughout his entire ministry. Six years later, with their two sons, they moved to Lisburn, where Mr Neilly was installed in Sloan Street congregation, by the Presbytery of Dromore, on 16 September 1964. Here, his third son, Mark, was born. Mr Neilly served in this busy urban pastorate, while also ministering as presbyterian chaplain to the Lagan Valley Hospital, until he accepted a call to Immanuel congregation, Shankill Road, where he was installed by the Presbytery of North Belfast, on 21



June 1973. These were difficult and demanding times as the violence of the ‘Troubles’ took their toll, political opinion polarised, and communities became divided and alienated from one another. So, when it was realised that the World Council of Churches was sympathetic to violent ‘freedom’ movements in South America, strongly influenced by Liberation Theology, a movement spread in the wider church to persuade the General Assembly to withdraw from membership of the WCC. Mr Neilly was very active in this, as a founder member of the Campaign for Compete Withdrawal (CCW) movement. The issue crystallised when six Elim Pentecostal missionaries in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), some from Northern Ireland, were murdered by guerrillas in June 1978. In that year the Assembly decided to suspend membership, which was confirmed by the Assembly of 1979, and withdrawn altogether by the Assembly of June 1980, by 448 votes to 388. Mr Neilly remained in Immanuel until his retirement on 30th September 1995. Outwith the Church, Mr Neilly served as a member of the Northern Ireland Council of the Lord’s Day Observance Society, now known as Day One Christian Ministries. Over the course of his ministry, he continued to study, qualifying Dip.Ed. during the 1960s, and achieving his B.Th. in 1971 (Queen’s University, Belfast) and M.Phil. (Queen’s University, Belfast) in 1996. Mr Neilly is survived by his wife, Florence, and two of his sons, Rev Stephen Neilly, and Rev Mark Neilly. His third son, Dr Paul Neilly, Consultant General Surgeon, died in February 2004. We extend to these, their families, and the wider family circle, our prayerful condolences, confident in the faith that looks to Christ, ‘the resurrection and the life’ (John 11:25)

**The Rev David McKee BD**, Minister without charge (retired), died on 11 February 2019, in the ninety-fifth year of his age and the fifty-sixth year of his ministry. He was born at Lissue, County Antrim, on 12 March 1924, one of a family of six, to John McKee, a factory worker, and his wife, Isabella, née McKee. He was educated at the local Primary School, 1930 to 1936, then Lisburn Technical College, 1936 to 1938, and became a joiner. He served with the RAF during the Second World War, from 1943 to 1946, in England, and India where he was converted to personal faith in Christ in 1945. Responding to the call of God to full-time Christian service with the Faith Mission, he trained at the Faith Mission Training Home and Bible College, Edinburgh, from October 1947, and graduated in June 1949. He engaged in evangelistic work in southern Ireland between July 1949 and June 1950. His experience in India never left him, and he had a burning desire to minister the Gospel there. He later said “I saw my Saviour as the Good Shepherd looking for servants who would go to the ‘other sheep’ and bring them into his fold.” So, he resigned the Faith Mission and sailed to India, in the autumn of 1950, to join the Dipti Mission. While at language school there, he met Berti Hofer, from Sonnenfeld, Switzerland, who was working with unwanted children in an orphanage, and they

married in 1951. After several years of ministry in various parts of India, Mr McKee returned home with his wife and three girls, to train for the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church at the Assembly's College, Belfast, from 1960 to 1963, graduating BD. He assisted the minister of Ballysillan, Belfast, the Rev John Llewellyn Wynne, and was licensed and ordained as a missionary to India by the Presbytery of North Belfast, on 30 May 1963. The General Assembly Annual Reports 1963 indicate there had been fifty-one retirements from the work in Gujarat in the previous eight years, and lamented "not a single man from Ireland to take the vacated places. Where are our new recruits? Does God no longer call?" The McKees answered this call and sailed for Gujarat later that year, where they served at Anand, Ahmedabad and Broach (Bharuch). They returned to Ireland in 1967 and Mr McKee was installed in First Lurgan, by the Presbytery of Dromore, on 22 February of that year. After a short ministry, in the autumn of 1970, he went to his wife's home country of Switzerland, to minister in the Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche, firstly at Biel-Madretschat, and, from 1973, at Lyss, both in the canton of Bern. In 1976, he returned home, and was installed in First Saintfield by the Presbytery of Down on 6 May. He was not afraid to speak into the violence of those times, warning, in 1976, following a bomb explosion in nearby Downpatrick, "It is not too late to find a way out of our problems, but there may not be much time left before the sinister powers who manipulate the young, undisciplined, unthinking hooligans of both sides, attempt to take effective control of our land." He stayed for two years until moving to Rostrevor to minister at the Christian Renewal Centre, alongside its founder, the Rev Cecil Kerr. In 1980 he returned to Switzerland to minister in Twann, on the shores of Lake Biel, until 1989, when they retired to Ireland. Mrs McKee predeceased her husband in 2002. We give thanks for Mr McKee's evangelistic gifts which were widely used throughout the land, and across the world, in services, missions, and personal witness. We assure his daughters, Esther, Joy and Rachel, his surviving siblings, Jack, Ethel and Jacqueline, and their wider family circle, of our sympathy and prayers, as we pay tribute to the life and ministry of our brother, who now beholds the Saviour face to face, in whom he trusted, and whom he faithfully declared to so many.

**The Rev Robert (Bob) Lockhart, BA**, Minister Emeritus (Released), Elmwood, Ballymacash, Lisburn, died on 13 March 2019, in the eighty-third year of his age and the forty-fifth year of his ministry. He was born at Newtownards on 4 June 1936, the eldest of two brothers, to Robert Lockhart, a career soldier, and his wife, Isabella, née, Bennett. Raised in a loving home, he was educated at the Model Primary School, and Regent House Grammar School. While at Regent House, he joined the Air Training Corps (ATC) which gave him the opportunity to attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. On leaving school, he joined Berkshire International (UK) Ltd., a hosiery company, where he qualified as a Purchasing Officer, and worked for twelve years.

In 1957 he attended a tent mission, and that night the whole course of his life and career changed. He was challenged by the preacher's text, Joshua 24:15, "Choose now this day whom you will serve..." He gave his life to Christ and began the journey which was to lead him into the ordained ministry. He matured in his faith through fellowship and service in the congregation of Greenwell Street. Among the many new friends he made was Betty Clarke. Love blossomed and they were married on 3 October 1963. They settled to married life at Newtownards and were blessed with two children, Fiona, and Niall. Over these years a sense of call to full-time ministry strengthened, and led to his decision to study at the Queen's University, Belfast, with a view to becoming a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This was a courageous decision, having a growing family to provide for, which was eloquent testimony to his commitment to his Lord and Saviour. A growing sense of call to full-time ordained ministry led Mr Lockhart to study at the Queen's University, Belfast, 1966-1969, graduating BA.

This was followed by theological study at the Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Ards on 9 June 1974, and assigned as assistant to the Rev W.J.A. Bell, then Minister of Knock, Belfast. He was ordained by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 12 January 1976, and, on being called to church extension work at Ballymacash, he was installed there on 2nd May of that same year. The parish was carved out of the bounds of Railway Street congregation. New housing developments were being built, and many families were moving in. There was no physical church building at that time, though the foundation stone had been laid early in 1976. Mr Lockhart had to set about gathering a congregation from scratch, which meant knocking doors and establishing a network of contacts and relationships with businesses and community groups in the area. He was well qualified for such work. His experience in the business world, his maturity, and his organisational skills, came into their own. Mr Lockhart was a people person. He was blessed with a warm, outgoing, personality, ready laughter, and a gift for friendship, which drew people to him. A church building was opened and dedicated on 22 January 1977, and, by the end of 1979, there were 280 families connected with the congregation. A new suite of halls was built to accommodate a wide range of activities and organisations, opened on 26 September 1981. The success of the work was recognised by a service of full erection to congregational status on 15 January 1984, followed by the installation of Mr Lockhart, who had been formally called as Minister, on 8 February 1984. Mr Lockhart talked of Christ to people in their homes, and preached Christ to them on a Sunday. Faithfully calling men and women to put their trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour, he also taught them to live out their faith in the routines of everyday life – in the home, the workplace, and the local community. He was a great encourager, guiding many into service for the Master. He was Chairman of the Board of Governors of Pond Park Primary

School from 1981 to 2009. He took an active interest in The Leprosy Mission. After twenty-seven years of steady and fruitful ministry he retired on 30 April 2003, but continued to serve, especially as Pastoral Assistant in Railway Street congregation, until his health declined. Throughout these years Mrs Lockhart was by his side, supporting and encouraging him, and playing her own part in the life and ministry of the congregation. In 2017, following a diagnosis of vascular dementia Mr Lockhart became resident in Nicholson House Nursing Home in Lisburn. Now in a season of weakness and growing incapacity witness, and indeed ministry, continued. We remember Mr Lockhart's family as they mourn his loss, especially Mrs Betty Lockhart, daughter Fiona and husband Clarke, the Rev Niall Lockhart and wife Zarina, their children. We give thanks to God for the fellowship and witness of our brother who has entered into the eternal rest secured and promised through Christ the resurrection and the life.

**The Rev Arthur O'Neill BA**, Minister Emeritus (Released) of Fintona, Ballynahatty & Creevan linkage, died on 25 March 2019, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and the fifty-fifth year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 12 October 1933, one of nine children to John O'Neill, a spinning master at Ewart's Mill and, later, Brookfield Mill, and his wife Sophia, née Dyer. The family belonged to Woodvale congregation, and Mr O'Neill began his early education at Woodvale Primary School. During the 1940s the family moved to Temple, outside Carryduff, to escape the Blitz, where he attended Carric na Veigh and Glenwood schools. On leaving school, he worked for a furniture company, and, when his father died in 1948, the family moved to Finaghy, where they joined Lowe Memorial congregation. Like his older brother William (Bill), and encouraged by the minister the Rev Alfred Martin, he was accepted for the ministry of the church, and he prepared by studying at Shaftesbury House School, Belfast, and from 1957, at Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated BA in 1961. He took his theological course at the Assembly's College, Belfast, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast South on 15 December 1963. He then served an assistantship in the congregation of Strand, Belfast, with the minister, the Rev Dr William Chestnutt, where he was ordained by the Presbytery of East Belfast, on 5 July 1964. Later that year, on the 24 October, Mr O'Neill married Beate Bierbrauer whom he had first met in 1954 during a youth exchange visit to Belfast from the Evangelische Kirchengemeinde, Essen, West Germany. He was called to the congregation of Fintona, in the Presbytery of Omagh, and was installed there, on 23 February 1966. A few years later the united congregations of Ballynahatty & Creevan were linked with Fintona, and Mr O'Neill was installed as minister on 12 November 1969. Mr and Mrs O'Neill settled to manse life in a rural setting, and their family soon grew with the birth of their daughter Nicola. Mr O'Neill was a

thoughtful preacher and an assiduous pastor, caring for his flock in all the vicissitudes of life, faithfully supported by his wife in the life of the church. They operated as a team, and together they greeted their people at the church door after each service. In this way she enabled him to overcome the deafness that he had lived with over the course of his life. Being a competent organist and singer, he brought a musician's appreciation of the power of praise and the beauty of worship to the Sunday Services he conducted. During his ministry he started a Boys' Brigade company and, being a keen sportsman and holder of a Trinity Blue for hockey, he encouraged sports organisations. In his capacity as a teacher of RE at Omagh Academy, he influenced the lives of many young people in the district, including one Charles McMullen, who was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 2018. As an extension of his pastoral role, he acted as Presbyterian Chaplain to the Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital, near Omagh, and, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Northern Ireland Healthcare Chaplains Association, he served as its treasurer for many years. In the life of the wider church he served on the Board of Studies and the Youth Committee of Irish Churches, and was Moderator of the Synod of Derry and Omagh, 1995. After thirty-four years of consistent ministry, Mr O'Neill retired on 31 July 2000. He remained a keen golfer, and kept up his interest in sport, and enjoyed fellowship with colleagues from across the denominations as members of Friends of the Way, a group of clergy – and later some Church members – who meet monthly for worship and study. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Beate, daughter Nicola and husband Jim, grandson Killian, and his surviving siblings – brothers William, Jim, Stanley and Kenneth – together with the wider family circle, in the faith that is anchored in Christ, the believer's sure and certain hope of eternal life.

## OVERVIEW AND COORDINATION TASK GROUP

1. The General Council formalised the appointment of an Overview and Coordination Task Group on 11 October 2018 (the group having met informally over the summer period) with the following remit and membership:
  - (a) **Remit:** To continue to take an overview of the evolving situation since the 2018 General Assembly and act in a coordinating role, taking any necessary decisions (as appropriate) between meetings of the General Council.
  - (b) **Membership:** Moderator and Clerk (Convener); Very Rev Drs Noble McNeely, Frank Sellar, Ian McNie, Rob Craig, Stafford Carson, Norman Hamilton and Alastair Dunlop; Messrs David Thomson, Edgar Jardine CB, and James Livingstone.

2. At the time of writing, the task group has met twice, in November 2018 and February 2019, and at each meeting heard updates from other task groups regarding a variety of matters, including:
  - (a) Dialogue and Resources Task Group
  - (b) Implementation Task Group
  - (c) Decision Making and Dissent Task Group
  - (d) UTC Review Task Group (relating to matters concerning the relationship between UTC and QUB)

(Note: The first three of these task groups will be reporting separately to the General Assembly as part of the General Council report, with the last one reporting through to the UTC Management Committee and the Council for Training in Ministry)
3. The task group also gave guidance to the Clerk and the Moderator regarding correspondence etc.
4. At the meeting of the task group in November 2018, the following points were noted:
  - (a) There is a need to set the tone for potentially controversial/sensitive General Assembly debates in advance.
  - (b) There is a challenge with GA Reports being available to the press/public before the Assembly debate. Is PCI in charge of our own debate?
  - (c) Does PCI need to 'put up people' for media in advance? (Danger of debate happening in media before the Assembly considers the matter.) Or just afterwards?
  - (d) Need to promote what we believe and why we believe it. Danger of agenda being set by others. (e.g. Need to promote marriage as a positive things rather than simply react to others agenda regarding a redefinition.)
5. At the meeting in February 2019, the task group invited the General Assembly Press Officer, Mr Mark Smith, to outline the media strategy in relation to the General Assembly. Mr Smith also outlined a number of suggested developments that he would desire to implement for the 2019 General Assembly. During a full discussion, the task group affirmed the Press Officer's proposals.
6. The task group will continue to meet as required, maintaining an overview, offering advice and seeking to coordinate responses as appropriate.

## IMPLEMENTATION TASK GROUP

1. The Implementation Task Group was formed by the General Council in response to the 2018 General Assembly resolution: “That appropriate training be offered to Kirk Sessions on the theology and practice of the Church’s understanding of ‘a credible profession of faith’ and the pastoral guidelines on homosexuality.’ The remit agreed by the General Council is to put together a resource to be used at Kirk Session level, with a clear pastoral tone.” Membership includes the Moderator and Clerk, representatives from the Dialogue and Resources Task Group, the Doctrine Committee and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, and others from different pastoral contexts within PCI.
2. The task group reported on its initial work to the stated General Council meeting on 11 October 2018. At that meeting it was agreed that it be given permission to present a different set of pastoral guidelines while staying true to the original concept and that the remit be broadened to include training on a general approach to ‘a credible profession of faith’ as well as the specific issue of same-sex relationships.
3. The task group has met on five occasions. Two sub-groups were formed – one to work on a resource on ‘a credible profession of faith’ and the other to work on updating the current pastoral guidelines on homosexuality. While work on both drafts is making good progress, neither will be ready in time for the 2019 General Assembly.
4. To inform the work, the task group organised a Presbytery Consultation Day held on 17 January 2019 to which six representatives from each presbytery were invited. Other invitees included members of the General Council (including 38 members coming directly from presbyteries), the Implementation Task Group, the Overview and Coordination Task Group, the Doctrine Committee, the Dialogue and Resources Task Group and the Human Identity Task Group. Approximately 200 were invited of whom approximately 150 were directly from presbyteries. Approximately 190 attended on the day. The task group is grateful to all who participated. While the purpose of the day was both to give an opportunity for a greater number to have an input to the work of the task group and for the task group to hear and consider the views of a wider group, the spirit in which participants engaged with the themes and with one another was constructive and helpful. The format of the day was structured around three twenty-minute presentations. Each presentation was followed by facilitated discussion around tables for forty minutes. Each table facilitator also recorded feedback which was forwarded to the task group for reflection. The following is a summary of the presentations and subsequent feedback received during the Presbytery Consultation Day.
  - (a) The first presentation was titled “Position of PCI re ‘the question of homosexuality’” and was delivered by Rev Prof Stephen Williams. He introduced his presentation by saying that, while the membership of PCI embraces a range of positions on same-sex relationships, the position set out in the documents of PCI is that

- (a) sexual relationships are properly ordered to the institution of monogamous, heterosexual marriage, (b) there is a moral distinction between same-sex practice and same-sex orientation, (c) homophobia, like same-sex relationships, is incompatible with Christian discipleship. He noted that while the basis for PCI's position is that the Bible is clear and permanently applicable on this area of Christian teaching and practice, critics of this position will challenge this interpretation of the Bible's application in the contemporary world. He highlighted the dynamic that while in 'church circles' the question of homosexuality is often addressed as though it were a question of morality, it is experienced by many as a question of identity.
- (b) Feedback following Rev Prof Williams' presentation included the following comments and insights. Many considered his point about morality and identity useful. What he said about the distinction between orientation and practice generated much discussion about what constitutes sin in terms of both thought and behaviour. This highlighted a need for clarity on this subject. It was acknowledged that kirk sessions find it difficult to talk about this issue. Widening the remit to help kirk sessions talk about other sins such as co-habitation of opposite sex couples was suggested.
- (c) The second presentation was titled "Position of PCI re 'credible profession'" and was delivered by Rev Dr Martyn Cowan. He drew attention to documents of PCI defining 'credible profession' and then described the difference between 'rigorism' and 'indifferentism'. He used Matthew 13:24-29, 36-43 to highlight the reality that the church is a 'mixed multitude' and the danger of rigorism that can result in uprooting the genuine crop. He used Matthew 18:15-17 to highlight the danger of indifferentism, which is to treat sin as relatively inconsequential. He emphasised that church discipline is not incompatible with the church being a community of grace and mercy.
- (d) Feedback following Rev Dr Martyn Cowan's presentation included the following comments and insights. It is clear that there is inconsistency in approach across the church in approach by kirk sessions. However, church discipline does occur for a range of sins such as adultery and non-attendance. It was also observed that in some congregations decisions on sacramental discipline are left, wrongly, to the minister with the kirk session not taking full responsibility as it should. Further training was suggested for elders-elect on the responsibility they will have in this area. It was noted that in sacramental discipline it is better when, after a conversation, the person themselves realises they are not ready or, in the case of church discipline, chooses to withdraw from the Lord's Table without the kirk session having to take action.



- (e) The third presentation was titled “Position of PCI re ‘pastoral guidelines’” and was delivered by Rev Bobby Liddle and Rev Mairisine Stanfield. Rev Bobby Liddle outlined the need to update the pastoral guidelines on homosexuality adopted by the General Assembly in 2007. He described the changed context, including that same-sex marriage is now legal in the Republic of Ireland. He said it is intended that the updated guidelines will include more biblical content and remain in line with PCI’s stated position. He highlighted the need for the church to be a loving community. Rev Mairisine Stanfield shared stories of real situations that demonstrated the need for the church to be a community of radical love.
  - (f) Feedback following Rev Bobby Liddle and Rev Mairisine Stanfield’s presentation included the following comments and insights. It was observed that, while it is important for a church to be loving community, often pastoral care is confidential which limits the response of the church to the individual concerned. It was noted that if church discipline is required, it takes extra effort on the part of minister and elders to show love to the person because of the awkwardness of the situation. The importance of a sensitive and inclusive approach in congregations towards singleness generated extensive discussion and this extended beyond those who choose to be single because of same-sex attraction.
  - (g) All the feedback from the Presbytery Consultation Day was received by the task group and has been used to inform the group’s discussions and further shape the resources.
5. It was noted in discussion that there appears to be considerable variety in the vows used within PCI at admission both to baptism and to full membership. In view of this the task group asked the General Council to recommend that the General Assembly take steps to clarify the vows to be used at admission to baptism and to full membership.
6. The task group has spent some time discussing how and when to communicate its work. At the 2018 General Assembly there was a perception among some that the church had produced a theological report without an accompanying pastoral one, so the task group considers it important that both aspects of its work, the pastoral and the theological, should be communicated together. Consideration was given to requesting the 2019 General Assembly to send material down to presbyteries for comment, but the task group believes it is better to send final drafts down rather than half-finished material. It also believes it is important that Presbyteries have the opportunity to give feedback on the proposed material before it is presented to the Assembly for approval. Therefore, it is planned to request that the 2020 General Assembly receive final drafts of both the ‘credible profession’ resource and the pastoral guidelines and send these to presbyteries for comment,

with final consideration being given to the resource and guidelines at the 2021 General Assembly.

ALASTAIR DUNLOP, Convener

## **DECISION MAKING AND DISSENT WITHIN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TASK GROUP**

### **(A) INTRODUCTION:**

1. The Decision Making and Dissent within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Task Group was appointed by the General Council at its meeting on 11 October 2018 as follows:
  - (a) Purpose of Task Group:
    - That a task group be established to draw up a report on ‘Presbyterian decision making and the place of dissent’. Reporting to the General Council for transmission to the General Assembly and most likely ‘sent down’ to Presbyteries for discussion and feedback.
    - That the task group’s remit be as follows:
      - (i) To draw together relevant material from the Code, Assembly reports etc.
      - (ii) To outline how decisions are made in PCI’s Presbyterian system of Church government;
      - (iii) To outline what dissent formally means and how other forms of ‘dissent’ can be expressed;
      - (iv) To outline how decisions of the General Assembly can be changed.
  - (b) Task Group Membership:  
Moderator and Clerk; Convener of General Council (Convener); 2 Clerks of Presbytery (Robert Herron and Tom Conway); 2 people with ‘institutional memory / experience’ (Dr Sam Hutchinson and Dr John Lockington); 2 people with ‘conciliatory skills’ (Joe Campbell and Avril Heenan); 2 representatives from the Doctrine Committee (Prof Michael McClenaghan and Prof John Gillespie).
2. The task group has to date met on three occasions, on 12 November 2018, 3 January and 15 February 2019 and has during wide-ranging discussions has sought to scope out the remit given to it by the General Council.

**(B) CONSIDERATION OF SOME RELEVANT BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. The task group considered a number of papers tabled by the Clerk of Assembly, namely:
  - The 1981 Doctrine Committee Report re ‘Subscription to Creeds and Confessions’;
  - The 1974 Report re ‘A Brief Statement concerning Faith and Order’;
  - The 1990 Report of the Judicial Commission re ‘Liberty of Conscience’
  - The 2014 Report of the General Board re ‘Freedom of Individuals to Express Opinions’
  - Extracts from the General Council Report of June 2018
2. The following two key points were noted:
  - (a) **PCI is a Confessional Church** – the Rule of Faith (Code Pars 10-14) states:

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.

(b) PCI is a Presbyterian Church:

- Key decisions are made by ministers elders meeting together in 'representative gatherings' (Code Par 19):  
19. (1) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland shall be governed by presbyters in representative assemblies, otherwise known as the courts of the Church. These courts comprise Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries and the General Assembly.
  - The Kirk Session is the meeting together of minister(s) and elders of the local congregation (Code Par 34):  
34. The Kirk Session is the governing body of a congregation in its Christian calling and as such has the rights and duties set out in this section.
  - Presbytery is the coming together of ministers and representative elders from a particular region (Code Par 69):  
69. (1) The Presbytery is the body primarily responsible for corporate oversight of the congregations and causes assigned to it by the General Assembly, and of the ministers and elders connected with it, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom generally within its bounds.
  - The General Assembly is a coming together of ministers and representative elders from every PCI congregation (Code Par 104):  
104. (1) The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church, representing in one body the whole Church, including all subordinate courts and particular congregations, and acting as its supreme legislative, administrative and judicial authority, in dealing with all matters brought before it.
3. The task group also noted the following additional points:
- (a) Not every 'policy', or even doctrinal statement, has the same 'standing'. Some matters are part of PCI's subordinate standards; some matters are set out in PCI's constitution (the Code); and some matters are policy or statements agreed by the General Assembly, often following on from a detailed report and debate on the underlying biblical principles involved. Some policy matters or doctrinal positions may be outlined in all three of these

ways – a sort of ‘triple lock’ of Scripture, Confession and Code. For example, in regard to PCI’s stated position that marriage is exclusively between one man and one woman – this is defined in the subordinate standards, is stated as such in the Code and has been affirmed on a number of occasions down the years by the General Assembly following reports presented to it on the bible’s teaching on marriage.

- (b) There is a difference between members having freedom to hold/promote a range of views and elders/ministers having the same freedom – the latter having ‘subscribed’ and taken on the responsibility and constraints of leadership, the former having not.
- (c) There are some areas that PCI has however decided that its ministers and elders can hold a different belief than that stated in the WCF e.g. the role of civil magistrates (in the Code); the view of the Pope (by GA resolution); certain liberty of conscience regarding the ordination of women (Judicial Commission report and GA resolutions). Certain other areas of the subordinate standards may no longer be deemed to be binding on ministers and elders, though the General Assembly has never formally stated so e.g. material on Sabbath observance.
- (d) Both the 1974 Report to the General Assembly re ‘A Brief Statement concerning Faith and Order’ and the 2014 Report of the General Board re ‘Freedom of Individuals to Express Opinions’, are somewhat limited, though perhaps deliberately so.
- (e) In today’s media / social media driven world, a small number of people (some who may be Church members and some who may not) can seek to influence PCI policy outside of the normal structures and indeed can seek to create the impression (or reflect the reality) of wide-spread discontent with PCI policy.
- (f) ‘Informal groupings’ have always been in existence and have often sought to influence/change policy at General Assembly level.

**(C) AREAS IN WHICH GREATER CLARITY IS NEEDED AND WHERE THERE IS ‘ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT’**

1. The process of bringing reports and recommendations to the General Assembly for decision:
  - (a) Consideration of how remits (especially with potentially controversial/significant issues) are given to committees/panels/task groups – are remits too narrow at times?
    - (i) With what a Council considered to be potentially controversial/significant issues, should the Council be encouraged to check progress and amend a remit if deemed appropriate to do so?

- (ii) Should the committee/panel/task group have the right to refer remits back to the Council for consideration and amendment if deemed appropriate?
- (b) The role of Councils in overseeing committees/panels/task groups as they carry forward their remits, especially where these are potentially controversial / significant. What should be the nature and purpose of interim reports to Councils? For instance, should they clearly indicate the nature of discussion and the direction of travel etc.
- (c) The task group would suggest that there needs to be more use of a 'green paper stage' for controversial/significant issues – giving background, scoping out the issue etc. From relevant experience this at times could be usefully considered by a wider 'conference style' meeting of representatives from presbyteries, or even formally sent down to presbyteries for consideration, prior to proposals for policy being brought forward to the General Assembly. Does a group, presumably under the General Council, need to be tasked with recommending what issues should follow this more consultative format and which should not?
- (d) When reports come to the General Assembly, especially where these are potentially controversial/significant, should some form of 'big picture assessment' be included for the recommendations or options suggested? For instance, consideration of the impact on wider issues.
2. The process of consideration of reports during the General Assembly:
- (a) How to enable wider and fuller participation during the General Assembly – is it a 'cold house' for elders generally, for younger people and for women? Can the Assembly operate in 'round table discussion mode' for some issues?
- (b) What is the appropriate role for retired ministers?
- (c) Should more items of business be conducted in private session to allow freer debate, especially when potentially controversial/significant matters are under discussion?
3. The place of General Assembly decisions once taken:
- (a) There is a need for affirmation and explanation of the role and authority of the General Assembly. For instance:
- What decisions are binding that must be followed?
  - What is in the form of guidelines that should be followed apart from in exceptional situations?
  - What is in the form of guidance which is advice that should be taken into consideration?
- (b) How are decisions and policies are communicated:
- Within PCI – to leaders and to members. Do summary papers highlighting significant decisions need to be sent

to all ministers and clerks of session as soon as possible after each General Assembly? How are key decisions best communicated to members of congregations?

- Outside of PCI to the media / social media? Do a range of spokespersons need to be prepared in advance?
- (c) How do we to keep key decisions, policies and guidelines before the Church?
  - (d) How can ministers and elders legitimately express ‘dissent’ from specific decisions of the General Assembly? What are the types/categories of issues on which it is legitimate for ministers and elders publically to differ from the stated PCI position?
  - (e) When does the issue of discipline come to the fore for ministers or elders who publically differ from the stated position of PCI in an area where this is not legitimate? How are such areas identified? How is such discipline to be exercised?
4. How General Assembly decisions can be changed:
- (a) How can General Assembly decisions be changed? How can such debate be entered into, especially with reference to points 3 (d) and (e) above?
  - (b) Does there need to be a simpler process for triggering a review of General Assembly policies? Does the process of ‘memorials’ need to be renamed, updated and explained?

#### **(D) SUMMARY**

1. A significant ‘task of education’ is necessary with regard to a number of issues – e.g. decision making within PCI; subscription and its implications; the standing of different types GA decision; how legitimately to express ‘dissent’ from specific decisions and work to change those decisions. This ‘task of education’ is needed both internally (amongst both leaders and members of PCI) and externally. Some specific material could be prepared outlining the basics of decision making and church governance within PCI – this could be presented in a diagrammatic form.
2. There is need for greater clarity on a number of matters – e.g. the standing of different types of GA decisions; the types of issues on which it was legitimate for ministers and elders publically to differ from the stated PCI position.
3. Alternative and improved decision making processes should be explored – how remits are drawn up; consideration of how wider discussion can be encouraged within PCI’s structures (e.g. possible ‘green paper’ stages); how the GA itself is facilitated in its engagement especially with issues that are controversial / significant; how GA decisions are communicated to PCI congregations/members and in the ‘public square’.

**(E) NEXT STEPS**

1. The General Council agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that the report of the task group be sent down to presbyteries (along with focussed questions to be drawn up by the task group) for discussion, with comments being returned to the Task Group Convener by Monday 9 December 2019.

NOBLE McNEELY, Convener

**DIALOGUE AND RESOURCES TASK GROUP**

1. The Dialogue and Resources Task Group (DRTG) was established by the General Council in October 2015: its membership, namely, Very Dr Rob Craig (Convener), Very Rev Dr Stafford Carson, Rev Chris Kennedy, Rev Bobby Liddle, Rev Mairisine Stanfield, Avril Heenan and Joe Campbell.
2. Having been given a brief, but no name, the first duty of the group was to find a suitable name which would convey its three-year task. In arriving at the name Dialogue and Resources the members of the task group set around fulfilling their twofold purpose of enabling a dialogue to take place safely within PCI and to provide pastoral resources around the area of same-sex attraction (SSA).
3. The programme of the three years unfolded as follows:
  - (a) Year 1 2015-16: in the first year the members of the task group sought both to inform and equip themselves on the theological and pastoral issues which were presenting themselves around SSA. Significant conversations were opened with Rev Vaughan Roberts (Living Out) and with Jonathan Berry and Rob Wood (True Freedom Trust). A channel of conversation was also opened with Pdraig O'Tuama (Corrymeela).
  - (b) Year 2 2016-17: in the second year a series of workshops was offered to all active teaching elders within PCI. These workshops were held on an area basis, drawing ministers from several presbyteries together. Sam Allberry (author of *Is God anti-gay?*) was the invited speaker and facilitator. In addition, during his visits identical workshops were offered both to full-time PCI youth workers and licentiates and students for the ministry.
    - (i) Alongside the workshops, the task group provided a sheet of recommended resources (websites and books) in keeping with the stated position of PCI on homosexuality. The resource sheet is attached.
    - (ii) Also, during this year and into the third year a series of three meetings took place with Pdraig O'Tuama and others whom he invited. Initially, the purpose of such meetings was to read and discuss two books which had been recommended by either group and which presented different arguments and



conclusions around SSA. Members of the task group found these meetings helpful as they listened to the stories and appreciated the vulnerability of those who spoke honestly of their experiences; however, it was apparent that there would never be a meeting of minds without a letting go of deeply held convictions on both sides.

- (c) Year 3 2017-18: in the third year a further series of workshops was offered to ruling elders on the same geographic basis as the workshops for ministers. On this occasion Rob Wood from True Freedom Trust was the invited facilitator.
4. At the General Assembly of 2018 the task group requested a one year extension to continue its work. The belief within the task group being that there was need for a similar programme to be offered to the leaders of church youth groups and their young people. However, the proposed work of the task group was overtaken by the reaction and response to the decision of the 2018 General Assembly to receive the report of the Doctrine Committee regarding same-sex attracted people, the sacraments and church discipline. As a result, the task group was of the opinion that its work be suspended to allow the work of the task group offering pastoral advice to kirk sessions to take precedence.
  5. Conclusions / Lessons from the Experience of DRTG:
    - (a) **Gracious Confidence** – early in its life the DRTG ‘chanced’ upon the expression gracious confidence which became a much repeated mantra. The members of the task group gained the perception that, in the contemporary climate with its emphasis on diversity and inclusion, it is easy for Christian people to feel intimidated and in the process lose either their gracious spirit or their confidence in the Gospel.
    - (b) **Tone** – closely related to the need to have a gracious confidence in the Gospel is the tone in which we affirm the truth and teaching of the Scriptures on matters related to sexuality. Listeners hear not only what it said but the way in which it is said.
    - (c) **Confusion** – whilst those on the extremes of this debate are very clear both in their understanding, their message and their agenda for the church, there exists in-between these extremes both much confusion and the need for a clear affirmation of the church’s teaching about human sexuality and relationships.
    - (d) **Marriage and Singleness** – From our celibate, same-sex attracted friends a fresh appreciation was received about the gifts of marriage and singleness; and also, about the tendency within the church to exalt marriage as the goal of life to the detriment of the many single Christians.
    - (e) **Agenda** – the impression was received that many who, in their minds, have reconciled the teaching of Scripture with a loving same-sex relationship, want the church to follow suit.

6. The task group was thanked and discharged at the March meeting of the General Council, which also agreed that the resource list in the appendix be forwarded to the Council for Congregational Life and Witness.

ROB CRAIG, Convener

## DIALOGUE AND RESOURCES TASK GROUP

### APPENDIX – RESOURCE LIST

Introduction: Since 2015-18 many new publications on the subject have been printed. This list, while not exhaustive, is the basis of the resource sheet made available at all the workshops which the task group organised.

#### Some Websites/ Organisations:

Presbyterian Church in Ireland [www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org): Type in ‘Homosexuality’ into the search box for a number of articles and resources written by and for members of our denomination in recent years.

Living Out [www.livingout.org](http://www.livingout.org): Not an organisation as such, simply a website resource for church leaders and individuals either struggling with same-sex attraction personally or wanting to encourage those who do. Features video stories of people talking about their experiences. It may be useful for elders or in a broader congregational setting.

The True Freedom Trust [www.truefreedomtrust.co.uk](http://www.truefreedomtrust.co.uk): UK based evangelical organisation for whom Rob Wood works. This website has a number of helpful resources for individuals dealing with gay/lesbian issues personally. There is also a number of particularly helpful articles for professing Christian parents with children who are facing these issues.

True Freedom Trust, 75 Albion Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5LS, UK or phone on +44 (0)151 653 0773.

Rosaria Butterfield’s website [www.rosariabutterfield.com](http://www.rosariabutterfield.com): Includes a free PDF. Study guide based on her *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, as well as other articles and videos.

Website in connection with Wes Hill’s work [www.spiritualfriendship.org](http://www.spiritualfriendship.org): A website which provides a blog providing “Musings on God, Sexuality and Friendship”.

#### Some Books on homosexuality:

Jonathan Berry and Rob Wood, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: A future and a Hope for Same-Sex Attracted Christians* (IVP, 2016). Written from a personal point of view by today’s speaker.

Glynn Harrison, *A better story: God, Sex and Human Flourishing* (IVP, 2016). “This book is my attempt to say why I think traditional Christian teaching on sex, marriage and human relationships is good news for today.” Very accessible.

Sam Allberry, *Is God anti-gay? And other questions about homosexuality, the Bible and same-sex attraction* (The Good Book Company, 2013). Written from the point of view of one who faces these issues personally.

Rosario Butterfield *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert: An English Professor’s Journey Into Christian Faith* (Pittsburgh: Crown and Covenant, 2012) A biographical account of her conversion to Christ and move out of a Lesbian lifestyle.

Wes Hill, *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality* (Grand Rapids Michigan: Zondervan, 2010). Biographical in tone, and disarmingly honest, with a strong emphasis upon God’s grace and forgiveness.

Ed Shaw, *The plausibility problem* (Leicester: IVP, 2015). “Ed Shaw experiences same-sex attraction, and yet he is committed to what the Bible says and what the church has always taught about marriage and sex. In this honest book, he shares his pain in dealing with these issues – but, at the same time, shows us that obedience to Jesus is ultimately the only way to experience life to the full.” Well written and challenging.

## HUMAN IDENTITY TASK GROUP

1. Since its formation in autumn 2017, the task group continues to work on the challenging and hugely complex issues regarding gender identity both in society and in PCI congregations. The most significant action of the task group to date has been making copies of the book, *Talking Points: Transgender* by Vaughan Roberts with a forward by Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, available to every congregation.
2. Rev Prof Bill Addley convened the group in its first year and thanks are expressed to him for getting the work underway. Rev Daniel Kane agreed to fulfil the role of acting convener in the interim and was appointed to this role on a permanent basis by the General Council at its March 2019 meeting.
3. The task group welcomes the new booklet, ‘Transformed’, on gender identity issues released by the Evangelical Alliance in autumn 2018. It believes, however, that a need remains for a specific resource providing guidance on theological understanding and pastoral care for those in PCI congregations who struggle with gender identity and their families.
4. The task group is working on such a resource and plans to release it in the first half of 2020. It is envisaged that the resource will mirror the tone and approach taken by the updated resource on pastoral care and same-sex attraction. Input to this resource will come from experienced

pastoral practitioners and medical professionals involved in this field. It is planned that the resource will draw on anonymised personal stories of those who have sought pastoral care because of struggles with gender identity and their families.

DANIEL KANE, Convener

# GENERAL COUNCIL

## SECTION 2

Wednesday afternoon – 3.30pm

### GUYSMERE TASK GROUP

1. At the 2018 General Assembly the following resolution was passed:  
*That the General Assembly grant the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady permission to commission a Feasibility Study of the redevelopment of Guysmere as a world class centre for mission and ministry (incorporating a community hub and commercial facilities) and ask the Presbytery to present the results of that study to the March 2019 meeting of the General Council, for comment and transmission to the 2019 General Assembly, to enable a decision to be made regarding the sale, or otherwise, of the Guysmere site.*
2. The Presbytery appointed a Guysmere Group to take forward this feasibility study, and this Group secured the necessary funding to appoint Venture International Ltd to carry forward the task in hand.
3. The Presbytery Guysmere Group forwarded the completed comprehensive Guysmere Feasibility Study to the Clerk of Assembly in early March 2019, along with a Summary Paper and various architect's drawings.
4. The General Council's Guysmere Task Group met on Tuesday 26 March 2019 to discuss the Feasibility Study and the proposals flowing from it. Representatives of the Presbytery Guysmere Group (accompanied by a representative of Venture International) joined the meeting and following on from a short presentation, there was a lengthy period of detailed questions and discussion. The Presbytery representatives left the meeting allowing the Task Group to hold further discussions and draw up recommendations for the General Council meeting on Thursday 11 April 2019.
5. To facilitate discussion in the General Council, along with this brief report, the Council was provided with the Presbytery's Summary Paper (see Appendix 1), excerpts from the main Feasibility Study outlining financial details (see Appendix 2) and the various architect's drawings (see Appendix 3). A representative of the Presbytery Guysmere Group was also invited to make a short presentation at the Council meeting.
6. At the meeting of the General Council in April 2019, the Council received the report of its Guysmere Task Group and a short presentation was made on behalf of the Presbytery Guysmere Group. It was noted that it was General Assembly itself (in 2018) which had granted permission

for the Feasibility Study of the redevelopment of Guysmere to take place. This was to enable a decision to be made regarding the sale, or otherwise, of the Guysmere site at the 2019 General Assembly.

7. Following considerable discussion, the following resolutions based upon the recommendations of the Guysmere Task Group (some in amended form) were agreed by the General Council, for transmission to the 2019 General Assembly:
  - (a) that the proposed redevelopment of Guysmere, as outlined in the Feasibility Study, be permitted to proceed to the next stage i.e. the “capital project development (technical and funding) which allows the local promoting group sufficient time to work through all of the activities required to refine and define its preferred option, secure planning consent and secure the required capital funding to effectively deliver the project” (see the highlighted section in Appendix 1, page 44);
  - (b) that regarding funding of this ‘capital project development phase’ (estimated at £75,000 – see the highlighted section of in Appendix 2, page 53), if external funding (as outlined) cannot be secured, then this cost up to £75,000 be met over a three year period by PCI centrally, as a charge on the Incidental Fund.
  - (c) that PCI central funds would however not be committed to the envisaged sum of £50,000 in Phase 1 of the development (see the highlighted section of in Appendix 2, page 47) nor the overall 10% equity of approx. £400,000 (see the highlighted section of in Appendix 2, page 48);
  - (d) that a ‘Guysmere Development Panel’ (having an agreed membership with a ‘local emphasis’ and reporting to the General Council) be appointed by the 2019 General Assembly to present a robust business case and business plan for approval by the General Council before the project proceeds beyond the capital project development phase.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Clerk of Assembly

## **GUYSMERE TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 1**

### **The Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady Guysmere Feasibility Study – Summary Paper (March 2019)**

#### **Introduction**

1. Guysmere has a uniquely beautiful location at the edge of Castlerock Blue Flag beach on the Causeway Coast of Northern Ireland. With direct rail and road links to all of the major cities and airports in Ireland the site offers easy and affordable national and international access. For the last 93 years, through God’s gift of this exceptional

location, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has delivered faithful and fruitful ministry and mission.

2. Venture International Ltd was commissioned in January 2019 to carry out a feasibility study exploring the potential of redeveloping Guysmere as a facility offering residential accommodation to faith, church and youth groups and others for weekend or week-long stays. The offer should also accommodate individuals and families for retreats and work with other service providers to provide recreational activity to complement the centre's central core of ministry and spiritual growth. The residential facility will be complemented by access to recreational activities and it is anticipated that an eatery/restaurant will be provided on-site, providing a valuable revenue stream as well as much needed dining facilities in the village.
3. The feasibility study, commissioned by the Coleraine and Limavady Presbytery, has determined that the proposed long-term business model is achievable and presents genuine opportunities for obtaining capital funding. The study reveals a high client demand for such accommodation offering a wide variety of ministry and mission opportunities for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
4. The feasibility has been informed by a series of consultations across the Presbytery, including Castlerock Presbyterian Church, local residents, potential service users and representatives of funding bodies. This was conducted through a public meeting in Castlerock, congregational consultation and a survey of user groups, supported by a review of the policy and funding environment and socio-economic analysis. A review of other residential accommodation models was undertaken to inform findings.

### Consultation Profile

5. The following table summarises the consultation base which informed the feasibility study and reflects the emphasis placed on faith and mission based groups as the primary target group and core focus of Guysmere and the PCI:

Faith Groups		
Castlerock Presbyterian Church	Castlerock Scouts	Scouts NI
Friends of Guysmere	Exodus, Coleraine	Surf Project, Portrush (Methodist Church)
Richill Presbyterian Church	PCI Council for Global Mission	Ballyloughan Presbyterian Church

Greystone Road Presbyterian Church	Scripture Union NI	Bloomfield Presbyterian Church
Adelaide Presbyterian Church, Dublin	Murlough House, Dundrum	Cleenish Centre, Co Fermanagh
Newmills Presbyterian Youth Club	Kirkpatrick Memorial, East Belfast	Londonderry YMCA
Drumlough and Anahilt Presbyterian Churches		
<b>Recreational Groups</b>		
Long Line Surf School	Surf Project, Portrush	
Castlerock Bowling Club	Pathway Activities, Reserve Forces and Cadets outreach programme	
Causeway Adventures Ltd	Castlerock Walk Fest	
<b>Community Organisations</b>		
Public meeting in Castlerock, including representation from: Castlerock Golf Club Castlerock Community Association Castlerock Senior Citizens	Hezlett Primary School	
<b>Other</b>		
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	Binevenagh Local Landscape Partnership	
DAERA	DfC	

6. *Key findings can be summarised as follows:-*

- (a) At a strategic level, the case for investment in facilities at Guysmere is sound. Such a proposal can support Council's Community Plan in addition to contributing to health and wellbeing agendas and creating greater opportunity for promoting social inclusion and working with vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities. At regional policy level, significant scope exists to contribute to the Programme for Government and the associated Outcomes Framework, including outcomes where:
- (i) We care for others and we help those in need.
  - (ii) We give our children and young people the best start in life.



- (b) Strong support across the community for taking forward the redevelopment of Guysmere was identified through robust consultation engaging with the members of Castlerock Presbyterian Church and potential user groups from a faith background in addition a public meeting attended by over 50 members of the Castlerock community.
- (c) A wide spectrum of potential centre users (from both faith and outdoor recreation perspectives) were consulted about their anticipated use of the facility and feedback was highly supportive of the redevelopment plans for Guysmere.
- (d) From a viability perspective, consultation identified significant interest from experienced promoters in taking on the proposed café/dining facility at the centre, enhancing the viability of the scheme in addition to catering for centre users and visitors to Castlerock.

### Summary of Need

7. The table below summarises the main findings of the consultation across all information groups which should be considered in moving ahead with the proposal:

Project Component	Rationale
Clearing site to facilitate dining/eating provision, including options for evening dining	Interest expressed by experienced operators (4 no.) in taking on the catering franchise. Meets an evidenced need created by lack of quality eateries in the village (dining/eatery as opposed to coffee shop provision). Enhanced project viability through rental income.
60 bed space accommodation	Potential users have confirmed interest, including a need for larger group accommodation. Accommodation enquiries the most common query at Village Information Centre.
Water sports provision	Growing number of water sports users, including out of season. Surf schools have expressed interest in the facility and opportunities for partnership working. Direct beach access provides opportunity for people with disabilities. Scope to accommodate both individual and group users.

Recreational multi use space	Local community identified need for physical activity/gym offer; need to cater for local residents as well as those visiting. Scope for generation of rental income through such studio space, cognisant of not displacing Peter Thompson Hall offer.
Council Service Level Agreement	Potential to work in partnership providing shower, changing and toilet facilities, creating an additional revenue stream.

8. The statement of need is supported by a detailed SWOT analysis appended to this summary paper.
9. A study carried out for Summer Madness in 2014, based on 1,000 respondents (who were attending church) discovered that 84% of people come to faith before the age of 25 years and only 1% after the age of 46 years. Of those who became Christians before they were 18 years, 34% cited a Christian residential camp or event as the major influence. With all of this in mind, and having this God-given opportunity for development, such a facility as that being proposed for Guysmere must be a priority in the future mission strategy of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

### **Recommendation**

10. In developing the feasibility study, a series of options was considered in order to identify the most advantageous approach to taking forward development of facilities at Guysmere.
11. It is recommended that the General Assembly retain the site and support the promoter to implement Option 4 below. Sufficient demand has been identified at the feasibility study stage to give comfort that the site can be developed in a manner which achieves the following:
  - (a) Creates the conditions for Christian renewal work meeting the needs of local faith groups/congregations while equally meeting the needs of faith groups and communities from outside Northern Ireland.
  - (b) Has the potential to be developed to maximise the beach front location and embed best practice environmental design and approaches to sustainability.
  - (c) Can augment and support mission work via a number of income streams.

## OPTION 4

### Option Title: Phased Development

#### Option Description

Option 4 involves the development of a new build residential centre and would be taken forward in two phases, each with its own technical planning and delivery stage. The option, across the two phases, will see provision of dining/café facilities (Phase 1) followed by residential accommodation, meeting space, recreational studio space and water sports facilities (Phase 2). The estimated capital costs are £4m, supported by a technical assistance budget circa £75,000 over a three year period to ensure a robust project management and business model.

1. Redevelopment of Guysmere as a residential facility has significant potential to impact positively on a range of agendas and priorities across key policy areas (such as health and wellbeing, families and children, environment, inclusion, rural development, tourism and recreation) in addition to contributing to the aims and ethos of the PCI's ministry work in a way which also benefits the Castlerock congregation and wider community. It must be noted, however, that given the complexities and potential of the project, a robust project development process should be developed in order to bring about a project which promotes mission and ministry underpinned by a sound business model and which is technically compliant.
2. The independent feasibility team is confident that this option represents the best option of taking forward Guysmere to achieve the following vision, aims and objectives:

#### Vision Statement

*“That the General Assembly grant the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady permission to commission a Feasibility Study of the redevelopment of Guysmere as a world class centre for mission and ministry (incorporating a community hub and commercial facilities) and ask the Presbytery to present the results of that study to the March 2019 Meeting of the General Council, for comment and transmission to the 2019 General Assembly, to enable a decision to be made regarding the sale, or otherwise, of the Guysmere site.”*

#### Future Vision

*“To develop Guysmere as a world class centre for Christian mission and ministry”*

This will be achieved by:

- (a) Providing a multi-use complex incorporating modern residential accommodation for up to 60 people;

- (b) Facilitating retreats and camps for a wide range of national and international groups to include churches, youth and children's groups, families and missionaries/ministers on sabbatical leave;
- (c) Providing conference facilities for PCI councils, committees, leadership teams, mission organisations and church ministries;
- (d) Providing facilities for water sports and outdoor activity ministries;
- (e) Providing social and meeting space for local churches and the local community including a coffee shop/restaurant.

### **Aims**

3. Investment in the development of residential accommodation and ancillary services at Guysmere will seek to deliver on the following aims:
  - (a) To redevelop the currently unused Guysmere site to provide quality accommodation space to support Church ministry and Christian outreach through the hosting of groups and families.
  - (b) To provide space for spiritual formation and development for all ages, including group and individual retreat.
  - (c) To cater for both residents of and visitors to Castlerock through multi-use space and an onsite café/restaurant facility.
  - (d) To further the work of the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady, including space to establish a café church in addition to meeting space for the congregation.
  - (e) To provide fully accessible accommodation and recreational facilities for people with disabilities.

### **S.M.A.R.T Objectives**

4. The following S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) objectives have been developed in order to guide the development options and ensure that the preferred option (if any) delivers measurable outputs for PCI, its client group and service partners. The objectives are:
  - (a) To arrive at a consensus decision at the General Assembly of PCI to retain the site and progress the development of the site and the preferred option.
  - (b) To establish a lease agreement with a compliant and experienced café operator by March 2021 generating an annual return of £20,000 per annum:
    - (i) To source the resources to undertake a compliant and detailed technical project development process (full design, site and environmental surveys, full planning consent and sourcing capital funding) by September 2019.
    - (ii) To complete the technical project development process (excluding acquiring all capital funding) by September 2020

- (iii) To secure the full capital funding requirement to deliver the preferred option (circa £4,000,000) by June 2022.
  - (iv) To deliver fully the preferred option (subject to refinement via the technical project development process) by May 2023.
  - (v) To support 3,000 people per annum on a faith journey/mission.
  - (vi) To achieve a 35% occupancy rate over the year from release of the accommodation element of the project.
  - (vii) To accommodate 40% out of state visitors.
  - (viii) To generate a minimum of £30,000 fixed income from non-trading income arrangements (Service Level Agreement, catering lease agreement, membership fees).
5. Achievement of these objectives will generate a number of additional benefits for the Presbytery and wider Castlerock community, namely:
- (a) Opportunity to extend the role of PCI and Castlerock Presbyterian Church, building on and extending its existing ministry including partnership working with other Christian mission organisations;
  - (b) Convenient after-church hospitality space in the form of a café church to further community integration;
  - (c) Meeting room with multi-media and internet access on the site, facilities and equipment which will be available to other groups;
  - (d) Provision of fully accessible recreational space will facilitate use of the facilities by residents and visitors to Castlerock, including caravan and apartment owners;
  - (e) Opportunity to contribute to wider tourism, at both borough and regional level.

### Financial Information

6. The capital costs for the preferred option (at the feasibility study stage and subject of future technical project development proofing) have been calculated as follows:

Guysmere Project	
Phase	Indicative Capital Cost (£)
One	350,000
Two	3,650,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,000,000</b>

7. A capital funding strategy has been developed as part of the feasibility study and outlines a number of potential funding streams which can be targeted.
8. It is recommended that a number of options may be available to the promoter (and the General Assembly) which have potential to deliver on its mission, impact the performance of Castlerock as a destination, create economic opportunities and be financially self-sustaining (subject to acquiring sufficient public sector or General Assembly investment). It is recommended that the General Assembly agree a timeframe for capital project development (technical and funding) which allows the local promoting group sufficient time to work through all of the activities required to refine and define its preferred option, secure planning consent and secure the required capital funding to effectively deliver the project.

## APPENDIX – SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness of the General Assembly to support the local group to identify feasible uses for the Guysmere site.</li> <li>• Faith based groups highly supportive of the project and its mission.</li> <li>• Site location and beach access (Blue Flag beach).</li> <li>• Strong local support to see the site brought back into use.</li> <li>• Transport linkages, including rail connection.</li> <li>• Ancillary outdoor activities – walking, water sports, heritage.</li> <li>• Strong track record and skills profile of the local promoting group.</li> <li>• Potential for collaboration (co-design) approaches with the private sector and the local authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique opportunity to develop an exceptional coastal location.</li> <li>• Expand church ministry through enhanced relationships with groups and congregations.</li> <li>• Provision of a unique location for ministry and mission work with local, regional and international faith groups.</li> <li>• Partnership working with other service providers and youth organisations.</li> <li>• Strong options for revenue generation which can support mission focused work, ministry and fellowship.</li> <li>• Expressions of interest in food outlet provision to enhance commercial viability.</li> <li>• Cater for regional and international visitor markets.</li> <li>• From a visitor perspective the Guysmere project is based in one of the two prime destination Councils in Northern Ireland.</li> <li>• Tourism NI (TNI) and the local authority aim to attract more ‘out of state’ visitors, staying longer and spending more. This will mean a wider investment in marketing and promotion.</li> <li>• TNI want to develop experience tourism which complements the key natural and man-made attractors (the Causeway and Titanic); surf and golf opportunities are part of experience tourism.</li> <li>• Contribute to activity tourism – walking, water sports.</li> <li>• To phase the development of the site to generate medium term income to support the longer-term sustainable development of the site.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of the site is proximal to the Derry /Londonderry – Belfast rail station.</li> <li>• Once political uncertainty is removed there is a strong possibility of a range of capital grant programmes including those associated with tourism, sports facilities, rural development and community / social projects.</li> <li>• The proposed PEACE PLUS Funding Programme (administered by SEUPB and replacing the current PEACE IV and Interrég Programmes) will focus on social enterprise and social innovation. Covering the 2022 – 2028 timeframe this is likely to bring opportunities for both capital funding and sustained revenue funding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current uncertainty around capital funding due to lack of devolved administration.</li> <li>• The lack of a dedicated person (employed)/ technical assistance to sustain the project development process (to lead and complete the project development process).</li> <li>• A feasible option is likely to involve a number of different local and out of state markets (and hence demands). The promoter may not have direct experience in all or any of these markets.</li> <li>• There could be a high degree of logistical management (ensuring that groups have appropriate food options, tutors or other specific inputs depending on their focus and ethos).</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrictions around Sunday trading.</li> <li>• Need for robust volunteer model to avoid high staffing costs.</li> <li>• Political uncertainty and the lack of decision making around capital funding in the immediate team.</li> <li>• The uncertainty in relation to the Brexit outcome; this may have an impact on capital project delivery costs and the flow of visitors on a cross border basis.</li> </ul>



**GUYSMERE TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 2**  
**More Detailed Financial Analysis (taken from full Feasibility Report)**

GUYSMERE CAPITAL FUNDING STRATEGY				
Phase	Target (£)	Target Funder	Contribution (£)	Timeframe
One	350,000	1. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Annual Capital Fund 2. PCI contribution	300,000 50,000	September 2019- June 2020
Two	3,650,000	It is recognised in the feasibility study that the second phase requires project development actions prior to securing planning consent and applying for and acquiring the capital funding to develop it. Equally in the absence of a functioning Executive it is recognised that there is ‘capital in the system’ and that capital funding programmes will be worked up in due course. At the moment the Capital Funding Strategy should focus on being ready for effective applications to some (or all) of the following potential opportunities: 1. Peace Plus Programme (SEUPB); 2. DAERA Strategic Project Call; 3. Social Investment Fund (Tranche two). Other opportunities are likely to emerge from Tourism N.I and Sport N.I. However, these will be new programmes and no placement exists for criteria or intervention rates.	3,650,000 (this funder has the potential to fund at a 100% intervention rate).  500,000 (up to 80%) ... could be used for one element of phase two.  Announced in the budget but depending on a functioning Executive (typically up to 80% funding for projects in the range of £500k-£2 million).	January 2020- December 2024
Total	£4,000,000	-	£4,000,000	-

For the purposes of the feasibility study and the financial appraisal element of it the following assumptions are made:

- (a) The overall capital funding requirement has been rounded up to £4m to allow for inflation (on the basis that the majority of the project will be delivered some 3-4-year post development of this feasibility study);
- (b) It is assumed that the promoter (even if it establishes a new Company Limited by Guarantee governance vehicle for the project) will be VAT registered on the basis that it will trade at a level of turnover in excess of current and future VAT threshold levels; this will allow it to recover VAT on capital expenditure associated with the delivery of the Guysmerc project and associated fixtures and fittings. This will reduce the overall level of public funding required (on the basis that any non-VAT registered community organisation cannot recover the VAT on the construction which adds 20% to the overall project delivery costs).

The promoter will secure 80% of the overall capital cost of the project; it will seek a 10% equity investment from the General Assembly and will be required to borrow 10% of the capital delivery costs which will be repayable over a 20 year timeframe at a 2% interest rate (assuming that the promoter can work in a collaborative manner with the local authority to secure the borrowings through the proposed Financial Transaction Capital model).

### **Revenues Generated**

Central to the viability of the project is its ability to generate revenues sufficient to meet operating costs, repay any borrowings and accumulate reserves which could be used to implement an appropriate repairs, maintenance and reinstatement regime over the lifespan of the project. The following table sets out the projected revenues for the project over its initial 5-year timeframe (these revenue projections are based on consultation feedback relating to need, the learning captured from precedent or similar projects and existing published information e.g. Tourism NI which can inform the revenue projection modelling process):

PROJECTED REVENUES FOR THE GUYSMERE PROJECT						
Revenue Source	Assumption	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Café/Eatery Lease	<p>The lease of the Café unit (phase one of the overall site development plan as articulated in Option 4) will result in the promoter developing a unit and leasing it to an operator which respects the overall vision for the site.</p> <p>Based on precedent projects in the area the lease should return £20k per annum. This factors in the exclusion of an alcohol licence.</p> <p><i>(It is recommended that an independent valuation exercise is completed as part of the recommended Project Technical Development Process (Phase One of the preferred option).</i></p>	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Accommodation Earnings	<p>Consultation set out in section 5 of the feasibility study confirms that the range of cost per night for the proposed accommodation is £12.50 pp per night (self-catering) to £30 pp per night full board.</p> <p>For the purposes of the feasibility study it is assumed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% of visitors will be on a self-catering basis at £18 per night reflecting the quality of the building and setting;</li> <li>• The remaining 70% of visitors will be on a full board basis at £30 per night;</li> <li>• Occupancy will reach 100% of target in Year 3, building on 80% Year 1 and 90% Year 2.</li> </ul>	22,932	25,798	28,665	28,665	28,665
		128,419	144,471	160,524	160,524	160,524

PROJECTED REVENUES FOR THE GUYSMERE PROJECT						
Food Revenues	<p>The assumptions underpinning the revenues generated from food sales are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% annually is projected as full occupancy;</li> <li>• Full occupancy will be reached by Y3;</li> <li>• 70% of visitors will require food;</li> <li>• The revenue yield per visitor on full board per day will be £12 per visitor (included in accommodation earnings);</li> <li>• Vending machine income will generate a revenue yield of £4,000 per annum.</li> </ul>	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Fitness and wellness programmes and access to the multi-use studio space	<p>The multi-function/studio space would be used to run fitness and wellness programmes (this could include circuits, bootcamps, yoga, Pilates, spin as examples). Based on the location, the local population, the incoming summer population and the lack of local provision it is projected that the following would be delivered:</p> <p>30 programmes per annum x an average of 6 weeks; per programme x 12 participants x £30 per participant =10,800 per annum;</p> <p>Hire of space to other providers (e.g. PTs, dance tutors) 10 hours per month x 10 months x £20 per hour = 4,000.</p>	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800
		4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000

PROJECTED REVENUES FOR THE GUYSMERE PROJECT						
Showers and drying access	<p>Consultation feedback has confirmed that surfers and water sport users (e.g. Triathletes) would pay an annual subscription for access to showering and drying facilities. The following assumptions are made on the basis of their feedback:</p> <p>An annual subscription of £30 would be acceptable; Approximately 100 people per annum would avail of this offer;</p> <p>75% uptake in Year 1;</p> <p>90% uptake in Year 2;</p> <p>100% uptake in Year 3 and ongoing.</p>	2,250	2,700	3,000	3,000	3,000
Public Toilets and Showers access	<p>Consultation during the recent council-led and resourced Village Planning process confirmed that the current public toilets are inadequate and that a shower block for beach and water sport users would enhance both village and beach facilities.</p> <p>It is projected that a collaborative arrangement can be reached with the council that accessible toilets and showers could be provided as part of Phase Two of the preferred option.</p> <p>In line with precedent a Service Level Agreement (SLA) would be negotiated with the council for an annual consideration of £10,000.</p>	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>202,401</b>	<b>221,769</b>	<b>240,989</b>	<b>240,289</b>	<b>240,989</b>

### Operating Costs

The viability of the project is determined by projecting the relationship between the revenues generated and operating costs. The following table sets out the projected operating costs for the project over its initial five years and based on the information available at the time of developing the feasibility study:

Cost element	Assumption	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Staff Costs	Allowed at 33% of turnover based on precedent projects	66,792	73,183	79,526	79,526	79,526
Repairs and Maintenance/Reinstatement	Allowed at 10% of turnover based on precedent projects	20,240	22,176	24,098	24,098	24,098
Cleaning and Consumables	Allowed at 5% of turnover based on precedent projects	10,120	11,088	12,014	12,014	12,014
Food	66% of food sales	51,367	57,788	64,209	64,209	64,209
Operating costs e.g. HLP, Telecoms and tutors	Allowed at 15% of turnover based on precedent projects	30,360	33,265	36,148	36,148	36,148
Marketing and Promotion	Budgets include year one launch at £2,000 and £12,000 per annum	8,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Loan Repayments	Assumed as 10% of phase two funded via Financial Transaction Capital at 2% interest rate over 20 years	18,622	18,622	18,622	18,622	18,622
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>205,501</b>	<b>222,122</b>	<b>240,617</b>	<b>240,617</b>	<b>240,617</b>

### Financial Appraisal

The following table sets out the projected financial performance of the Guysmere project over the initial five years post capital delivery of the project (i.e. its first five years' trading). It sets out the relationship between projected revenue generation and projected operating costs:

Factor	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenues Generated	202,401	221,769	240,989	240,989	240,989
Operating Costs	205,501	222,122	240,617	240,617	240,617
Surplus/Deficit	(3,100)	(353)	372	372	372
Cash Flow	(3,100)	(3,453)	(3,081)	(2,709)	(2,337)

An analysis of the five year revenue and operating costs projections confirms the following:

On the assumption that the project carries no more than 10% borrowing and that the revenue projections are met and operating costs budgets adhered to the proposed project can operate in a financially viable manner.

The following points are noted at this stage:

- (a) There is no assumption of revenue grant aid being attracted to support the early stage management and delivery of the project; given that this will be a social enterprise there may be some opportunities to secure revenue assistance which could contribute to revenue costs such as employment, marketing and marketing and promotion;
- (b) Achieving 100% capital funding (and thus not carrying the 10% loan responsibility have a major impact on project viability);
- (c) An element of prudence has been applied to occupancy rates – these being estimated at 35% occupancy rather than the NI norm of 40%.

### Technical Assistance funding

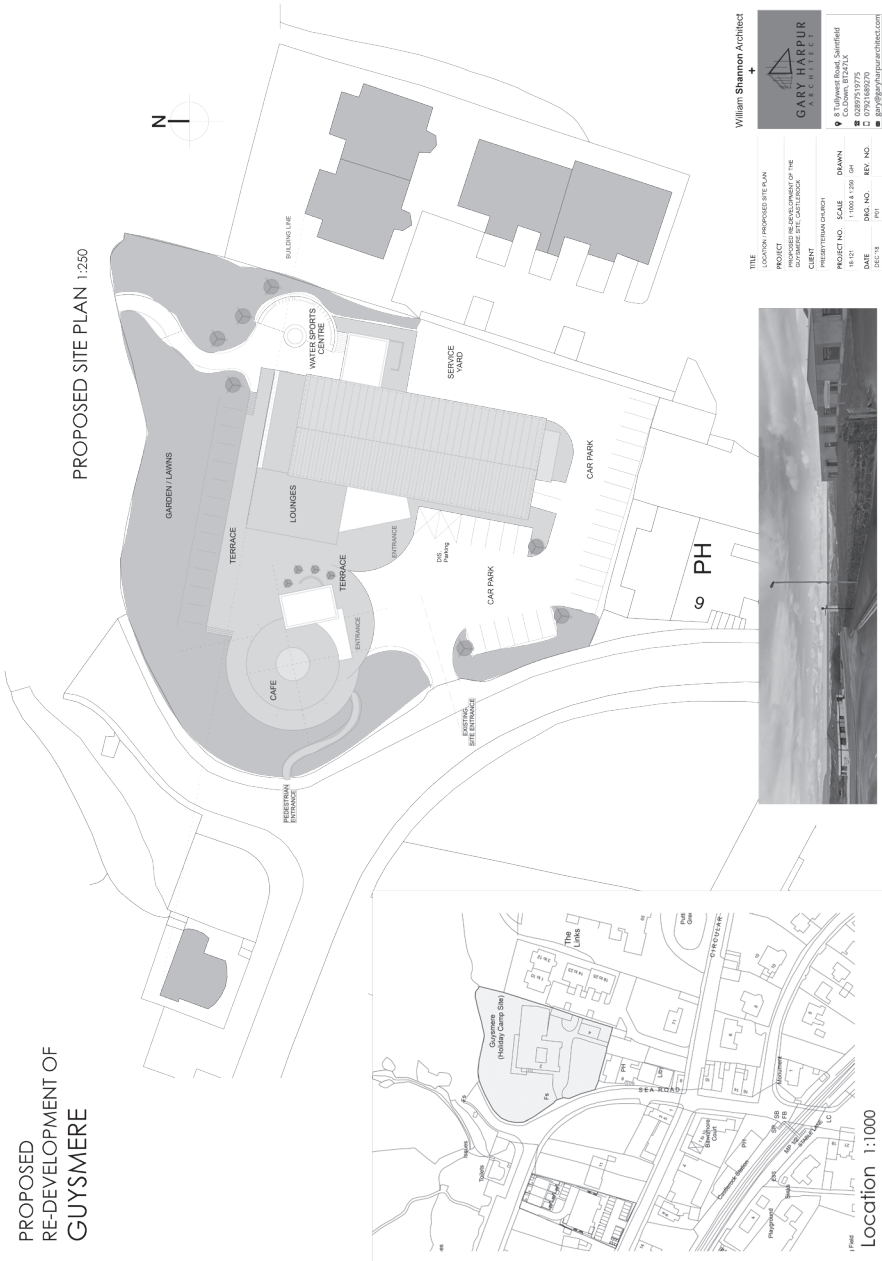
Actioning Option 4 will require sourcing technical assistance resources, estimated at £75,000 over a three year period to ensure planning and technical compliance, fully costed drawings and robust business planning. Potential sources where this can be sourced include:

- (a) Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council;
- (b) Strategic Investment Board;
- (c) Coastal Communities Fund.

# GUYSMERE TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 3A

PROPOSED  
RE-DEVELOPMENT OF  
GUYSMERE

PROPOSED SITE PLAN 1:250



William Shannon Architect

**GARY HARPER**  
ARCHITECT

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TITLE	LOCATION	PROPOSED	DATE
PROPOSED RE-DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXISTING SITE, CASTLEBROOK	1100 & 1200, 04	18-02	15-07-18
CLIENT	SCALE	DRAWN	REV. NO.
CELESTINE PARK CHURCH	1:100 & 1:200, 04	DMANN	01
PROJECT NO.	DWG. NO.	DWG. NO.	REV. NO.
18-02	1100 & 1200, 04	1100 & 1200, 04	01
DATE	DWG. NO.	DWG. NO.	REV. NO.
15-07-18	1100 & 1200, 04	1100 & 1200, 04	01

Location 1:1000



**GUYSMERE TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 3B**



# GUYSMERE TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 3C



**William Sheehy Architect**

**GARY HARPER ARCHITECT**

**TITLE**  
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR & BASEMENT BUREAU SCHOOL

**PROJECT**  
REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GUYSMERE TASK GROUP

**CLIENT**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**PROJECT NO.** 03092519775  
**SCALE** 1:100  
**DATE** 15/12/18  
**REV. NO.** 01  
**REV. DATE** 15/12/18

**DRAWN** GPH  
**CHKD** GPH  
**REV. NO.** 01  
**REV. DATE** 15/12/18

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## CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

### IRISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (ICC) and IRISH INTER CHURCH COMMITTEE (IICC)

1. The General Secretary Dr Nicola Brady and the Programme Officer Dr Damian Jackson are commended for their dedication, professionalism and commitment. Their work in advocacy and the skills which they bring to ICC and IICC are warmly appreciated by all the member Churches. It is good to report that the inter-church bodies in Ireland are in such good heart. They successfully provide a voice for Ireland's Churches to connect through a common belief in Christ.

#### IICC

2. The Irish Inter-Church Committee (IICC) holds regular meetings in Dundalk, while alternating between the two jurisdictions on the island for the expanded meeting. A significant number of workshops and working group meetings have taken place under the auspices of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting over the past year. The IICC continues to encourage local inter-church work, using partnership approaches where possible.
3. By partnering with the Belfast Secretariat of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs a workshop was delivered on supporting local churches to respond to paramilitary style attacks. With the support of the Community Relations Council NI we have put in place a further consultation process which will allow the gathering of a wider range of views and perspectives.

#### ICC

4. The ICC President is a member of the Church Leaders' group and is supported by Dr Brady in this work. ICC continues to have an interest in societal issues, climate justice, housing insecurity and homelessness. We have worked with member churches and NGO partners on these issues and have developed a set of common Climate Justice Affirmations. Migration and asylum matters remain on our agenda.
5. A report on Brexit was circulated to member churches and the ICC European Affairs Committee brought a draft paper to a meeting held in European Parliament Office on 14th September 2018. The Head of the Office James Temple-Smithson encouraged the ICC to send the paper to Mairead McGuinness MEP because of its relevance to several of the particular areas of responsibility she has as an MEP. A second stage of funding from CRC has been secured.
6. A submission was made as part of the NIO Consultation on 'Addressing the Legacy of the Past'. Dr Jackson's work on homelessness is also progressing and it is hoped that high quality materials on the topic will soon be available. It will be a rich resource for all the member churches.

An annual meeting was held with The Russian Orthodox Church and contact was made with other Orthodox churches in April 2019.

### European Engagement

7. The convener attended the General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches in Novi Sad, Serbia, from 31 May to 6 June. It was a well-chosen location, with a long history of cultural encounter and confrontation and important symbolic significance in terms of European conflicts. The Clerk attended the 8th General Assembly of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) from 13th to 18 September in Basel. The theme was ‘Liberated – connected – committed.’ The Committee received extensive reports from both Assemblies and reflected upon them in the light of the remit of the 2017 General Assembly.

### General Assembly Remits

8. The 2017 General Assembly decided that: *“PCI reviews its membership of both CPCE and CEC (recognising that it could associate with CEC through the Irish Council of Churches), with a report coming to the 2018 General Assembly (2017 Reports page 75 par 17(c)). The Task Group noted that the General Assemblies of both these bodies are being held in 2018, normally being held every six or seven years. The Task Group therefore recommends to the General Assembly that the Church Relations Committee consider this matter further in the ensuing year and report with recommendations to the 2019 General Assembly, having received reports from its Convener, the Rev John Brackenridge, following his attendance in June at the CEC General Assembly and from the Clerk of Assembly, following his attendance in September at the CPCE General Assembly.”*
9. The committee considered the reports on the Assemblies, overviewed the 5 year Strategic Plan for CEC and firstly agreed our own PCI response to that document. The committee recommended to the General Council that PCI continues in membership of these 2 bodies and forwards the following reasons which shaped our thinking:
  - (a) These bodies have a dual role. The former (CPCE) is more theological, the latter, perhaps more practical. Both speak as the Christian soul of Europe, in word and in deed. The themes which occupy them are peace, justice, refugees and reconciliation – themes which find a resonance with PCI. We have something to say to our brothers and sisters in Europe on these very matters.
  - (b) We view positively the transition to a positive vision which these organisations are making. The Strategic Plan of CEC is clear and precise and enables us for the first time to make an assessment of the overall vision and direction.
  - (c) Pragmatically, and especially with congregations in the Republic of Ireland, any disconnect of PCI from European Christian

institutions can only disadvantage us and restrict our voice and place in Europe.

- (d) They provide access to European institutions, advocacy to the European Parliament and provide us with material, programmes and participation in various working parties.
- (e) They provide us with contact at a European level not only with the historic churches of the UK, but also with other churches with whom we have close relationships and those with whom relations are now developing.

### **Meetings with various churches**

10. We have welcomed delegations to Belfast from the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland. We have discussed our current areas of co-operation with the Church of Scotland and have both agreed that we ought to continue to enable complementary working within our respective churches where this was thought to be mutually beneficial. We continue to enjoy exploratory conversations with representatives of the Free Church of Scotland in areas such as discipleship, theological education, sharing resources and global mission. The tone of the meetings with each of these Scottish denominations has been positive and worthwhile. Further meetings will be held.
11. A meeting with The United Free Church of Scotland was also held. A resolution relating to this is appended. Information on the denomination may be gathered at [www.ufcos.org.uk](http://www.ufcos.org.uk)
12. The Clerk of Assembly met with a representative of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (EPC). This followed on from initial e-mail contact resulting from the decision of the EPC General Assembly to work to develop fraternal relations with the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. Again, a resolution relating to this is appended. Information on this denomination may be gathered at <https://epc.org/>
13. The annual meeting with the Church of Ireland took place in Belfast. This year we presented our respective connections in Europe as an agreed theme. We heard of their membership of the Porvoo Communion, the continuing Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue (ARCIC), and their association with The Reilly Declaration. We were informed of the conversations with the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The Church of Ireland also enjoys other ‘bonds of affection’ throughout Europe and beyond. A positive joint conclusion is that we agreed to jointly ask ICC to investigate the possibility of funding an Irish church youth delegation at a suitable future European assembly. A positive joint conclusion is that we agreed to jointly ask ICC to investigate the possibility of funding an Irish church youth delegation at a suitable future European assembly.

JOHN BRACKENRIDGE, Convener

## **PRIORITIES COMMITTEE**

1. The Priorities Committee was not required to meet during the past year.
2. The Priorities Reference Panel met to conduct some routine business and put a number of necessary approvals in place.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Convener

## **MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

1. During the past year the Moderator's Advisory Committee transacted just a few items of routine business.
2. A number of Moderator's Advisory Assessors were appointed to assist presbyteries in their work. The committee is thankful to those senior ministers and elders who so willingly give of their time to assist presbyteries in often sensitive and challenging situations.
3. Following the decisions of last year's General Assembly, the committee has been given the responsibility of considering requests from ministers without charge to be granted minister emeritus status, under Par 226(a) of the Code.
4. The committee considered the request of the Rev John Martin Gracey be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Coagh, Ballygoney and Saltersland congregations. This request came to the committee with the strong support of both the Kirk Sessions and the Presbytery of Tyrone. The committee is also fully supportive and an appropriate resolution is appended for consideration by the General Assembly.
5. It is anticipated a second such request will be forthcoming after the May meeting of a presbytery. If this materialises, a report will be included in the 2019 Supplementary Reports.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Convener

## **DOCTRINE COMMITTEE**

1. During the past year the Doctrine Committee was not required to meet, as no matters were remitted to it by either the General Assembly or the General Council.

J. STAFFORD CARSON, Convener

## THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT TASK GROUP

1. The Theological Engagement Task Group has met with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church five times: 16 March 2018, 18 May 2018, 10 September 2018, 25 November 2018, and 23 February 2019. A further meeting is planned for May 2019.
2. Presbyterian representatives are: Very Rev Principal Stafford Carson, Rev Prof Michael McClenahan, Rev Dr Martyn Cowan, Prof John Gillespie, Rev John Faris, Ms Zoe O'Neill, Dr Patrick Mitchell, Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow, Rev John Seawright, Rev Joanne Smith.
3. Roman Catholic representatives are : Dom Mark Ephrem Nolan, Dr Mary McCarthy, Dr Joan Back, Rev Dr Terence Crotty OP, Rev Dr Conor McDonagh OP, Rev Dr Noel Sullivan, Rev Prof Gabriel Flynn, Rev Dr Niall Coll.
4. The discussions have used the contents of *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* approved by Lutherans and Catholics as a point of departure for a wider conversation on our differing understandings of the grace of God in Christ. The discussions have been informative, animated and enlightening. Both delegations have appreciated the cordial spirit in which the conversations have progressed and the genuine attempts to understand each other's position. It has been very helpful for Irish Presbyterians to engage with Irish Roman Catholics on key Christian doctrines rather than to jump into a conversation between Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Europe. The Presbyterian delegation wishes to express thanks to the Irish Roman Catholic delegation for the enthusiastic and helpful way in which they have contributed to these discussions.
5. A wide range of theological issues has been discussed:
  - (a) The importance of the doctrine of justification in Protestant theology and the importance of sanctification in Catholic theology.
  - (b) The relationship between justification and sanctification; how a justified person deals with subsequent sin.
  - (c) The doctrine of assurance.
  - (d) How both justification and sanctification are centred on our Lord Jesus Christ, and that justification is one aspect of our union with Christ.
  - (e) The centrality of the person and work of Christ in Christian doctrine and experience.
  - (f) The centrality of the Scriptures in revelation and the Christian life; the Protestant understanding of sola scriptura and the Roman Catholic understanding of tradition.
  - (g) The importance of faith in salvation and Christian experience. Irish Presbyterians and Roman Catholics have different views on how grace is received. Neither side wishes to misrepresent or misunderstand those differences.

- (h) The importance of an intellectual engagement with regard to the doctrines of the Christian faith, and how an articulation of our faith is counter-cultural.
  - (i) The challenge of mission and witness in Ireland today.
6. Topics for further discussion include:
- (a) How does the understanding of doctrine of justification have Trinitarian as well as Christocentric elements, and what is the relationship to the Church?
  - (b) What is the relationship between being justified and simultaneously working out our salvation (by grace)?
  - (c) Who are members of the Church?
  - (d) What is the role of the sacraments?
7. The General Council, at its meeting in March 2019, enthusiastically encouraged the continuation of this dialogue, recognising its importance in the quickly-changing spiritual and ecclesiastical landscape of contemporary Ireland.

J. STAFFORD CARSON, Convener



# GENERAL COUNCIL

## SECTION 3

Thursday Evening – 8pm

### SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

#### Introduction

1. The Support Services Committee met and considered report from its respective Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Property and Creative Production Panels. The panel with the most business is the Finance Panel, but this report summarises the key issues considered by each them.

#### FINANCE PANEL

2. At its October meeting, the committee agreed the recommendations from the Finance Panel relating to assessments for 2019. In determining the appropriate assessment rates, consideration was given to the budgets for the respective funds, the balances in those funds and the impact on congregations of any changes. It was agreed that the assessment rates should continue at the same aggregate level as 2018, although there were some variations in individual funds, as shown in Appendix 1.
3. The committee considered the preliminary results of the actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 31 December 2017, which showed that the scheme was in a small surplus, but that the ongoing funding rate had increased. It was noted that the preliminary results had not made provision for an annual pension increase in respect of pre-1997 service for ministers which is at the discretion of the scheme trustees. The scheme trustees had subsequently asked the actuary to make provision for an ongoing annual increase of 1% at a cost of £2.9m. The impact of the increase in the scheme's normal retirement age from 65 to 66 for service accrued after October 2020 will be to reduce the employer contribution from 26.5% to 25.3% at that time.
4. The scheme actuary has advised the scheme trustees that approximately £1m of surplus would be used up if the employer contribution rate remained at the current rate of 24% rather than increasing to the required rate of 26.5%. Following discussion, the committee agreed that the scheme trustees should be informed that the committee, in their capacity as scheme employer, would be prepared to agree an employer funding rate of 24% with members continuing to contribute

7% and that this be funded by the using part of the valuation surplus. The scheme trustees agreed to this request. The committee therefore agreed that the assessment rate for 2019 for the PCI Pension Fund should remain at 24.0%.

5. It was noted that only two responses had been received to the consultation on the increase in the pension scheme retirement age. The committee agreed that the proposed change to increase the scheme retirement age to 66 in respect of service accrued from October 2020 be implemented.
6. The committee reviewed the levels of the sterling and euro basic ministerial minimum stipend having received recommendations from its Finance Panel. As the HR panel had not met, there was no recommendation relating to the annual salary review from that panel, and the rates were therefore considered by the committee. The committee agreed that the sterling and euro basic ministerial minimum stipends be increased by 2.0% and 1.0% respectively, as shown in Appendix 2. It was also agreed that the staff salaries scales be increased on the same basis (2% in NI and 1% in RoI) (Appendix 4)
7. A tender competition for the provision of insurance brokerage and placement services from 31 December 2018 was held in the autumn of 2018. After assessing a number of applications, A.J. Gallagher were re-appointed as insurance brokers to PCI for a further three years.
8. The panel has been considering, in the context of GDPR, the requirement in the Code that a list of contributors to FWO be prepared. The committee supported the view of the panel reached at its meeting last October that “disclosure should be by number , but that members can give consent to have their contributions disclosed by name.”
9. The committee noted that the Charity Commission NI web site indicates that there were 12 congregations in Northern Ireland in default and that 21 had submitted their returns late. Whilst noting these, the committee was pleased with the overall responses by congregations and recognised the considerable work required by them, with the majority having met the legislative requirements. However, a limited review of returns made indicates that some congregations may not be completing accounts and returns in line with the guidance issued. In particular, there appears to be confusion as to the preparation of aspects of receipts and payments accounts and the associated bank balances. Further guidance on this matter was issued to congregations at the start of 2019. The committee also confirmed the position that, for accounts prepared on a receipts and payments basis, the bank balance should continue to be adjusted for outstanding cheques and lodgements.
10. At its meeting in February 2019, The committee approved the accounts for the assessment funds (other than the Students’ Bursary Fund, which falls to the Council for Training in Ministry) for the year ended 31 December 2018, and also the accounts for the Finance, IT, HR, and Payroll Departments and also the General Secretary’s Department. The financial position for each of the funds was considered to be satisfactory

and there were no significant issues to highlight. The committee also agreed the budgets for Support Services and the Incidental Fund for 2019 (Appendix 3).

11. The committee discussed the mileage rates for the General Assembly. It was agreed that the rate for Northern Ireland would continue at 15p per mile for 2019. However, the committee decided that a kilometre rate be introduced, from 1 July 2019, for members travelling from the Republic, and attending councils and committees, at 14 cent per kilometre (equivalent to previous rate of 22 cent per mile).
12. The panel reviewed the annual financial report (including the Trustee's report) in detail and discussed specific items, including major variances from 2017. The panel noted that there was again a deficit arising from normal charitable activities of £515,817 (2018 – deficit of £965,771). After making a number of reporting adjustments, mainly to reflect pensions but also losses on investment assets, the accounts show a deficit for the year of £10,649,819. Therefore during 2018, the overall fund balances of the church decreased from £59,504,860 to £48,855,041. The report and accounts were approved by the General Council at its meeting in April.
13. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire at or over the age of 65; the Rev D. McIlwaine (Newington); Rev D.W. Brice (Glengormley); Rev R.L. Craig (Kilfennan); Rev B. McMillan (Ballymartin); Rev R.J. Stevenson (Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis); Rev A.C. Wilson (Ballykelly); Rev K. Nelson (St Andrew's, Belfast) ; Rev R.D. Maxwell (Castlewellan and Leitrim); Rev J. McCaughan (First Dunboe) and Rev I. McDonald (New Mossley).
14. In accordance with the requirements of the Code, the committee agreed that Revs D.A. Murphy (Cunningham Memorial), T.J. Laverty (Portstewart), TDW Johnston (Hamilton Road, Bangor) and J.G. Johnston (Carnlough, Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin) be granted permission to retire before their 65th birthdays on the basis that their benefits from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) are actuarially reduced to reflect early retirement.

## HR PANEL

15. The panel has not had a convener throughout 2018. The panel was not able to meet in September and the committee considered the annual salary review, as noted above. The panel met in February and the committee agreed to a recommendation from the panel to introduce a scheme offering loans to staff for the payment of annual travel costs. Two new policies – a social media policy and a public transport loans policy – were approved.
16. A procurement process has commenced for the provision, to congregations, of both human resources and health and safety advice (currently provided by Peninsula). Advertisements seeking tenders have

been placed and it is expected that the provider will be in position in early autumn.

## **PROPERTY PANEL**

17. The committee was pleased to receive a report from the panel advising that the recent phase of refurbishment work on the ground floor of Assembly Buildings was complete. It offers much needed additional conference AND exhibition space and bespoke accommodation for the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland. The projected final account for both Assembly Buildings and PHSI will be £1,584,661 (inclusive of VAT AND fees) and this was within the set budget for the project. A new logo, along with branding, has been designed for the Conference Centre and additional signage put in place. The committee was pleased to hear that conference bookings in 2018 provided income of some £135,000 and there is considerable forward interest.
18. The visitor exhibition in the reception area of Assembly Buildings has been completed and was formally opened on Wednesday 27 March 2019 by the Deputy Lord Mayor

## **IT PANEL**

19. The committee approved an updated ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which now covers new matters such as cloud technologies and GDPR. The committee recognises the concerns of the panel about the capacity of the IT department to undertake everything required and the consequent significant risks to the operation of PCI.
20. The General Council agreed to a recommendation from the committee that a task group be set up to consider the structure and resources of the IT Department and bring forward definitive proposals.

## **CREATIVE PRODUCTION PANEL**

21. The Rev Alistair Bill was appointed as convener of the panel. The committee had a discussion about the role of CPD and, in particular, how it can best support the work of the various PCI Councils. General Council agreed that a task group be set up to consider how CPD can provide as efficient and effective service as possible to the other Councils.

DAVID THOMSON, Convener

NOTE: The customary Schedules of the Support Services Committee Report dealing with a summary of the presbyteries financial returns and the General Assembly's statistics and graphs, will be included with the 2019 Minutes of the General Assembly. This change is due to the new later submission date for part B of the annual statistical returns.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### 2019 ASSESSMENT RATES AND ALLOCATIONS

The proposed rates of assessment for 2019 are ;

Assessment Band	Assessable Income (£/€)		Assessment Rate
	From	To	
1	0	10,999	0.00%
2	11,000	64,999	14.50%
3	65,000	129,999	10.75%
4	130,000	194,999	7.25%
5	195,000	259,999	3.50%
6	260,000	and above	0.00%

*(Note: the above is unchanged from 2018)*

It is proposed that amounts collected through the assessment system are allocated on the following percentages

Assessment Fund	Projected Allocation for 2019 £	Projected Allocation for 2019 %	Projected Allocation for 2018	Actual Allocation for 2018 %
Central Ministry Fund	£1,800,000	41.20%	£1,810,700	41.29%
Retired Ministers Fund	£425,000	9.73%	£427,600	9.75%
Widows of Ministers Fund	£400,000	9.15%	402,100	9.17%
Prolonged Disability Fund	£100,000	2.29%	77,200	1.72%
Incidental Fund	£825,000	18.88%	754,200	17.20%
Church House Repairs Fund	£525,000	12.01%	528,000	12.04%
Special Assembly	–	–	–	–
Ministerial Development Fund	£130,000	2.97%	127,400	2.87%
Sick Supply Fund	£15,000	0.34%	10,100	0.23%
Students Bursary Fund	£150,000	3.43%	251,300	5.73%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,370,000</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>4,388,600</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

It is also proposed that the assessment rate for 2019 for the PCI Pension Fund should remain at 24.0%.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 2

#### 2019 RATES AND ALLOWANCES

##### 1. Basic Ministerial and Appropriate Ministerial Minimum

	Northern Ireland		Republic of Ireland	
	2019 £	2018 £	2019 €	2018 €
Basic Ministerial Minimum	26,695	26,172	39,953	39,557
After 1 year's service	26,962	26,434	40,353	39,953
After 2 years' service	27,229	26,696	40,753	40,349
After 3 years' service	27,496	26,958	41,153	40,745
After 4 years' service	27,763	27,220	41,553	41,141
After 5 years' service	28,030	27,482	41,953	41,537
After 6 years' service	28,297	27,744	42,353	41,933
After 7 years' service	28,564	28,006	42,753	42,329
After 8 years' service	28,831	28,268	43,153	42,725
After 9 years' service	29,098	28,530	43,553	43,121
After 10 years' service	29,365	28,792	43,953	43,517
After 11 years' service	29,632	29,054	44,353	43,913
After 12 years' service	29,899	29,316	44,753	44,309
After 13 years' service	30,166	29,578	45,153	44,705
After 14 years' service	30,433	29,840	45,553	45,101
After 15 years' service	30,700	30,102	45,953	45,497
After 16 years' service	30,967	30,364	46,353	45,893
After 17 years' service	31,234	30,626	46,753	46,289
After 18 years' service	31,501	30,888	47,153	46,685
After 19 years' service	31,768	31,150	47,553	47,081
After 20 years' service	32,035	31,412	47,953	47,477

**2. Retired Ministers, Widows of Ministers, and Prolonged Disability Funds**

Retired Ministers Fund: maximum retirement pension for 2019 is £12,737.

Widows of Ministers Fund: maximum retirement pension for 2019 is £7,005.

Prolonged Disability Fund: maximum grants for 2019 is £12,809.

**3. Regium Donum**

Regium Donum: £30 per month

**4. Family Grants**

The following grants are payable for the academic year 2018/19.

Grant Category	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland
<b>1. Birth to final year Primary School</b>	Child Allowance £375 PLUS Tuition Grant £Nil	Child Allowance €575 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €475
<b>2. Secondary School</b>	Child Allowance £550 PLUS Tuition Grant £Nil	Child Allowance €850 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €800
<b>3. Further and Higher Education</b> (claimable up to and including the academic year in which the student becomes 24)	Child Allowance £825 PLUS Tuition Grant up to £2,000	Child Allowance €1,250 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €4,000



**SUPPORT SERVICES****APPENDIX 3****2019 INCIDENTAL FUND BUDGET**

	£	£
(i) General Council		
General Work	3,500	
Ad Hoc Task Groups	1,000	
GDPR Compliance	5,000	
Assembly Arrangements	20,000	
Church Relations Committee		
– Irish Council of Churches	22,167	
– Irish Inter-Church Meeting	10,918	
– Conference of European Churches	6,000	
– Comm Protestant Churches Europe	1,300	
– World Comm Reformed Churches	13,000	
– General Church Relations (expenses)	<u>5,000</u>	87,885
(iii) Council for Public Affairs		
General Work incl conferences	1,500	
Education Grants	<u>11,000</u>	12,500
(vi) Linkage Commission		
General Work	6,500	
Church Architecture Committee	<u>8,500</u>	15,000
Moderator expenses allowance		30,000
Printing for General Assembly		11,000
Postage, admin and other		12,500
Insurance		8,000
Travel General Assembly and Councils etc.		9,500
Allowance to Congregations re Conveners		9,500
Legal fees		40,000
Costs of General Secretary's Department		415,931
Support Services Charges		109,000
UK Borders Agency		500
Presbyterian Historical Society		23,000
Youth Link		10,750
Churches Legislation Advisory		2,575
Peninsula Employment Law and Health and Safety		<u>17,300</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u><u>814,941</u></u>

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 4

#### OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STAFFING

#### **Sterling Salary Scales of posts in Assembly Buildings on 11 April 2019**

##### EXECUTIVE POSTS

##### Scale 1 (£25,240–£29,987)

- IT Support Manager, (ITD)
- Presbyterian Women Support Officer (CCLW)
- Operations and Maintenance Officer (PSD)

##### Scale 2 (£28,504–£34,288)

- Property Support Officer (FSD)
- Children's Development Officer (CCLW)
- Creative Production Support Officer (including Editorial Responsibilities) (CPD)
- Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer (CLW)
- Finance Manager (FSD/MD)
- Press Officer (GSD)
- Payroll and Assessment Manager (FSD)
- Personnel Support Officer (PD)
- Youth Development Officer (CCLW)
- Discipleship Development Officer (CCLW)
- Mission Support Officer (Partnership) (MD)

##### Scale 3 (£31,892–£38,870)

- Finance Manager (FSD/CSW)
- Mission Support Officer (Member Care) (MD)
- Head of Creative Production (CPD)
- Programme Development Officer (CCLW)
- Public Affairs Officer (GSD)
- Training Development Officer (CCLW)
- Mission Development Officer (CCLW)
- Facilities and Conference Manager (PSD)

**Scale 4 (£35,151–£43,915)**

Senior Finance Manager (FSD)  
 Head of Personnel (PD)  
 IT Development and Support Manager (ITD)  
 Head of Safeguarding (CSW)  
 Head of Disability Services (CSW)  
 Head of Older People Services (CSW)

**Scale 6 (£41,747–£50,859)**

Deputy Clerk of Assembly and Deputy General Secretary  
 Secretary of the Council for Mission in Ireland  
 Secretary of the Council for Social Witness  
 Secretary of the Council for Global Mission  
 Secretary of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness

**Scale 7 (£47,367 – £60,928)**

Clerk of Assembly and General Secretary  
 Financial Secretary

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS****Scale 2 (£15,457–£17,877)**

Administrative Assistant (CCLW)  
 Personnel Assistant (1.14 post) (PD)  
 Administrative Assistant, PW (CLW)  
 Administrative Assistant (Job Share) (MD)  
 ‘Taking Care’ Administrator (CSW)  
 Administrative Assistant (0.68 post) (Purchase Ledger) (FSD)  
 Handyperson (PSD)  
 Assistant Receptionist and Telephonist (PSD) (higher salary protected)

**Scale 3 (£17,345 – £20,056)**

Administrative Assistant (GSD)  
 Administrative Assistant (Sales Ledger) (job share 0.4 post)  
 Senior Personnel Assistant (Job Share) (PD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (job share 2 x 0.6 post) (CSW)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (0.5 post) (MD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant, PW (CCLW)  
 Reception and Information Officer (PSD)

**Scale 4 (£19,653–£22,633)**

Senior Administrative Assistant (Partnerships) (MD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (Member Care) (MD)  
 Payroll and Administrative Assistant (1.77 posts) (FSD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistants (x 2 job share) (CCLW)  
 Senior Communications Assistant (0.8 post) (CPD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (0.6 post) (FSD)  
 Senior Communications Assistant (Pub) (job share 2 x 0.6 post) (CPD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (CCLW)

**Scale 5 (£21,503–£24,825)**

Senior Creative Production Technician (CPD)  
 Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (MD)  
 Assistant Accountant (FSD)  
 Senior Personnel Administrator (PD)  
 Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (job share) (GSD)  
 IT Support Officer x 2 (ITD)  
 Financial and Administrative Assistant (0.74 post) (FSD)  
 IT Support and Development Officer (0.8 post) (ITD)

**Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,748–£27,147)**

Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CCLW)  
 Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (MD)  
 Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CSW)

**Scale 5 (Enhanced pt 25-34) (£23,748 – £29,268)**

Senior Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (GSD)

**Sterling Salary Scales of posts in other locations on 1 January 2019****EXECUTIVE POSTS****Scale 2 (£28,504–£34,288)**

College Registrar/Bursar, Union College  
 College Librarian, Union College  
 Minister/Ministry Co-ordinator, Kinghan Church (CSW)  
 Chaplain in Residence (MD)  
 University Chaplain UUJ, (MD)  
 Lecturer in Historical Theology, Union College  
 Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Union College  
 Chaplain NI Prison Service and Coordinating Chaplain (Maghaberry)

**Scale 4 (£35,151–£43,915)**

Dean of Ministerial Studies & Development (Union College)

**Scale 5 (£38,870–£47,367)**

Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Director of Post-Graduate Studies (Union College)

**Scale 6 (£41,747–£50,859)**

Professor of New Testament Studies, Union College (higher salary protected)

Professor of Practical Theology, Union College (higher salary protected)

Professor of Systematic Theology, Union College

**Scale 7 (£47,367–£60,928)**

Principal of Union Theological College

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS****Scale 1 (£14,366 – £16,591)**

Clerical Officer (3 p/t) OPS (CSW)

**Scale 2 (£15,457 – £17,877)**

Clerical Officer – Carlisle House (part time) (CSW)

Clerical Officer, (4 FT & 1 PT) OPS (CSW)

Clerical Officer, Kinghan Church (part time) (CSW)

Custodian, Union College

Library Assistant (part time), Union College

**Scale 3 (£17,345 – £20,056)**

Marriage and Guidance Co-ordinator (CL&W)

Administrative Assistant (part time), Union College

Senior Clerical Officer (part time), Carlisle House (CSW)

Senior Secretary, Union College (0.6 post)

Senior Secretary, Union College

**Scale 4 (£19,653 – £22,633)**

Administrator, Derryvolgie (MD)

Senior Secretary, Union College

Deputy Librarian, Union College

**Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,748 – £27,147)**

Assistant Chaplain, QUB (MD)

Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale) (CSW)

## UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

1. The committee met on the following dates:
  - (a) Thursday 7 February 2019 – to review the 2018 accounts, the response to the 2018 Appeal and to confirm grants to councils for that year.
  - (b) Friday, 29 March 2019 – to prepare for meetings with councils in relation to their 2020 grants requests.
  - (c) Monday, 1 April 2019 – to meet with councils and discuss their budget submissions and then to consider recommendations to the General Council for the 2020 Appeal.

### The 2018 Appeal

2. The committee wishes to express its thanks to the congregations who supported the United Appeal in 2018. When contributions for the 2018 Appeal were closed at the end of January 2019, £3,291,684 (2018: £3,301,553) had been received from congregations towards the Appeal Target of £3,500,000, a shortfall of some £208,316. Once late contributions for the 2017 Appeal, trust fund income and donations were taken into account there remained an income shortfall of £14,896. This shortfall, and an excess expenditure over budget for promotion, was further mitigated by the return of £90,000 from the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. The committee notes that by the closing date of the Appeal 38 congregations had not contributed to it and that approx. 60% of the income for the 2018 appeal was received in December 2018 and January 2019. Since the closing date for the Appeal a further £173,220 (at the date of this report) has been received and this will be reflected in the 2019 accounts.
3. The committee was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants of £3,665,000 to councils for 2018.
4. A number of years ago the United Appeal Board took the decision to introduce a phased reduction in the use of reserves but this was deferred pending the restructuring of boards to councils. Reserves have reduced by around £1.3m in the last 10 years. In 2018 reserves were reduced by £106,770, which was slightly less than the budgeted release of £127,000.
5. The committee conveys its position that it will not be possible to continue to use reserves at this rate or to depend on councils returning grants previously allocated and therefore remains of the view that the level of the Appeal and grants to councils needs to be brought into line over the next few years.

### The 2019 Appeal

6. The General Assembly has already agreed to an Appeal of £3,550,000 for 2019 with agreed grants to councils of £3,700,000. Details of these 2019 agreed grants are included in the second column of

Schedule 1 of this report and details of the agreed allocation of the appeal to Presbyteries is included in Schedule 2.

### **The 2020 Appeal**

7. The United Appeal Committee met on 29 March to complete some preparatory work and again on 1 April to meet with the councils and consider the 2020 budget requests submitted. Having given careful consideration to the budget requests and each Council's presentation, the United Appeal Committee drew up the allocations outlined in Schedule 1 of this report.
8. The United Appeal Committee is grateful for the hard work and dedication of every council, not least from their secretaries and conveners. The support from finance personnel to each Council is a crucial link in ensuring monitoring of budgets and spending along with forecasting projections so far in advance.

### **Interviews with Councils**

9. **Council for Global Mission – Requested Grant £1,065,000. Proposed Grant £1,065,000:** Members of the United Appeal Committee were encouraged by the presentations of our two mission councils. The focus of Global Mission continues to be the sending of global mission workers across the world to share God's heart. In supporting the requested budget of £1,065,000 the United Appeal Committee was encouraged by the Council's desire to streamline its structure to ensure core activities had priority. The United Appeal Committee recommended a further review of the Council's investments and their approach to pension contributions for missionaries.
10. **Council for Mission in Ireland – Requested Grant £1,065,000. Proposed Grant £1,065,000:** The United Appeal Committee reviewed the request of the Council for Mission in Ireland and were reassured by the Council's identification of the many challenges which face our Church throughout Ireland. Members were encouraged by the 'minor miracles' emerging from the Council's work within the Belfast Conference. Although the proposed budget of the Council in 2020 has a greater expenditure than income, the United Appeal Committee is confident in the Council's long term strategy with regard to funding this through the realisation of existing assets.
11. **Council for Training in Ministry – Requested Grant £375,000. Proposed Grant £375,000:** The United Appeal Committee met with representatives from the Council for Training in Ministry and from Union College. The budget presented by the council reflects a clear level of diligence in offsetting a predicted reduction in income pending a decision of QUB for undergraduate study. While the teaching of ministerial students remains our priority as a church, it is disappointing to potentially lose the partnership of QUB in teaching theology to our student community. Steps to replace the teaching of undergraduate degrees through Queen's with PTFI degrees and the use of BibleMesh

for online students brought some encouragement to the United Appeal Committee. While affirming the budget for 2020 the United Appeal Committee wish to highlight that potential changes to the role of the college in undergraduate studies could place a greater demand upon the United Appeal for future funding.

12. **Council for Congregational Life and Witness – Requested Grant £720,000. Proposed Grant £720,000:** The United Appeal Committee received the presentation of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness budget. The committee recognised the value and benefit of this Council’s reliance on its staff members to resource the work of our congregations. Recognising this asset, members of the United Appeal Committee would encourage a review of the Church Hymnary Fund and Family Book Fund to assist in future funding of critical areas of the Council’s work among congregations. It was felt that the ability of the Council to keep the cost of its courses and conferences as low as possible without incurring cost on the United Appeal was admirable.
13. **Council for Social Witness – Requested Grant £264,271. Proposed Grant £245,000:** The United Appeal Committee heard of the hard work undertaken throughout Ireland by the Council for Social Witness. As many of their projects are funded from various outside income streams they do not require any funding from United Appeal. This is mainly due to the high level of occupancy achieved at all facilities while also avoiding the need to require top-up payments from resident’s families. The care of the Council’s staff in each setting is remarkable as is the diligence of its staff and leadership. This is reflected in the efficient managing of its budget, assets and investments. The United Appeal Committee realises, however, the forthcoming impact on the Council’s work through the shortage of skilled care and nursing staff.
14. **General Council Creative Production Department – Requested Grant £230,000. Proposed Grant £230,000:** The United Appeal Committee consulted with the Creative Production Department and reflected on its budget for United Appeal funding. It was encouraging to discover how recent staffing changes had been managed through the use of third party professional services. Training for staff members was also high on the priority list, enabling our communication to be relevant and effective. The management of computer hardware, software and website systems allows CPD to operate with a small potential surplus. The United Appeal Committee, however, is aware that this will not always be the case and an increase in budget for creative production will be likely within the next five years.

### **Proposed Grants for 2020**

15. Having met with the various councils and departments it was agreed that the budgets for each be affirmed and that a call on United Appeal for 2020 be made as highlighted in Schedule 1. This is with the exception of the Council for Social Witness which has some reserves



and an ongoing disposal of assets and therefore its budget should remain at the same level as 2019 i.e. £245,000.

16. This will maintain the overall level of grant expenditure for 2020 at the same level as 2019, i.e. £3,700,000 with all councils receiving the same level of grant.

### **Proposed Appeal for 2020**

17. The United Appeal Committee, therefore, recommends an increase in the Appeal for 2020 to £3,600,000 from £3,550,000 in 2019 (i.e. a 1.4% increase).
18. As some congregations do not contribute to the Appeal before the closing date it is projected that the accounts for 2020 will show a deficit of £162,000. Without any anticipated returns from councils this deficit would bring the balance of reserves to £ 1,705,408 at the end of 2020. This is necessary to fund the monthly grants to councils of 7.5% of their projected grants.
19. The United Appeal Committee is concerned as to the continuing use on reserves and anticipate future increases in funding requests from the councils to maintain their current level of work and fulfilment of remits. It is anticipated that the United Appeal in the next few years would need to increase to meet these requests placing a greater demand on our congregations and members. The United Appeal Committee recognises the hard work undertaken by the Financial Secretary, his staff and the individual secretaries and conveners. This hard work has avoided a greater call on United Appeal in recent years but many of their tactics cannot be maintained thus leading to the potential increase in the United Appeal from 2021 onwards.

MARK CATNEY, Convener

## UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

### SCHEDULE 1 – PROPOSED 2020 APPEAL AND COMPARATIVE FIGURES FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

	Proposed 2020 £	Budget 2019 £	Actual 2018 £
<b>APPEAL</b>	3,600,000	3,550,000	3,500,000
<b>PROJECTED ACCOUNTS</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>			
Congregations (current year)	3,350,000	3,300,000	3,291,684
Congregations (prior years)	150,000	150,000	118,943
Income from Trust Funds	28,000	28,000	28,698
Donations and Bequests	10,000	10,000	39,292
Bank Interest	10,000	10,000	6,487
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	3,548,000	3,498,000	3,485,104
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Promotional Costs	10,000	10,000	16,874
<b>GRANTS</b>			
Mission in Ireland	1,065,000	1,065,000	1,050,000
Global Mission	1,065,000	1,065,000	1,050,000
Training in Ministry	375,000	375,000	370,000
Congregational Life and Witness	720,000	720,000	720,000
Social Witness	245,000	245,000	245,000
General – Creative Production	230,000	230,000	230,000
<b>TOTAL GRANTS</b>	3,700,000	3,700,000	3,665,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	3,710,000	3,710,000	3,681,874
<b>SURPLUS ( DEFICIT)</b>	-162,000	-212,000	-196,770
Grants Returned – CCLW	0		90,000
Added /( Deducted) to/(from) reserves	-162,000	-212,000	-106,770
Reserves at start of year	1,867,408	2,079,408	2,186,178
Reserves at end of year	1,705,408	1,867,408	2,079,408

## UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

### SCHEDULE 2 – ALLOCATION OF THE 2019 UNITED APPEAL TO PRESBYTERIES

*(As agreed by the 2018 General Assembly)*

Presbytery	Contributing	Assessable	United
	Families	Income	Appeal
	2017	2017	2019
		£	£
Ards	6,720	3,723,121	329,554
Armagh	3,511	2,201,318	183,432
Ballymena	6,550	3,638,544	321,639
Belfast North	3,919	2,166,338	191,975
Belfast South	2,546	1,859,801	144,591
Belfast East	4,807	3,346,276	265,741
Carrickfergus	4,279	2,046,113	195,588
Coleraine and Limavady	4,958	2,733,297	242,546
Derry and Donegal	4,654	2,214,626	212,253
Down	4,077	1,924,649	185,262
Dromore	4,345	2,297,298	208,251
Dublin and Munster	1,160	1,804,701	107,930
Iveagh	3,265	1,721,101	156,261
Monaghan	1,082	813,503	62,464
Newry	2,715	1,325,342	125,290
Omagh	3,248	1,615,176	151,188
Route	3,210	1,557,070	147,697
Templepatrick	3,457	1,704,031	160,255
Tyrone	3,346	1,717,022	158,083
	71,849	40,409,327	3,550,000

50% of the allocation for 2019 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for congregations in the Republic of Ireland has been converted to sterling at GBP£1 = €1.1413

*NOTE: Schedule 3 of the United Appeal Committee Report, outlining the allocation of the 2020 United Appeal to Presbyteries, will be included with the 2019 Minutes of the General Assembly. The allocation will be based on the agreed formula of 50% of the allocation based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. This change is due to the later submission date for part B of the annual statistical returns.*

## HOLDING TRUSTEE TASK GROUP

1. The 2018 General Assembly instructed all presbyteries to consider the following proposal:
 

to merge the 19 Presbytery Education Boards and form one, or if necessary two, holding trustee bodies for those congregations in the General Assembly not wishing to appoint three or more individual voting members as named trustees to receive and hold their property, and report to the Convener of the Holding Trustee Task Group by 30 November 2018.
2. Replies were received from all 19 Presbyteries and the outcome was:
  - 13 Presbyteries were in favour of continuing with the process;
  - 3 Presbyteries were opposed to continuing with the process;
  - 3 Presbyteries did not express an opinion for or against but submitted comments.

**The responses indicate that the proposal to merge the Presbytery Education Boards should be considered in more detail.**

3. Some presbyteries made written submissions and in others the Clerk of Presbytery spoke to the convener. The following is a summary of concerns and questions raised during the consultation:
  - Merging 19 into 1 or 2 may be seen by some as the centralisation of power.
  - Any move towards one body could mean a loss of local knowledge.
  - Will the removal of the local trustee body result in an increase in time to process business?
  - Is it not likely that this process will lead to an increase in the number of congregations appointing named trustees?
  - This could be a long drawn out and complex process.
  - What level of costs will be involved?
  - Would it not be better to put energy and resources into training members of Education Boards?
  - Some Education Boards have investments in the name of the Education Board – how will these be managed?
  - Some Education Boards have investment funds and the income is used by the presbytery to support local projects – how can the future use of such funds be maintained?
  - At least one Education Board was appointed by the High Court as the executive trustee body of a fund and is responsible for the distribution of funds – how can this be managed by a holding trustee body?
  - Several Education Boards are registered as landlords under the Landlord Registration Scheme – is this a matter that needs to be resolved if there is to be one body?

The comments received suggest that further information would be helpful in reaching a final decision. Presbyteries are interested in the detailed outworking of any proposals before committing to make changes.

4. Discussions with clerks suggest that the process of appointing charity trustees has raised questions throughout the Church about the position of holding trustee. Possibly this is something that needs to be clarified during the process and may be the starting point for the report that needs to be prepared to help the Church decide on this matter.
5. The General Council received the report of the task group and agreed that an appropriate resolution be presented to the General Assembly to progress the issues outlined.

ROBERT HERRON, Convener

## **CHARITY REGISTRATION TASK GROUP**

### **Registration with the Charities Regulatory Authority**

1. Representatives of PCI have met with officials of the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) in the Republic of Ireland on two occasions over the last few years and while those meetings were useful the CRA have not been in a position to complete the registration of all parts of the denomination.
2. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (or maybe more accurately the activities falling under the General Assembly) is already registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and the annual returns to the CRA are up to date.
3. A small number of PCI congregations were classified as what are referred to as Section 40 registrations (or existing charities) because they had their own Revenue Commissioners Charity Number (i.e. a CHY number). These congregation are now registered and it appears that everything is up to date with regard to filing and reporting requirements. These congregations are Abbey, Christ Church Rathgar, Cavan, Corboy, Donegal, Dundalk, Dunfanaghy, Newbliss, Sligo, St Andrew's, Blackrock, and Ray.
4. The majority of PCI congregations (and indeed the three presbyteries in, or with a substantial number of congregations in, the Republic of Ireland) are what are referred to as Section 39 registrations (or new charities) because they do not have their own Revenue Commissioners Charity Number. It is hoped that eventually these can be registered as individual charities but under a group registration process.
5. The last email correspondence from the CRA was on 21 June 2018 when the CRA advised that they were putting in a new IT system and that PCI's Section 39 congregations would not be invited forward for registration in a few months. It was anticipated this would be around

August/September 2018 and that CRA would arrange a further meeting to discuss the registration process. PCI has not heard anything since then. The Financial Secretary has contacted the CRA on several occasions by telephone over recent months enquiring when registration might take place. Despite being advised that someone would be in touch no one from the CRA has returned these calls.

6. A letter has recently been sent to the Registration Team at CRA seeking a definitive timescale for the registration of PCI's section 39 congregations.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Acting Convener

## **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION TASK GROUP**

1. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Task Group was appointed by the Council on 10 October 2017, with the following remit:

*To produce advice and guidelines for:*

- (a) The Councils and Departments of the General Assembly
- (b) Presbyteries and Congregations

*which will enable ongoing compliance with GDPR by 25 May 2018; and which will enable information/data which has previously been gathered or processed to become compliant.*

2. The GDPR Task Group has met on two occasions since the last meeting of General Assembly.

### **Temporary Data Protection Officer**

3. Mr Kirk Shilliday's term as Project Manager has come to an end – the task group is extremely grateful to him for the work he has done, and the manner in which he has carried it out. The meeting of General Council on 11 October 2018 had accepted a recommendation from the GDPR Task Group to appoint a time-limited dedicated Data Protection Coordinator and that the Financial Secretary and Project Manager prepare a job description and personnel specification for the post for approval by the Priorities Reference Panel. The task group reviewed the documents and agreed that the post would require two days per week for a minimum of six months, with a possibility of extension and that the position would be filled on a contract for services basis. The post was advertised through the church and Mr Robert Dowey, a member of the kirk session of First Portadown Presbyterian Church, was appointed in January as Temporary Data Protection Officer. Mr Dowey's priorities will be:
  - (a) data retention policies;
  - (b) the General Assembly Data Register; and
  - (c) staff training.

**Policy Development**

4. The task group considered a draft ‘Top Ten Tips’ for ensuring presbyteries and congregations are GDPR compliant. The document, which had been drawn up by the Project Manager was discussed and amendments proposed. An amended ‘Top Ten Tips’ document has been drawn up by the Deputy Clerk and Financial Secretary and included in the GDPR Downloads section of the PCI website at [www.presbyterianireland.org/gdpr](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/gdpr). In addition, the Convener will contribute an article to the May edition of the *Presbyterian Herald* on ‘GDPR one year on’ which will include a copy of the ‘Top Ten Tips’.

**Office 365**

5. The Deputy Clerk and Head of IT will issue a letter to congregations informing them of the existence of Office 365 as a GDPR compliant platform. Congregations will be advised that PCI is not resourced to support the implementation of Office 365 and that they should source local support should they decide to use the platform.

**Retention of emails**

6. The time for which emails need to be retained poses a number of issues for General Assembly Departments. The task group asked the Temporary Data Protection Officer to consult with departments on retention periods for emails and to identify options.

**Future of Task Group**

7. The task group reviewed its work and concluded that its remit has been largely fulfilled. The task group was thanked for its services and discharged at the March meeting of the General Council, with future responsibility for GDPR matters given to the Support Services Committee.

EDGAR JARDINE CB, Convener

## **ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATIONS TASK GROUP (ECTG)**

1. The ECTG continued in existence for a further period to consider the responses given at a meeting with clerks of presbytery in January 2019 reviewing the new consultations process. In summary, comments were favourable and there are no major changes to be made to the process.
2. It is understood that some presbyteries operate a hybrid model of consulting with congregations. While adopting most of the new process they may, for example, use a larger panel to undertake a consultation or may still ask a congregation give a presentation. The new system allows for some of this kind of flexibility, but in general the new template was

felt by clerks to be an improvement on the previous process and not as unwieldy.

3. Clarification was sought by the convener of the task group from the Church Architecture and Manses Panel on the standard and costing of the ten-year building surveys required during a consultation as there seems to be a wide range of practice throughout the church. The advice is that such surveys should not be intrusive in nature and should not be too costly to undertake. It is the responsibility of the congregation being consulted to pay for the survey, although the task group is aware of at least one presbytery which levies each congregation through the year and it then pays for the surveys.
4. It is hoped that recommendations from the task group passed previously at the General Assembly in terms of better engagement between councils and presbyteries and between presbyteries and congregations will be put into practice. Some early indications of changes and improvements being made are encouraging.
5. The task group was thanked and discharged at the March General Council. The Council agreed that the responsibility for updating the consultations process from time to time to allow for changes in legislation and church policy (e.g. relating to GDPR, Taking Care etc.) be given to the General Secretary's Department.

NORMAN CAMERON, Convener



# GENERAL COUNCIL

## SECTION 4

**Friday Morning (immediately after private session)**

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE (SECOND REPORT)

1. Future Assemblies Review. As part of the ongoing review the Business Committee had asked presbyteries and council conveners and secretaries to comment on the merits or otherwise of having evening business sessions, the use of additional ‘under 30’ people and other relevant matters.
2. Having received feedback from presbyteries, councils and others the committee recommends:
  - (a) that the experimental additional evening sessions be discontinued;
  - (b) that the experimental additional ‘under 30’ person become permanent;
  - (c) that the ‘additional elder’ option not be reinstated.

ROY PATTON, Convener

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The nominations Committee has met twice since the last General Assembly.

#### **Refreshing the Pool**

2. The process of refreshing the pool took place in the autumn with people being asked to express interest through an online resource (Survey Monkey). A paper version was also sent to each minister/presbytery clerk for distribution to those who are not online. Eighty-eight people responded.
3. The detail provided in response to the online process has been found to be much more helpful than the previous paper responses in discerning where within the structures it might be appropriate for someone to serve.
4. As in the previous pool ministers and presbyteries must have ‘ownership’ of the names put forward. This means that all names will be sent to ministers and clerks of presbytery for approval.

5. The committee thanks all who encouraged people to put their names forward and recognises there is still a need to encourage more congregational members to offer to serve on councils and committees when the pool is next refreshed.

#### **Four Year Term**

6. June 2019 marks the end of the first four-year term under the new structures. 58 people who will have served a full four years by this Assembly were contacted to see if they were willing to serve a second four-year term. Of these 19 indicated they wished to step down.
7. Those appointed to fill gaps in the past few years have been asked to serve a full four-year term and not just the remainder of the current term. These people will be contacted when they enter their fourth year.

#### **New Structure for CCLW**

8. In preparation for the new structure of CCLW nominations have been made for the three new committees: Congregational Life Committee (ten Council members and ten other nominees); Congregational Witness committee (ten Council members and ten other nominees); Programme, Finance and Coordination Committee (six Council members and six other nominees). Thanks are expressed to all involved in this process in which the committee has sought to balance provision for continuity of expertise with utilisation of the newly populated pool.

#### **Nominations**

9. Nominations to convenerships are contained in an appended resolution while nominations to membership of councils etc. are contained in the Nominations Booklet.
10. At the time of writing, there are fewer vacancies remaining without definite nominations than at the same time in previous years. It is hoped that those gaps will be filled by the time the Nominations Booklet is printed. It is helpful if those intending to resign from membership of a council or committee give notice in good time for a replacement to be found for nomination to the following General Assembly, that is, by the preceding January. It should be noted that, apart from direct presbytery nominees and some ex-officio members, vacancies that arise during the year cannot be filled until the following General Assembly.
11. The committee has decided that it will be appropriate to advertise vacancies for convenerships of councils and committees from the July before such vacancies occur, should councils wish that to be done to facilitate shadowing of the position by any prospective new convener. This will always, however, be subject to confirmation of any nomination by the subsequent General Assembly.

JONATHAN CURRY, Convener

## DEPUTY CLERK TASK GROUP

1. At the meeting of the General Council on Monday 25 March 2019, it was intimated that the current Deputy Clerk, the Rev Jim Stothers, had written to the Clerk indicating that he intended to retire from his post on 30 September 2020. Mr Stothers had given this period of notice to facilitate the 2019 General Assembly in considering the post, prior to advertising, recruiting and making an appointment at the 2020 General Assembly.
2. The General Council appointed the following task group to consider the matter and report back: Moderator, Clerk (Convener), Very Rev Dr Noble McNeely (General Council Convener), Mr David Thomson (Support Services Convener), Rev William Henry (Moderator Designate) and Ms Laura Kelly (Head of Personnel).
3. The task group met and had before it the current job description and personnel specification. It considered the balance in the job description between the ‘deputising roles’ and the ‘council secretary type roles’. The task group felt that the balance should change slightly to enable more time to be freed up for the deputising roles, both as Deputy Clerk and Deputy General Secretary. However, the group also recognised that the executive support of the Linkage Commission was important, as was the Council Secretary role with the Council for Training in Ministry, especially over the incoming years. The task group recognised that there was no other current executive post which would have the capacity to take on either of these responsibilities and that it was not appropriate to recommend a new additional post, even part-time.
4. The task group therefore resolved to amend slightly the current job description, but once someone is appointed to adjust the person’s ‘task list’ to make small changes to the balance of the job. The task group made some adjustments to the personnel specification to reflect this slight change in emphasis. A draft job description and personnel specification are attached in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Clerk of Assembly

## DEPUTY CLERK TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 1

### JOB DESCRIPTION

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

**Salary Scale:** Scale E6

**Responsible to:** The Clerk of the General Assembly

#### Main functions of job:

To contribute to the Christian ministry and mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland through the delivery of the duties outlined.

To be an active member of the General Assembly's staff team, contributing to the effective administration of its functions and assisting in the development of strategies and plans for the delivery of its agreed objective in a manner in keeping with the Christian ethos of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Under the Leadership of the Clerk of the General Assembly to assist with the implementation of decisions of the General Assembly relevant to the Council and to carry forward its delegated responsibilities.

The Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly and 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 Secretarial functions.

#### Responsibilities and duties

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

1. To assist the Clerk in his support of Clerks of Presbytery and others in leadership positions within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
2. To assist the Clerk in his support of Ministers in issues arising in their ongoing ministry,
3. To assist with the proofing and indexing of Assembly Reports.
4. To prepare draft Minutes of Assembly, to act as Recording Secretary during the Assembly and to proof and index Assembly Minutes.
5. To minute Councils and Committees as required.
6. To deputise for the Clerk during holidays, illness and other absences.

7. To act in place of the Clerk under Par 269(2) (a) (ii) of the Code.
8. To assist the Clerk in representing the Church, as necessary.
9. 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 their duties as required from time to time, and specifically as follows:**

10. To oversee the work of designated areas within the Assembly Buildings as required i.e. line-managing the Head of Creative Production, Head of IT and the Conference and Facilities Manager and reporting to the General Secretary as necessary. These specific areas may be subject to change.
11. To act as Authorising Officer for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's registration with the Home Office with regard to visas etc.
12. To deputise for the General Secretary during holidays, illness and other absences.
13. 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 Secretarial functions as follows:**

14. To act as Secretary to the Council for Training in Ministry, supporting its Convener, as appropriate, and to provide executive support to the Linkage Commission and its officers as required. (These areas of executive support may be subject to change.)
15. To line-manage staff within the Council for Training in Ministry, as required.
16. To act in a representative role for the Council for Training in Ministry, at meetings and groups, both internal and external to Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as appropriate.
17. To act as Authorising Officer for Union Theological College's registration with the Home Office with regard to visas etc.
18. To oversee and coordinate the work of the Conciliation Service.
19. To carry out deputation work within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland on behalf of the Council for Training in Ministry, and in a general role, as appropriate.
20. To carry out any other requested duties appropriate and reasonable within this function of the post.
21. To contribute to the overall organisational effectiveness and to perform any other duties as deemed appropriate by the General Assembly or the Clerk of the General Assembly.

## DEPUTY CLERK TASK GROUP – APPENDIX 2

### PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

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

**Salary Scale:** Executive Scale E6

**Responsible to:** The Clerk of the General Assembly

### CRITERIA

#### Qualifications and knowledge:

##### Essential

1. An ordained Minister 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. A detailed 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 Councils of the Church.
6. A knowledge of the inter church, governmental, political and statutory structures in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
7. Appropriate computer skills i.e. word processing, emailing and utilising databases.

##### Desirable

1. A degree in Theology
2. A broad understanding of all relevant legislation (e.g. safeguarding).
3. Knowledge of the current challenges to the Christian church in Ireland.

**Relevant Experience:****Essential**

1. A minimum of 2 years' ministry experience in a congregational setting.
2. A minimum of 1 year's experience of leading and managing others.
3. Experience of servicing committees and writing reports.
4. 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.



## QUALIFICATION FOR VOTING MEMBERSHIP TASK GROUP

1. The 2017 General Assembly received a Memorial from the Rev Dr Ivan Neish, which stated:

*The Memorial of the Rev Dr Ivan D Neish, respectfully showeth:  
That the issue of financial giving to the work of the Church is a matter of the heart of the giver and ought not to be something which is regulated in a legal way, as in the Code of the Presbyterian Church which ties giving to voting. Giving should be left to the individual, who should be allowed to give in the way they feel appropriate, recognising that those who give do so according to a range of different patterns.*

*That the current requirement in the Code could be counter-productive in encouraging tokenism, whereby a communicant member could give a small amount in an envelope in order to ‘fulfil all righteousness’, and thereby qualify as a voting member.*

*That there are those in most congregations who are communicant members but who feel constrained by the principle of giving in secret and therefore do not have envelopes or give in any way that can be recorded. Many, if not most, of these people nevertheless give financially, but are by the current system excluded from voting.*

*That these matters could be resolved if the Code simply stated that a Communicant member in good standing is eligible to vote.*

*Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly to instruct the Judicial Commission to draft overtures for presentation at the 2018 General Assembly removing the requirement to subscribe financially from the qualification to be a voting member of a congregation.*

*And Memorialist, as in duty bound, will ever pray.*

2. In response to this Memorial, the General Assembly resolved as follows:

*That the Memorial be received and its prayer be not granted, but that the Moderator’s Advisory Committee appoint a Task Group to consider the qualifications of voting members and report to the 2018 Assembly.*

3. The following task group was appointed to carry this forward:

Moderator, Clerk (Convener), Deputy Clerk, General Assembly Solicitor, Rev Dr Derek McKelvey, Mrs Dianne Leckey, Mr James Livingstone, Mr Kenneth Belshaw, Mrs Elizabeth Moffett and Rev David Johnston.

4. The task group met on Thursday 13 December 2018 and held a preliminary discussion of its remit and the issues involved, during which it was noted that:
- (a) The substance of Rev Dr Ivan Neish's position is that communicant members should not have to contribute to the funds of the congregation to be a voting member.
  - (b) The current basic requirement of the Code, Par 175(1) was noted, namely:
 

*Voting members in the Church are communicants on the roll of the congregation who are listed, whether by name or number, as having contributed to the stipend or weekly freewill offering of the congregation in the last financial year.*
  - (c) The Clerk reported that the Finance Panel of the Support Services Committee would be bringing an overture to the 2019 General Assembly seeking to amend to Code to state that all giving should be recorded by number only i.e. anonymously.
5. Dr Neish joined the meeting and a lengthy and fruitful discussion took place. Dr Neish explained the reasoning behind his position and responded to questions. Some of the main points made by Dr Neish were as follows:
- (a) That he accepted the need for an FWO system to be available and that it use would be the normative position for most church members.
  - (b) It seems not to make sense that a nominal contribution through a FWO system entitles a person who is a communicant to be a voting member – encourages tokenism.
  - (c) Par 6 of the Code sets a high calling for church members, as opposed to such tokenism:
 

*Church members are called to make diligent use of the means of grace, to share faithfully in the worship and work of the Church, to give of their substance as the Lord may prosper them, to render whole-hearted service to Christ and His Kingdom throughout the world and to continue in the peace and fellowship of the people of God.*
  - (d) There are some people who in principle, based on their reading of the scriptures, practice totally secret giving to the Lord i.e. nobody else knows.
  - (e) While he desired to break the link between recorded giving and voting membership, he recognized that for many other reasons a FWO list would continue.
  - (f) However, all communicants in good standing should have a vote in the congregation. This would mean kirk sessions taking seriously the need to review the communion roll.

6. After Dr Neish left the meeting there was a full discussion on the pros and cons of his position. It was agreed that there was a biblical responsibility on all members of a congregation to financially support the work of the Lord in and through the congregation – to give of their substance as the Lord may prosper them. However, different opinions were legitimately held as to whether recorded giving should be a requirement for voting membership.
  - (a) Some support that it should be a requirement (the current position in PCI) because it encourages giving and demonstrates that members are fulfilling this responsibility.
  - (b) Some feel the link should go (a change in PCI practice) because it encourages unbiblical nominalism and rules out from voting membership some people who, on biblical grounds, feel that all giving should be between the believer and the Lord i.e. in secret.

It was recognised if option (b) was adopted then it would make regular reviews of the communion roll even more important. Might this be done by a proactive pointing to the obligations of members set out in Code Par 6 as part of a review of the communion roll every three years?

7. Members of the task group undertook to give further consideration to the issues in advance of the next meeting. The task group met again on Wednesday 13 February 2019. Following further detailed discussion and consideration of the issues at hand, it was resolved as follows:
  - (a) The task group recognised the force of Dr Neish’s argument concerning the probably small number of members who give but ‘are not listed by name or number as having contributed to stipend or weekly freewill offering.’ Code Par 175 (1)
  - (b) However, the task group is aware that paragraph 6 of the Code sets out the calling of church membership, one element of which is ‘to give of their substance as the Lord may prosper them.’
  - (c) Therefore, the task group recommends that the link between giving and voting membership should not be broken at this time. This recommendation was endorsed by the General Council at its meeting in March 2019 and an appropriate resolution is appended.
  - (d) However, the task group asked the General Council to consider whether it wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it consider setting up a group to examine how Par 6 of the Code, in its entirety, relates to determining voting membership, rather than simply singling out the financial element. After a period of debate, the General Council decided not to make such a recommendation to the General Assembly.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Convener

## HISTORIAL ARCHIVING TASK GROUP

1. The Historical Archiving Task Group has met twice since the last General Assembly.
2. Since it was appointed in January 2015 its work has been in three main areas.
  - (a) Clearing the strongroom of unessential material.
  - (b) The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland has taken custody of a large volume of material which is of historical interest, but is not essential to hold in the strong room. This has cleared a lot more space in the strongroom, which contains now mostly minutes and legal documents relating to the General Assembly, as well as some similar material relating to presbyteries and congregations.
  - (c) Collating minutes of commissions, boards and committees of the General Assembly which are not in the strongroom. Relevant departmental staff have removed minutes stored in rooms on the first floor from other material and placed them together in one location. Other material has been offered to the Presbyterian Historical Society: that which is of no interest to it has been disposed of.
  - (d) Cataloguing of minutes and legal documents. It has not been possible to make any progress on this.
3. Although there exists in the Financial Secretary's Department a file which lists material in the strongroom, this is now out of date. Again, although in 2013 a professional survey of material held in the strongroom was carried out on behalf of the Presbyterian Historical Society, this too is out of date and needs revised and put into electronic form to facilitate searches.
4. The experience of the last four years and more has shown:
  - (a) that the Deputy Clerk and other departmental staff do not have the capacity to properly catalogue the minutes and other legal documents relating to the General Assembly.
  - (b) that it is important for the General Assembly that its minutes and live legal documents are catalogued easily found when consultation is needed.
5. The task group has concluded that it is not the appropriate vehicle to achieve what is referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 above. It has accordingly recommended to the General Council that that an individual with appropriate skills is appointed on a short-term basis to:
  - (a) Clear the strongroom of all remaining unnecessary items.
  - (b) Catalogue all General Assembly commission, board and committee minutes and live legal documents, disposing of other items as appropriate (including to the Presbyterian Historical Society).

- (c) Catalogue all presbytery and congregational minutes and live legal documentation, returning other items to those bodies, or disposing of them as appropriate (including to the Presbyterian Historical Society).
  - (d) Place all General Assembly commission, board and committee minutes in appropriate binders, folders or boxes.
  - (e) Place all General Assembly live legal documents in appropriate receptacles.
  - (f) Place all presbytery and congregational minutes and live legal documents in appropriate receptacles.
  - (g) Draw together the items at 8b and c, wherever they are in the building and place them in the strongroom. An exception to this is material relating to the Financial Secretary's Department which may more appropriately be stored in the secure room on the first floor.
  - (h) Arrange the items in the strongroom in a logical order on the shelves, allowing room for further additions, and indexing them to facilitate retrieval at a later date.
  - (i) Produce a catalogue of items arranged by General Assembly, presbytery and congregation, including the index referred to at h) above.
  - (j) Devise a scheme for the deposit of future General Assembly commission, council and committee minutes and live legal documents, and of presbytery and congregational minutes and live legal documents in the Strong Room.
6. Included in the task group's remit is reference to material held at Union Theological College and with the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland.
  7. It has not, in any meaningful way, been able to address material held in Union Theological College. Most of it is relevant to the college, although there is a substantial amount of material relating to the Foreign Mission held there. Ultimately everything 'owned' by the college, is the property of the General Assembly, as the college is a constituent part of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. If it is desired to have the material held there catalogued properly (apart from what is in the library) then an individual would need to be appointed on the a similar basis to what is recommended above in paragraph 5.
  8. The material stored in the Historical Society is well catalogued and the basis of understanding is that anything which is rightly the property of the General Assembly will be restored to it on request.
  9. At the General Council meeting in April 2019, the recommendations of the task group outlined in par 5 above were adopted and referred to the Support Services Committee for outworking.

JIM STOTHERS, Convener

## CENTRAL PRAYER COORDINATION TASK GROUP

1. The Central Prayer Coordination Task Group has met twice since the last General Assembly.
2. It has monitored the format and take-up of the new weekly Let's Pray resource.
3. Let's Pray is proving a useful tool for the church and the process of producing and distributing it each week is effective. Extensive use if being made of the resource.
4. Some minor changes have been made: the accompanying slides now mostly use graphics only (rather than including extensive text) and are produced in two screen sizes; and the Friday section has been altered to enable the prayer topics to be more easily distinguished from each other.
5. A pilot of the use of *PrayerMate*, a popular prayer app, as an additional platform is running. If successful the prayers from Let's Pray will be published on it on a daily basis. This would cost £240 per annum, but will be free to users of the app.
6. The new format *Presbyterian Herald* has significantly increased the amount of prayer information given, tying it to specific articles in the Mission Connect section. The prayer information is both more detailed and more up to date than was previously possible in the *Prayer Handbook*.

JIM STOTHERS, Convener

## AD-HOC BUSINESS

### (A) Finance and Staffing Commission (2019)

1. In light of recent decisions with regard to Union Theological College, the General Council at its meeting in April 2019 agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that a Finance and Staffing Commission (2019) be appointed. This would both enable necessary decisions to be taken during the forthcoming transitional period in the life of the college and also enable firm and definite proposals, regarding the college's future, to be brought to the General Assembly for decision.
2. Subsequent to the meeting of the General Council, the Clerk of Assembly received written notification from Principal Stafford Carson indicating that he intended to retire from his post as Principal of Union Theological College and Professor of Ministry on 30 September 2020. The Finance and Staffing Commission (2019) would therefore have the responsibility of taking all steps necessary to bring a nomination for a new Principal to the 2020 General Assembly for appointment.

3. It is therefore recommended that the Commission would have full and specific Assembly powers:
  - to consider the recommendations of the Union Theological College Management Committee and/or Council for Training in Ministry and/or other relevant General Assembly bodies;
  - to make any necessary legal, financial and staffing decisions in regard to Union Theological College;
  - to bring a nomination for a new Principal of UTC to the 2020 General Assembly for appointment;
  - to present firm and definite proposals regarding the College's future to the General Assembly for decision.
4. Appropriate resolutions are appended in regarding the appointment of the commission and its membership.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Clerk of Assembly

**(B) COUNCIL FOR GLOBAL MISSION – STRUCTURES REVIEW REPORT**

1. The Council for Global Mission has reviewed its current structures and is proposing the following changes as set out below in this report to the General Council.
2. This review has been carried out as a follow-up to the 2013 and 2014 reports of PCI's Structures Review Panel, which reviewed all the structures within PCI, focusing on the concepts of accountability, communication and engagement and stated the remit for the Council for Global Mission as follows:
  - (a) Supporting the mission and service of PCI offered by congregations working together through the General Assembly in global mission including:
    - (i) developing mission overseas, including developing partnerships with churches and sending personnel;
    - (ii) promoting world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal;
  - (b) Leading thinking within PCI with regard to issues of global concern, such as the environment, race relations and international relations.

**Procedures**

3. In coming to review its internal structure at this time, the Council for Global Mission recognised that it could take initiatives to carry out minor adjustments to its structure of panels and task groups, with subsequent ratification by the General Council. It further recognised, however, that a more significant re-structuring, especially one that involved a change to Assembly Committees would from the outset, involve an ongoing conversation with the General Council which is responsible for all re-structuring.

4. In forwarding this report to the General Council for consideration, the Council for Global Mission understands that whatever structure may be agreed and subsequently forwarded to the General Assembly in 2019, will not come into effect until the General Assembly 2020 at the earliest, once committees and panels have been populated and conveners nominated.

### **Presenting issues**

5. The Council for Global Mission recognises, in seeking to fulfil its General Assembly remit, that there is a need to function more efficiently and effectively. It identified a particular need for Assembly Committees to function more effectively as the place where strategy was discussed and set, and in this regard to distinguish more clearly the specific roles of committees, panels and task groups.
6. The Council identified the importance of improving Council representation at every level of its structure, and especially at those points where key decisions were to be taken.
7. While not a key driver for change, it was recognised that a new, streamlined, structure would have beneficial implications for the stewardship of resources, not least the work of Mission Department Staff.
8. Not only was a new, streamlined structure required, therefore, but this needed to be accompanied by new ways of working.

### **Consultation**

9. Interviews were carried out with conveners of Council for Global Mission Committees and Council-appointed panels and these confirmed the need for change at this time. These conveners then took the discussion to their respective committees and panels. In general, proposed changes were received positively, in as much as their purpose and improved efficiency could be identified and with assurance that key areas of remit were not lost.
10. The following points were commonly mentioned during the interviews:
  - (a) Changes to the structure are needed to avoid duplication and aid effectiveness and efficiency of the various committees and panels but these should be accompanied by:
    - (i) clear statements of purpose for council, committees and panels;
    - (ii) defined remits for committees and panels including responsibility for decision making;
    - (iii) defined roles for individuals within each of these groups i.e. conveners, chairs, agents, secretaries and members.



- (b) Revisions to the structure must be accompanied by new ways of working if efficiency is to be improved:
  - (i) how we manage our meetings e.g. flow of documentation;
  - (ii) how we record and manage attendance e.g. three consecutive absences without an apology lead to resignation;
  - (iii) induction of members and conveners.
  - (iv) policy guidelines for members e.g. *modus operandi*.
- (c) Each committee and panel within any revised structure should understand how its work fits into the overall strategy of the Council. Priorities and expected outcomes should be defined in an annual work plan for each group.
- (d) Communication is a key priority for CGM and its committees to ensure that stakeholders give and receive information according to their needs. Priorities for communication need to be identified and this will be taken forward by a Communications Sub-Group.
- (e) Ways of effectively collaborating with other councils (e.g. Council for Congregational Life and Witness) on relevant topics and projects should be established e.g. joint task groups

### **Structural Changes**

11. Following consultation, a proposed new structure was drawn up for further feedback and discussion. See Appendix 1 ‘Present structure’ and Appendix 2 ‘Proposed Structure’.
12. The main structural changes proposed are:
  - (a) Formation of a Global Mission Committee, which would oversee the work of three panels, including developing a strategy for the work of these panels. Some elements of the existing Global Mission Partnership Panel’s remit would also be assumed by the Global Mission Committee e.g. partnership strategy.
  - (b) Removal of the Outreach Ministries Committee with its work becoming the responsibility of the Global Mission Committee, especially working through the Global Mission Partnership Panel and Global Mission Worker Panel.
  - (c) Removal of Leadership Development Committee, with the Global Leadership Training Panel being retained under the Global Mission Committee.
  - (d) The Global Development Committee would assume the strategic aspects of the World Development Committee and Global Concerns Committee.
  - (e) Removal of four panels of the Global Concerns Committee with core elements of their work being taken on by agents who would be members of the Global Development Committee, and who may be asked to convene task groups, set up as and when required for key pieces of work.

- (f) A World Development Appeal Task Group set up to focus on the practical aspects of the appeal. This would be a rolling task group appointed for up to three years, depending on the duration of the theme of the appeal.

### **Remit of the Council**

13. Under this new structure, the remit of the Council would be fulfilled by the two Assembly Committees as follows:

#### **Global Mission Committee**

- (a) Supporting the mission and service of PCI offered by congregations working together through the General Assembly in global mission including:
- (b) Developing mission overseas, including developing partnerships with Churches and sending personnel;

#### **Global Development Committee**

- (a) Promoting world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal;
- (b) Leading thinking within PCI with regard to issues of global concern, such as the environment, race relations and international relations.

### **Membership**

14. Membership of each group is outlined in Appendix 3.

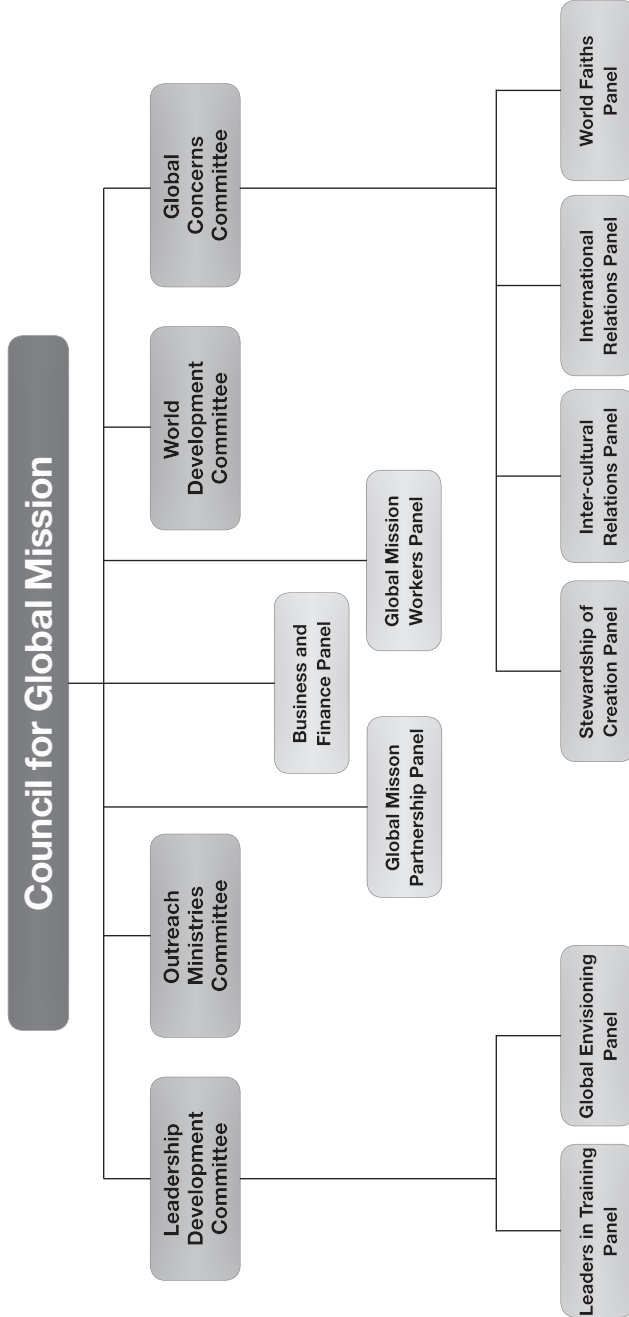
### **Conclusions**

15. The following Council for Global Mission therefore came to the following conclusions of the review:
  - (a) A change of structure is needed for the Council to fulfil its remit more effectively and efficiently.
  - (b) A change of structure should be accompanied by new ways of working, with a focus on strong Council representation at every level.
  - (c) In order to achieve the vision, the development and review of strategy should become a clear and focused component of the remit of Assembly Committees, overseen by the Council and, where appropriate, facilitated through its Business and Finance Panel.
  - (d) Where a committee or panel ceases to exist, steps will be taken to ensure that its work is carried out by another committee, panel or, where appropriate, the setting up of a task group.
16. The General Council at its meeting in March 2019, supported the proposed new structures for the Council for Global Mission. It agreed to recommend the new structures to the 2019 General Assembly for agreement (taking effect at the 2020 General Assembly), in the clear

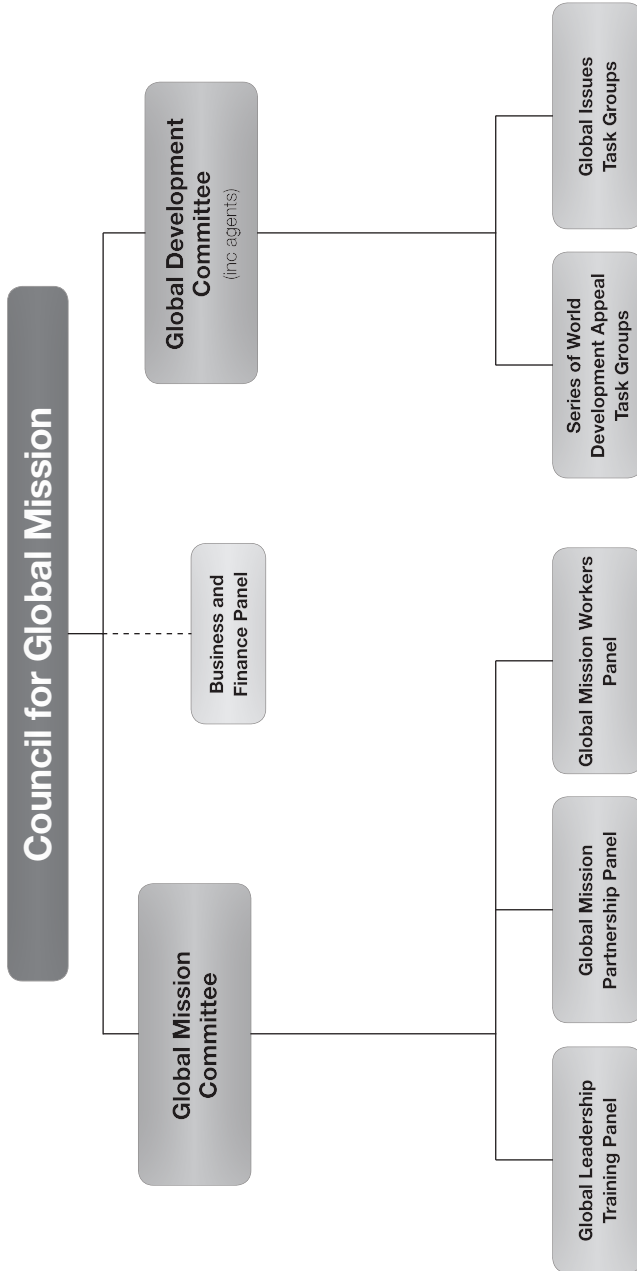
understanding that the World Development Appeal will be delivered by a series of discrete Task Groups (rather than a single ‘rolling task group’. An appropriate resolution is appended.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Clerk of Assembly

# APPENDIX 1 – PRESENT STRUCTURE



# APPENDIX 2 – PROPOSED STRUCTURE



## APPENDIX 3

### Proposed Membership for New Council Structure

#### 1. Council for Global Mission

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary plus PW representatives x 2; and Committee and Council-Panel Conveners: Global Mission Committee Convener, Global Development Committee Convener, Business and Finance Panel Convener.

*Presbytery Nominees x 19*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 10*

#### 2. Global Mission Committee

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary, Committee Convener, Leaders in Training Panel Convener, Global Mission Partnership Panel Convener, Global Mission Workers Panel Convener.

*Council Members x 4 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

#### 3. Global Development Committee

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary, Committee Convener.

*Agents (preferably selected from Council membership):* Stewardship of creation, world faiths, intercultural relations, international relations, other.

*Council Members x 4 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

#### 4. Business and Finance Panel

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary Panel convener, Global Mission Committee Convener, Global Development Committee Convener.

*Council Members x 2 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

**5. Global Leadership Training Panel**

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary, Overseas Mission Committee Convener, Panel Convener, Panel Secretary.

*Council Members x 2 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

**6. Global Mission Partnership Panel**

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary, Panel Convener, Panel Secretary.

*Council Members x 2 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

**7. Global Mission Workers Panel**

Ex-officio: Moderator, Clerk, Council Convener, Council Secretary, Panel Convener, Panel Secretary.

*Council Members x 2 (normally excluding ex-officio)*

*Nominations Committee Nominees x 4*

NB: As a rule, all groupings should be made up of one third ministers to non-ministers, at least one third female to male, and seeking to have a good age range.

## **(C) PEACEHAVEN TRANSFER**

### **Introduction**

1. The General Council continues to take an overview, on behalf of the General Assembly, regarding the transfer of the Peacehaven Trust into the control of the General Assembly. The following update report was received by the Council at its meeting in April 2019.

### **Summary of facilities**

2. Peacehaven Trust comprises three houses in Greystones, Co. Wicklow – Applewood, Lydia and Blake Houses. The houses provide supported living for 17 residents with physical and intellectual disabilities and employs 22 staff. Peacehaven runs on full capacity and has a reputation for the highest standards of care. Senior PCI Council of Social Witness Staff have been advising and supporting the Director of Services, Michael Williams and team and have provided training on a regular basis.

### **Governance**

3. The Peacehaven Trust Board membership is currently as follows:  
Mr Stuart Ferguson (Chair), Adelaide Road, Dublin;  
Mr Ken Gillanders, Adelaide Road, Dublin;  
Mr Brian Egan, Greystones;  
Rev Dr Trevor McCormick, Convener of the Council for Social Witness;  
Mr Lindsay Conway, Secretary to the Council for Social Witness.
4. The board meet bi-monthly and receive a comprehensive report from the Director of Services, outlining the activities and services and any matters which require board approval. At the conclusion of the meeting the board meet without staff to discuss the overall management and deal with strategic and forward planning. To be fully compliant two further board members are required and will be appointed soon.

### **Transfer of Peacehaven to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (Council for Social Witness)**

5. In 2015-16, the then Board of Peacehaven Trust approached PCI with the request that PCI would take over the running and ministry of Peacehaven. Following lengthy consideration and discussion, in May 2016 the then Finance and Staffing Commission of the General Assembly agreed in principle that this should proceed, reporting to the 2016 meeting of the General Assembly.
6. Since then, the process has been both slow and complicated. A number of issues in relation to registration have been resolved, but a small number of legal and grant-related matters remain outstanding. The General Assembly Solicitor and the Senior Team of the Council for



Social Witness continue to meet to resolve these matters. A meeting is being arranged with Wicklow County Council to try and resolve an outstanding grant-related issue. Senior staff visit monthly and are in regular telephone and email contact with Peacehaven staff. The Council for Social Witness Disability Services Committee and Senior Team remain committed to this exciting and well established work in Greystones.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Clerk of Assembly

Note: Reports of bodies not under the control of the General Assembly are to be found on pages 328-334, namely:

- Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland;
- Presbyterian Children’s Society;
- Old Age, Women’s and Indigent Ladies’ Funds.

## RESOLUTIONS

### **Resolutions – General Assembly Business Committee (Initial Report)**

#### **10.30am Tuesday morning:**

1. That the Draft Order of Business for the 2019 General Assembly be approved.
2. That the ‘Guide to Assembly Procedure’ (yellow pages) be approved with the appropriate General Assembly Standing Orders suspended, when necessary, to facilitate alternative presentations etc.
3. That at the 2019 General Assembly, permission be granted, where appropriate, to consolidate resolutions relating to Overtures; and that if a written request from ten or more members of Assembly is lodged with the Clerk before the time scheduled for debate on the consolidated resolution(s) relating to Overtures, then the item(s) specified in the written request will be removed from the consolidated resolution(s) and considered as separate resolution(s).
4. That a grant of £20,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Panel of the General Assembly Business Committee.
5. That the Right Rev Dr William Henry, accompanied by his wife, be appointed to attend the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales in July 2019.
6. That for the 2019 General Assembly, any individual who has had a matter decided by the Judicial Commission on behalf of the Assembly may not address the Assembly on that or any related matter; that where an individual is asked to give undertaking to abide by this decision

of the Assembly, and refuses to do so, that individual will either not be issued with a Voting Card or have their Voting Card withdrawn; and that the Judicial Commission, through its Code Republishing Panel considers an appropriate clause to enact this, to be included the Republished Code.

7. That the initial report of the General Assembly Business Committee be received.

## **Resolutions – General Council (Section 1)**

### **2pm Tuesday afternoon**

#### **Implementation Task Group:**

8. That the General Assembly instruct the General Council to appoint a task group to recommend how best to clarify the vows taken at admission to full membership and at baptism, with a report coming to the 2020 General Assembly.

#### **Decision Making and Dissent Task Group:**

9. That the General Assembly send down the Report of the Decision Making and Dissent Task Group to Presbyteries (along with focussed questions to be drawn up by the task group) for discussion, with comments being returned to the Task Group Convener by Monday 9 December 2019.
10. That Section 1 of the report of the General Council (with the exception of the initial report of the General Assembly Business Committee) be received.

## **Resolutions – General Council (Section 2)**

### **3.30pm Wednesday afternoon**

#### **Guysmere Centre Task Group**

11. That the proposed redevelopment of Guysmere, as outlined in the Feasibility Study, be permitted to proceed to the next stage i.e. the “capital project development (technical and funding), which allows an appointed group sufficient time to work through all of the activities required to refine and define its preferred option, secure both planning consent and also the required capital funding to effectively deliver the project” (see the highlighted section on page 44 of Appendix 1).
12. That regarding funding of this ‘capital project development phase’ (estimated at £75,000 – see the highlighted section of page 53 in Appendix 2), if external funding (as outlined) cannot be secured, then this cost up to £75,000 be met over a three year period by PCI centrally, as a charge on the Incidental Fund.

13. That PCI central funds would however not be committed to the envisaged sum of £50,000 in Phase 1 of the development (see the highlighted section of page 47 in Appendix 2) nor the overall 10% equity of approx. £400,000 (see the highlighted section of page 48 in Appendix 2).
14. That a ‘Guysmere Development Panel’ (having an agreed membership with a ‘local emphasis’ and reporting to the General Council) be appointed by the 2019 General Assembly to present a robust business case and business plan for approval by the General Council before the project proceeds beyond the capital project development phase, as follows: (Names still to be identified - to be included in Supplementary Reports.)

#### **Church Relations Committee**

15. That PCI remain in membership of Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) and the Council of European Churches (CEC).
16. That future natural areas of collaborations with the United Free Church of Scotland be explored (through respective councils, committees and departments) and developed as appropriate.
17. That future natural areas of collaborations with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (USA) be explored (through respective councils, committees and departments) and developed as appropriate.

#### **Moderator’s Advisory Committee**

18. That, under Par 226(a) of the Code, the Rev John Martin Gracey be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of Coagh, Ballygoney and Saltersland congregations.
19. That Section 2 of the report of the General Council be received.

### **Resolutions – General Council (Section 3)**

#### **8pm Thursday evening**

##### **Support Services Committee**

20. That for 2019, the Assessment Rates, along with the related allocation of funds, be as set out in Support Services Appendix 1 and that the rate of assessment for the Pension Fund be set at 24% of stipend paid in the year.
21. That the 2019 budgeted expenditure of the Incidental Fund be as set out in Support Services Appendix 3.
22. That under Par 223(3) of the Code, leave is given to the pre-65 retirement of the Revs DA Murphy (Cunningham Memorial), TJ Laverty (Portstewart), TWD Johnston (Hamilton Road, Bangor) and JG Johnston (Carnlough, Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin).

**United Appeal Committee**

23. That the United Appeal for 2020 be as set out on the Schedule 1 to the report of the United Appeal Committee.
24. The General Assembly affirm the United Appeal Committee's desire to reduce the call on reserves in future years but recognises the projected increase in expenditure necessary to maintain the work of the General Assembly's Councils.
25. The General Assembly support the call of the United Appeal Committee for congregations to forward their United Appeal contributions in a timely manner and to consider their giving as we seek to do more, together.

**Holding Trustee Task Group**

26. That the General Assembly Solicitor be requested to advise the Church on the proposal as outlined in the 2018 Assembly Resolution, taking account of the comments received from Presbyteries; and ask the Holding Trustee Task Group to prepare a full report with definitive proposals for the 2020 General Assembly.
27. That Section 3 of the report of the General Council be received.

**Resolutions – General Council (Section 4)****Friday morning (immediately after the Private Session)****General Assembly Business Committee (Second Report)**

28. That from 2020 the experimental additional evening sessions be discontinued.
29. That the experimental additional 'under 30' person become permanent.
30. That the second report of the General Assembly Business Committee be received.

**Nominations Committee**

31. That, subsequent to the Council for Congregational Life and Witness CLW committee restructuring, the following are thanked for their past service:
  - (a) as Convener of the Outreach Committee – the Rev S.J. Richmond;
  - (b) as Convener of the Discipleship Committee – the Rev Dr Mark Goudy;
  - (c) as Convener of the Leadership Committee – the Rev J.E. McDowell;
  - (d) as Convener of the Worship Committee – the Rev W.J. Murdock;
  - (e) as Convener of the Pastoral Care Committee – the Rev A.R. Bill;
  - (f) as Convener of the Global Mission Involvement Committee – Mr Trevor Long;

- (g) as Convener of the Youth, Children’s and Family Strategy and Coordination Committee – Rev S.D. Finlay;
  - (h) as Convener of the Women’s Strategy and Coordination Committee – Mrs Valerie Stewart
32. That the following resignations be accepted and appointments made:
- (a) the resignation of the Rev Dr D.J. McKelvey as Convener of the Judicial Commission, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev N.A.L. Cameron be appointed in his place.
  - (b) the resignation of the Very Rev Dr T.N. Hamilton, OBE, as Convener of the Council for Public Affairs, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev D.J. Kane be appointed in his place.
  - (c) the resignation of the Very Rev Dr W.D. Patton as Convener of the Healthcare, Prisons and Forces Chaplaincy Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev R.J.A. Bell, be appointed in his place.
  - (d) the Rev P.G. McCrea be appointed as Convener of the Congregational Life Committee.
  - (e) the Rev S.J. Richmond be appointed as Convener of the Congregational Witness Committee.
  - (f) the Rev P.J. Nelson be appointed as Convener of the Programme, Finance and Coordination Committee.
33. That the nominations to the General Assembly Commissions, Councils and Committees (as tabled by the Nominations Committee) be approved.

#### **Deputy Clerk Task Group**

34. That the job description and personnel specification for the post of Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly and Deputy General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland be approved.
35. That the General Council be instructed to take all steps necessary to bring the name of a sole nominee to the 2020 General Assembly, for appointment as Deputy Clerk and Deputy General Secretary.

#### **Voting Membership Task Group**

36. That the link between giving and voting membership should not be broken at this time.

#### **Ad-Hoc Business**

37. That in light of recent decisions with regard to Union Theological College:
- (a) That a Finance and Staffing Commission (2019) be appointed, having full and specific Assembly powers:
    - to consider the recommendations of the Union Theological College Management Committee and/or Council for Training in Ministry and/or other relevant General Assembly bodies;

- to make any necessary legal, financial and staffing decisions in regard to Union Theological College;
  - to bring a nomination for a new Principal of UTC to the 2020 General Assembly for appointment;
  - to present firm and definite proposals regarding the College's future to the General Assembly for decision.
- (b) That the membership of the Finance and Staffing Commission (2019) be as follows: Moderator and Clerk (Secretary); the Very Rev Dr Charles McMullen (Convener); the Very Rev Drs Rob Craig, Noble McNeely, Ian McNie and Frank Sellar; Mrs Catherine Bell CBE, Prof John Gillespie, Prof Paul Hanna, Mr Edgar Jardine CB, Mr James Livingstone, Mr David Thomson and Mrs Rosemary Wilson.

#### **Council For Global Mission Structures**

38. That the General Assembly agree the new structures for the Council for Global Mission, as recommended by the General Council.
39. That Section 4 of the report of the General Council be received.

#### **General Assembly Business Committee Resolutions (Final Report)**

##### **Close of business on Friday**

To be tabled at the close of the General Assembly

## REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W.G. Cameron is their Moderator; that the Rev William Caughey, Minister Emeritus (Released), of Kirkcubbin and Portaferry, died on 11 March 2018; that the Rev David McKee, Minister Without Charge, died on 11 February 2019; that the Very Rev Dr R.A. Patton, Minister of Ballygilbert, retired on 3 July 2018; that Mr Andrew Gill presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and inducted to the work of Moderator's Assistant on 26 April 2018; that Miss Meriel Pinkerton was commissioned to the work of Auxiliary Minister in First Bangor on 15 June 2018; that Mr Ben Johnston presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was received as a licentiate; that Mr M.L. Gray was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge the Rev Simon Henning, the Rev C.D. Mawhinney; as a Licentiate, Mr Keith Ward; as a student Mr David Morrison; that they held consultations at Second Newtownards and Scrabo; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev S.M. Hamilton is their Moderator; that the Rev R.I. Abraham presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed to the charge of Keady First and Armaghbrague on the 14 of December 2018; that Mr S.N. Hawthorne presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of Waringstown on 4 January 2019; that Mr Alan Marsh presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed to the charge of Second Keady and Drumhillery on 11 January 2019; that Mrs Joanne Smith presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was ordained and installed to the charge of Caledon and Minterburn on 18 January 2019; that Mr Philip Houston presented credentials from the Presbtery of North Belfast and was received as licentiate; that Mr Chris Humphries and Mrs Rachel Humphries were commissioned as Global Mission Workers to Portugal on 24 February 2019; that under their care are: as Minister Without Charge Rev J.W.P. McConnell; as Licentiates Mr Philip Houston, Mr C.W. Jackson, Mr J.U. Torrens; as students Mr John Graham, Mr Richard Hill; that they held consultations at Mall, Armagh and Lislooney; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W.J.A. Moody is their Moderator; that the Rev W.J.A. Armstrong became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 6 March 2018; that the Rev D.E. Jones became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 6 March 2018; that Mr A.J. McCracken presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick and was ordained and installed as Minister of Cloughwater on 1 June 2018; that

the Rev L.M. Keys presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was inducted as Associate Minister in West Church on 26 January 2019; that Mr M.D. Boyd, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, was ordained and inducted as Associate Minister of Ballymena First on 26 October 2018; that Mr J.A. Porter was licensed as a Probationer for the Christian Ministry on 10 June 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that Mr R.W. McFaul presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal and was received as licentiate under the care of the Presbytery on 11 September 2018; that under their care are; as Licentiates Mr J.J. Boyd, Mr R.W. McFaul and Mr M.S. Rutledge; as students Mr C. Wilson, Mr M.R.T. Rodgers and Mr M.J.K. Kelso; that a consultation was held with Carnlough and Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Colin J. Gamble is their Moderator; that Rev Margaret Johnston, Minister Emerita of Fortwilliam Park, Belfast, died on the 23 August 2018; that Rev Robert (Bob) Harkness, Minister Emeritus of Sinclair Seamen's, Belfast, died on 2 January 2019; that Rev James Neilly, Minister Emeritus of Immanuel, Belfast, died on 31 January 2019; that the Rev I.D. Neish, Minister of Abbot's Cross, retired on 30 April 2018; that the Rev D. McIlwaine, Minister of Newington, retired on 6 January 2019; that Rev Rev A.K. Duddy presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was installed to the Charge of Woodvale on 22 June 2018; that the Rev Stephen Lowry presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was installed to the Charge of Whitehouse on 14 September 2018; that Mr S.N. Hawthorne was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that Mr Philip Houston was licensed on 10 June 2018 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that Miss Doreen Draffin retired as a Deaconess on 31 March 2018; that under their care are: as Ministers without Charge the Revs Dr L.E. Carroll, S. Newell, W.A. Shaw and F.W. Vincent; as Licentiates Mr A.J. Downey, Mr J.A. Martin, Mr David McCarthy, Mr R.A. Orr and Mr J.T.H. Porter; as Students Mr Gareth Keaveny and Mr John McCracken; that no Consultations were held; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A.E. Tolland is their Moderator; that the Rev A.R. Bill, Minister of Saintfield Road, retired on 30 June 2018; that the Rev B.R. Hughes, Chaplain to Belfast City Hospital, retired on 5 October 2018; that Mr J.C. Newell, Licentiate under the care of South Belfast Presbytery, was ordained and inducted to special work as Chaplain to the Forces (RAF) on 3 February 2019; that the Rev C.H. Deering, Minister Without Charge, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh on 2 March 2018; that Mrs E. Black was inducted to the service as a Deaconess in South Belfast



Friendship House and Great Victoria Street, on 16 November 2018; that Mr Stephen Anderson, a Global Mission Worker, resigned on 30 June 2018; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge, Rev Dr L.H. Eagleson, Rev K.M. Mbayo, Rev J.D. Maxwell, Rev P.G. McDowell, Rev J.A. Peacock; as Licentiates Mr J.J. O'Donnell, Mr D.P. Curran; as Student Mr P. Lutton; that no Consultations were held; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R.S.J. McIlhatton is their Moderator; that the Rev W.J. Harshaw, Minister Without Charge, retired on 15 April 2018; that the Rev R.D. Maxwell, Minister of St Andrew's Belfast, retired on 30 September 2018; that the Rev J.A.M. Scott, Minister Emeritus, resigned from the ministry of Presbyterian Church in Ireland on 5 February 2019; that Mr Alan Marsh was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev G.J. MacLean presented credentials from the Presbytery of Route and was installed to the charge of Orangefield on 19 July 2018; that the Rev E.J.B. McKenzie presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry and was installed to the charge of Cregagh on 30 August 2018; that the Rev A.T.F. Johnston presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady and was inducted as associate in Holywood First on 6 January 2019; that Mr M.L. Gray presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards and was ordained and installed to the charge of Ravenhill on 21 June 2018; that Mr Ben Johnston was licensed on 10 June 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that Mr Sam Bostock was licensed on 24 June 2018; that Mr Richard Cronin was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that the Rev S.J. Lowry, Ordained Assistant in First Holywood, resigned his charge on 13 September 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that the Rev W.D.S. McCullagh and Mrs Pamela McCullagh, Global Mission Workers in Malawi, resigned their appointment on 15 November 2018 and Rev W.D.S. McCullagh was given credentials to the Presbytery of Newry; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge, the Rev J.M. Casement, the Rev Dr D.J. Montgomery, the Rev B.J. Walker, the Rev Dr M.J. Welsh; the Rev W.J. Harshaw (retired); as Licentiate Mr Sam Bostock; as Transferring Minister Rev Andras Gilicze; as student Mr Philip Boyd; that they held consultations at Stormont and Tullycarnet; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev D.R. Cromie is their Moderator; that the Rev R.J. McCullough, Minister Without Charge became Minister Emeritus of the congregations of Woodburn and Loughmorne on 6 June 2018; that the Rev F.M.A. Forbes, Minister of Cairncastle, resigned her charge on 25 October 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that Mr N.W. Duddy presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dublin and

Munster and was installed to the charge of Downshire on Thursday 31 May 2018; that Mr D.J. Kelly was ordained and installed to the charge of Woodburn and Loughmorne on 12 April 2018; that Mr Campbell Mulvenny presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry and was received as licentiate; that Mr Andrew Gill was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev R.J. Gilkinson, Minister Without Charge was given credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that Mrs Joanne Smith was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that under their care are: as Deaconess Mrs Lynda McFaul; as Licentiates Mr C.M.S. Barron, Mr Campbell Mulvenny; that they held consultations in the Congregation of Whitehead; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev S.A. Morrow is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr R.A. Kane, minister of Aghadowey and Crossgar, resigned his charge on 24 April 2018 and was retained as Minister Without Charge; that the Rev R.J. Hyndman, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed to the charge of First Coleraine on 7 September 2018; that Mr J.A. McClure was given credentials to the Presbytery of Newry; that Rev A.T.F. Johnston and Mrs Tracey Johnston, Global Mission Workers in Italy, resigned their appointment on 5 January 2019 and Rev A.T.F. Johnston was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that under their care are: as Minister Without Charge the Rev Dr R.A. Kane; as licentiate Mr J.D. McKane; as student Mr J. O'Neill; that Mrs Julie Peake, Deaconess, ceased to be under the care of Presbytery from 1 May 2018; that they held consultations at Portstewart and Dunboe First; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **DERRY AND DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev P.E. Linkens is their Moderator; that the Rev Amanda Best, Minister of Ramelton and Kilmacrennan, retired on 4 June 2018; that the Rev Dr T.R. Buick, Minister of Carlisle Road and Crossroads, retired on 31 July 2018; that the Rev E.L.M. Henning, Minister Emeritus of Stranorlar and Donoughmore, became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 5 May 2018; that Rev Dr John Lappin, Minister Emeritus of Malin and Carndonagh, became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 5 May 2018; that the Rev J.K. McCormick, Minister Emeritus of Burt and Second Derry, became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 5 May 2018; that the Rev S.W.K. Glendinning was released from his charge of Carndonagh, Malin, Moville and Greenbank on the grounds of medical incapacity on 19 November 2018 and was received as a Minister Without Charge; that Mr R.W. McFaul was licensed on 17 June 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge, the Rev J.C. Teeney; the Rev K.G. Patterson; the Rev S.W.K. Glendinning; that they held consultations at Magheramason, Cumber and Upper Cumber; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed.

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J.J. Currie is their Moderator; that the Rev R.J. Hyndman, Minister of Trinity, Boardmills, resigned his charge on 6 September and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady; that the Rev R.I. Abraham, Minister of Lissara, resigned his charge on 13 December 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that the Rev N.R.A. Cooper presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was installed to the charge of Ballygowan on 31 August 2018; that the Rev G.R. Stockdale was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that Mr B.A. Kee was given credentials to the Presbytery of Newry; that Mr A.S. McQuade was given credentials to the Presbytery of Monaghan; that under their care are; as Minister Without Charge Rev Dr B.C.G. Black; as licentiate Mr W.J.C. Brogan; as student Mr P. Burke; that they held no consultations; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev K.W.J. Hanna is their Moderator; that the Rev W.H. Gray, Minister Emeritus (Released), of Harmony Hill, died on 18 April 2018; that the Rev J.S. McIvor, Theological Professor Emeritus (Released), died on 23 May 2018; that the Rev A.S. Thompson, Minister Without Charge, was enrolled as Minister Emeritus of First Dromara on 6 June 2018; that the Rev A.K. Duddy, Minister of First Dromore, resigned his charge on 21 June 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that the Rev G.R. Stockdale presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was installed as Chaplain to HMP Maghaberry on 3 June 2018; that the Rev S.W. Moore presented credentials from the Presbytery of Route and was installed to the charge of First Dromara on 14 September 2018; that the Rev F.M.A. Forbes presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was installed to the charge of Harmony Hill on 26 October 2018; that Rev G.M. Andrigh, Minister Transferring, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that Mr E.T. Frazer was given credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that under their care are: as Minister Without Charge Rev W.J. Todd; as Licentiates Dr Andre Alves-Areias, Mr J.S. Maguire, Mr R.S. Aicken, Mr M.A. McCormick; that they held consultations at Legacurry, Hillhall and Moira; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed.

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev H.M. Freeburn is their Moderator; that the Rev N.W. Duddy, Minister of Arklow, resigned his charge on 30 May 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that the Rev D.R. Martin, Minister of Kilkenny, resigned his charge on 30 November 2018 and was inducted into the Home Mission Charge of Mullingar and Corboy on 1 December 2018; that Mr Richard Cronin presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was ordained and installed into the Home Mission and inducted into the charge of Trinity Cork and

Aghada on 30 June 2018; that they held consultations at Clontarf and Scots; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Seamus Burke is their Moderator; that the Rev Kenneth Nelson, Minister of Castlewellan and Leitrim, retired on 2 November 2018; that under their care are: as Licentiate Mr Philip Poots; that they held consultations at First Rathfriland, Second & Third Rathfriland and Newmills; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev C.G. Anderson is their Moderator; that the Rev F.J. Taylor, Minister Emeritus, became Minister Emeritus (Released) on 1 May 2018; that Mr A.S. McQuade, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Monaghan and Smithborough on 16 November 2018; that under their care are: as Minister Without Charge Rev D.J.M. Boyle; that they held consultations at Kells; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W.T. Bingham is their Moderator; that the Rev D.C. Scott, Minister Emeritus of Cremore and Tyrone's Ditches, died on 27 December 2018; that the Rev D.J. Irvine resigned his charge on 19 April 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that the Rev E.J.B. McKenzie, Minister of Warrenpoint and Rostrevor, resigned his charge on 29 August 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that the Rev W.D.S. McCullagh presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast and was installed to the charge of Annalong on 16 November 2018; Mr B.A. Kee presented credentials from the Presbytery of Down and was ordained and installed to the charge of First Newry on 8 June 2018; that Mr R.J.A. McClure presented credentials from the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady and was ordained and installed to the charge of Second Newtownhamilton and Creggan on 7 September 2018; that Mr Campbell Mulvenny was licensed on 3 June 2018 and given credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that under their care are: as Minister Without Charge Rev B.A.H. Wilson and Rev A.D. Mullan; as Student Mr D.S. Bingham; that they held no consultations; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed.

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev P.J. Nelson is their Moderator; that the Rev I.T. McKee, Minister of Aghnacloy and Ballymagrane, retired on 31 March 2018; that the Rev A.W. Moore, Minister of Cavanaleck and Aughtentine, resigned his charge on 21 March 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev N.R. Cooper, Minister of Ballygawley

and Ballyreagh, resigned his charge on 30 August 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that the Rev L.M. Keys, Minister of Seskinore and Edenderry, resigned her charge on 25 January 2019 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev G.M. Andrich presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was installed to the Home Mission and inducted to the charge of Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo on 18 January 2019; that Rev C.H. Deering presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast and was installed to the charge of Fintona and Ballynahatty & Creevan on 3 March 2018; that Mr E.T. Frazer presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore and was ordained and installed to the charge of Clogher and Glenhoy on 30 November 2018; that the Rev J.A. Gordon, Minister Without Charge, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick on 11 September 2018; that they held no consultations; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R.M. Moody is their Moderator; that the Rev Peter Turton, Minister of Armoy and Ramoan, was released from his charge on grounds of medical incapacity on the 31 July 2018 and was retained as Minister Without Charge under the care of the Presbytery; that the Rev N.E. Dorrans became a Minister Emeritus (Released) on 31 December 2018; that the Rev G.J. MacLean, of First Ballymoney, resigned his charge on the 18 July 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that the Rev S.W. Moore of Dervock resigned his charge on the 13 September 2018 and was given credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that the Rev D.J. Irvine presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry and was installed to the charge of Trinity, Ballymoney on 20 April 2018; that the Rev R.J. Gilkinson presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus and was received as a Minister Without Charge on 2 October 2018; that Mr R.A. Morrison was licensed on the 3 June 2018; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge Rev Dr V. Dobbin, Rev Peter Turton, Rev R.J. Gilkinson; that they held no consultations; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W.J. Murdock is their Moderator; that the Rev Karen Campbell, Minister of Kilbride, resigned her charge on 31 August 2018 to take up a ministry position outside of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; that Mr A.J. McCracken, was given credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev A.W. Moore, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was installed to the charge of Second Randalstown on 22 March 2018; that the Rev J.A. Gordon presented credentials from the Presbytery of Omagh and was received as Minister Without Charge on the 6 November 2018; that Mr J.R. Kernohan was received back as licentiate, under Para. 219(5)(c) of the Code;

that Mr J.A. Porter presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena and was received as licentiate; that under their care are: as Ministers Without Charge, the Rev J.A. Gordon, the Rev J.L. Tosh; as licentiates are Mr A.D. Burke, Mr S.P. Kennedy, Mr J.R. Kernohan, Mr J.A. Porter; as student Mr B. Abwa; that they held a consultation at First Donegore; that the Financial Reports of Congregations are being printed.

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev M.W. Dodds is their Moderator; that the Rev T.J. Conway, Minister of Culnady and Swartragh, resigned his charge on 17 June 2018 and was retained as Minister Without Charge; that the Rev J.M. Gracey, Minister of Coagh, Ballygoney and Saltersland, resigned his charge on 30 September 2018 and was retained as Minister Without Charge; that Mrs Eileen Black, Deaconess of Magherafelt First, resigned her appointment on 9 October 2018; that under their care are; as Ministers Without Charge, the Rev T.J. Conway, the Rev W.I. Ferris, the Rev J.M. Gracey; that they held no consultations; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed.

# COUNCIL FOR GLOBAL MISSION

Convener: Rev S.E. HUGHES

Secretary: Rev W.S. MARRS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Global Mission is all about global disciples sharing God's heart for the world, declaring good news and demonstrating God's love. The Council is tasked with enabling the coordination and delivery of global mission as determined by the General Assembly (Code Par 115), and especially where it is beyond the ability of the local congregation and not falling under the remit of other mission councils, partners or agencies. This entails the development of a strategy for mission overseas, including partnership with overseas churches and sending global mission workers; promoting world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal; lead thinking on issues of global concern such as the environment, race relations, international relations (Code Par 278(3)).
2. The Council met on three occasions since the last General Assembly. It continues to seek to fulfil its remit through the following committees, panels and task groups, while recognising the importance of collaborating with and complementing the work of other councils:
  - (a) **Outreach Ministries Committee** oversees PCI's global outreach initiatives and is particularly focused at present on building teams to take forward church planting in Europe (Pars 3 to 13).
  - (b) **Leadership Development Committee** supports leaders in training through their studies, whether in the UK/Ireland or around the world; and seeks to build vision for global mission amongst church leaders within PCI (Pars 14 to 30).
  - (c) **Global Concerns Committee** grapples with a wide range of issues in relation to world faiths, the stewardship of creation, inter-cultural and international relations, and in this report highlights the issue of world faiths (Pars 31 to 58).
  - (d) **World Development Committee** addresses the challenge of global poverty through both the Annual and Moderator's Appeals, with a focus at present on gender justice and the prevention of gender violence (Pars 59 to 70).
  - (e) **Global Mission Worker Panel** oversees the support of PCI's global mission workers, dealing with calls to missionary service, member care development, memorial minutes, and appreciations (Pars 71 to 77).

- (f) **Global Mission Partnership Panel** deals with all partnership related matters, including allocation of grants (Pars 78 to 83).
- (g) **Business and Finance Panel** handles matters of strategy, finance, property, staffing, and risk analysis (Pars 84 to 87).
- (h) **Vision Building Task Group** has been facilitating a review of the Council's vision, structures and communication (Pars 88 to 94).

## OUTREACH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

3. The Outreach Ministries Committee seeks to initiate and support PCI's global outreach, identifying strategic areas of focus: church planting and evangelism; healthcare mission; conflict resolution; mission through education; integral mission and Bible poverty.
4. In collaboration with the Council's Partnership and Global Mission Worker Panels, the committee seeks to share with PCI's global mission partners and to support global mission workers, concentrating on the 22 global mission workers who have a clear outreach focus to their work with seven partners in seven countries. The committee met on two occasions in the past year and reports as follows.
5. **Challenges:** There are many challenges in world mission today and Western Europe, in particular, has been found to be hard ground for the gospel. While PCI engagement has drawn to a close in Torre del Mar, Spain; Porto Mantovano, Italy; and with the Gujarati community in London, some may conclude that it would be better for PCI to concentrate its efforts closer to home and leave mission in broader Europe to others. Hebrews 10:35 and 39 tell us: "Do not throw away your confidence... we are not those who shrink back and suffer loss, but those who have faith to obtain life!"
6. **Encouragements:** Following on from a split in the congregation two years ago, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) UK Outreach is now finding its feet again, growing and developing as a congregation. What was a first generation congregation with a chaplaincy mindset, is increasingly becoming a second generation congregation with a fresh focus on cross-cultural outreach and today it contains not only Kenyans but a growing number of other nationalities.
7. In Porto, Portugal, the Comunidade Pedras Vivas church plant formally welcomed its first church members when 12 people were received on profession of faith. With the arrival of Chris and Rachel Humphries, along with their two small children, the committee feels there is now a strong team in place, comprising both global mission and national workers, to carry the mission forward.
8. **Church Planting and Evangelism Task Group:** Great challenges also mean great opportunities and there is both challenge and opportunity for PCI to see itself as a church planting denomination, not just in Ireland but globally. This task group was set up by the committee to



learn from present and past evangelism initiatives and to plot a way forward if the Council is to attempt further church planting initiatives in Europe. As well as conducting research and consulting those involved in global mission, the task group has also benefited from consultation with the Council for Mission in Ireland which is engaged in several successful church planting initiatives.

9. While the task group hopes to bring a final report in 2020, preliminary conclusions include the following:
  - (a) There are significant questions over the current, established model of partnership when it comes to engaging in church planting. Theological differences and lack of missional outlook are just two of the areas highlighted. Indeed, it may be more appropriate to talk of networking or collaborating with similar mission-minded churches and organisations.
  - (b) A church plant ought to be a missional community, outward focused rather than inward looking.
  - (c) PCI global mission workers should work as part of a church planting team comprising those sent by PCI and also national Christians.
  - (d) There is need for flexibility, adopting an approach such as the one found in Acts 15, that defines certain core values and other issues that may change according to culture (e.g. baptism). Decision-making ought to take place primarily in the local context, not least with whatever 'partners' we may be working alongside. It is also important, as a guideline, to convey our trust in those whom we have sent out to serve as global mission workers. Outside of Ireland, the church plant may not end up looking exactly like a PCI congregation as we know it here in Ireland. The name 'Presbyterian' or even the use of the word 'church' may not be properly understood or make people guarded. The result may be the planting of a Presbyterian Church but with a small 'p'!
10. Containers for Malawi Task Group: The Malawi Containers Group, although an independent group, has been largely comprising PCI members. It has served to great effect over many years as a practical way of mission involvement for the church in Ireland, including PCI congregations, PWs, knitting groups, and many others. It has also provided much-needed medical and educational resources for Malawian institutions. Due to charity regulations and other logistical changes, decisions were required concerning the future of the Container Group, and a task group was set up by the committee to explore whether the Container Group ought to be reconstituted and, if so, whether it would remain independent or come under the supervision of the Council for Global Mission.
11. There continues to be strong, grassroots support for sending out containers and some 40 representatives from different congregations attended an open meeting to explore options for the future of the

Malawi Container Group. Feedback on the sending out of containers was largely very positive, although it was recognised that tighter controls would be needed over the items being sent and there were frustrations about lack of feedback from recipients as to whether items were useful or even had reached their intended destination. While the vast majority at the meeting hoped that the sending out of containers would continue, there were few able to commit the necessary time and energy to manage and run such a group. The Container Task Group was likewise unable to identify enough volunteers to provide effective administrative oversight and practical help for the sorting of goods received for shipment and it was clear that the PCI Mission Department does not have the capacity to take on such extra responsibilities.

12. While many of the goods for shipment are donated free of charge, the costs related to shipping, transportation and duty are rising continually, coupled with fluctuations in the value of sterling in recent years. These rising costs have brought into question the cost effectiveness of shipping goods, indeed many of the goods shipped can now be purchased within Malawi itself. There have also been personnel changes within the freight handling company within Malawi, requiring new working relationships to be forged.
13. There is no doubt that the containers have been greatly appreciated as a means of support, especially for the educational and medical institutions of the church, but after much deliberation and heaviness of heart, considering all of the above reasons, the task group recommended that the Container Project be brought to a conclusion at the end of 2019. Items for shipment will be collected for one final container to be sent at the end of this year. Beyond this, it is hoped to encourage those who have been so actively involved in this project over the years to identify other suitable avenues for supporting the work of global mission in Malawi today.

DAVID STEELE, Convener

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

14. Recognising the growth and vitality of the church in many parts of the world and the challenges such growth brings, the Leadership Development Committee works along with partner churches and institutions for the development of mature, experienced, Christian leadership around the world.
15. The committee's work involves liaising with the Global Mission Workers' Panel on the placement, support, review and evaluation of global mission workers involved in leadership development; liaising with the Global Mission Partnership Panel on the provision of leadership development grants to partner churches and institutions; and ensuring the story of leadership development is told widely through the PCI website, magazine articles, and prayer resources.

16. The committee seeks to take to heart the warning of Michael Oh, Global Executive Director and CEO of the Lausanne Movement, about not being so focused on the academic development of leaders in training that we lose sight of them being disciplined in Christ-likeness.
17. The committee has been pleased to welcome Pip Florit as Mission Support Officer (Partnerships) and expresses appreciation for how readily she has taken up her detailed work.
18. The Leaders in Training Panel continues to oversee the provision of scholarship funding for partner church 'leaders in training' whether for study in the UK, Ireland or further afield. Where required, the panel liaises with universities and colleges, ensures the provision of pastoral care, reception and orientation for leaders in training, and provides guidelines to congregations for sponsoring and supporting leaders in training.
19. Leader in training scholarships totalling £43,182 were approved for the year 2019 covering leaders in training in India (Gujarat), Kenya, Myanmar, Malawi, Nepal and Indonesia across a range of disciplines. It is good to note that they are studying largely in their home or neighbouring countries.
20. The continued support (approximately £30,000 p.a.) from the Lindsay Memorial Fund is much appreciated. Three leaders in training on the staff of Zomba Theological College are engaged in distance PhDs through the University of Aberdeen. They attended a summer school in Aberdeen in August 2018 and received a visit from the Leadership Development Committee convener and Leaders in Training Panel convener. Thanks are due in particular to Dr Ken Jeffery of the University of Aberdeen and the university chaplaincy for facilitating this visit so warmly. The plan is to bring the three students for a short visit to Northern Ireland in 2020 at the time of the next summer school.
21. The committee acknowledges the very significant role played by ministers' spouses in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian and is considering once again how best to support their training programmes and events.
22. The Global Envisioning Panel seeks to envision PCI ministers and students for the ministry through providing, as and when invited by Union Theological College, a series of lectures on the Missiology Short Course and a training day for licentiate ministers. The panel also facilitates overseas missional opportunities for ministers and others in PCI's leadership as part of their sabbatical study so as to promote missiological insight and experience, not least through the witness and example of global Christian leaders, especially those experiencing persecution and hardship.
23. The panel recently reviewed its remit, especially for the benefit of new members. Mr Neil Harrison is welcomed in his capacity as Mission Development Officer and is well placed to encourage communication between the panel and the Global Mission Involvement Committee of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness.

24. In February 2019 a Licentiate's Training Day at Union Theological College was facilitated by the panel and a global envisioning trip to the Philippines for PCI church leaders, facilitated by Wycliffe Bible Translators, is currently at the planning stage.
25. Grants with relevance to leadership development under the Global Mission Partnership Panel have been made to Malawi – Nkhoma Synod; France – Faculté Jean Calvin; and Nepal – 'Minority Focus' (formerly known as 'Focus Nepal').
26. The committee warmly supports the possibility of a global mission partnership with St Petersburg Christian University, one that would open up in a strategic way opportunities for theological training and for developing relationships with marginalised protestant and reformed churches in the St Petersburg area and on into the heart of Russia.
27. Overseas visits with a leadership development focus have taken place to the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary, Latvia and Faculté Jean Calvin, France (Prof Gordon Campbell); Tahan Theological College, Myanmar (Dr Ian and Pat Hart); Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary, Jordan (Dr Martyn Cowan and the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles and Mrs Barbara McMullen); Kenya, South Africa, Zambia (Rev Uel Marrs).
28. The committee is aware that improved communication about the work of leaders in training is needed throughout PCI. There are 'good news' stories to share. It is hoped to have leaders in training mentioned by name in the Let's Pray weekly prayer bulletin and to initiate a system of 'prayer friends' so that each leader in training may have personal support from a Council member.
29. Arising from Dr Ian Hart's visit to Myanmar, the committee wishes to explore supporting Tahan Theological College in attaining a much higher standard of English, both to help students engage with visiting lecturers and to have access to wider theological resources. This will hopefully be taken forward by Pip Florit when she represents PCI at a partners' consultation in Tahan due to take place in May 2019.
30. The committee is content that, although it may disappear under the proposed new Council structure, its work will carry on with hopefully greater efficiency through the proposed Global Mission Committee and its panels. The support given to the Leadership Development Committee at all levels from the Mission Department is again deeply appreciated.

JOHN FARIS, Convener

## GLOBAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

31. Isaiah portrays God as global rather than parochial in his scope and mission. Isaiah writes: "The Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples" (25:6). He repeatedly lifts our eyes from

the immediate and local, the mediocre and mundane, to a vision of something so much greater, grander, more global in scope.

32. It is something of this vision of God and his mission that the Global Concerns Committee seeks to convey as it wrestles with pertinent issues in our world today. Four panels, carrying out distinct remits, seek to lead the thinking of our denomination on issues as diverse as stewardship of creation, world faiths, international relations and intercultural relations.
33. The main work of the International Relations Panel this year involved seeking a better understanding of the Israeli/Palestinian situation and to engage the wider church in this discussion. To this end a conference was held at the end of November entitled, 'Hard Pressed, Not Crushed'. There were two main speakers.
34. The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, reported on the visit he and Barbara had made to Jordan, facilitated by PCI Mission Department and global mission workers. He spoke very movingly of the situation in which Christians often find themselves as a minority in the Middle East. For them faith grows through adversity. He also spoke very positively of the work of Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary. The Moderator used examples from his visit to illustrate the importance of his theme, 'Building relationships – Christ's love compels us'.
35. The other keynote speaker was Rev Prof Yohanna Katanacho, Academic Dean at Nazareth Evangelical College who describes himself as a Palestinian, Israeli, evangelical Christian. Speaking from a conservative evangelical theological position, he challenged us deeply about our understanding of the situation for the Arab church.
36. He highlighted the fact that as Christians our identity is in Jesus Christ and all other allegiances are secondary to that. As an Arab Christian he could trace his heritage back to earliest Christianity and beyond into Old Testament times, yet many try to make out that evangelical Christianity is a recent import to the Middle East, allied to western imperialism. Churches like PCI can work to dispel that misunderstanding. Perhaps those attending learnt most from Yohanna's humility and deep spirituality. As an extension to the conference both speakers spoke at evening events held in Limavady and south Belfast.
37. The panel is aware that Yohanna was speaking out of his own background, as would anyone coming from a situation of conflict. He was helpfully introducing a Christian viewpoint which is not one that is often illustrated so clearly.
38. PCI was represented by its convener, Rev Dr Donald Watts, at a European Churches Conference entitled, 'Towards Peaceful Coexistence in the Middle East: Challenges and Opportunities', held at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, in December. The timing was in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights", signed on 10 December, 1948.

39. As well as European church leaders there was significant participation by leaders of Middle Eastern churches, mainly Orthodox and Coptic. It was interesting that their views resonated strongly with the evangelical view expressed by Rev Prof Yohanna Katanacho. The Christian presence in the Middle East is now less than 5%, where it was once 20-30%. This is largely due to persecution and people leaving for their own safety, but it was emphasised that Christians in the area see themselves as witnesses and not victims. The only countries where there are still significant numbers of Christians are Lebanon and Egypt. In other countries the absence of a significant body of Christians is cause for concern. Again, the leaders pointed out that the Christian Church is an indigenous church and its members deserve equal citizenship.
40. The panel reported last year on its contacts with the churches of Lebanon and Syria, largely through PCI's historic relationship with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and partner organisations. The panel hopes to further develop these contacts.
41. The panel is aware of the publication of a Kairos Ireland document, an Irish response to a previously published Kairos Palestine document, and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the thinking of those who published it. The panel considers that it is for individuals to consider whether or not to endorse it.
42. The main focus of the Stewardship of Creation Panel this past year has been highlighting and promoting the Report on Climate Change presented and approved by the 2018 General Assembly. The panel is concerned that the report could easily 'get lost', partly because the media did not pick up on the report, but also because other issues took centre stage.
43. The panel is convinced of the importance of this report to the church and want to ensure it is kept on the agenda. At a recent event in Belfast, Tearfund's CEO Nigel Harris commented that the biggest challenges to reducing world poverty are conflict and climate change.
44. Strategies to take things forward include encouraging presbyteries to engage with the report's recommendations and writing articles for the *Herald*.
45. The Convener, Rev John Hanson, attended the European Churches Environmental Network Conference in Poland in October. This proved to be an informative and stimulating event.
46. Plans are also underway to make the panel more aware of environmental issues at home. This would include visits to local initiatives. Another area is exploring how PCI as a denomination can better model good stewardship of creation in choices made at every level of church life.
47. The Intercultural Relations Panel continues to lead thinking on issues relating to migration. With its impact felt both locally and globally, migration continues to be the reality for more than 244 million of the earth's population. Of these over 40 million people are internally displaced and more than 22 million are refugees. How PCI relates to

those who have migrated, voluntarily and involuntarily, is a core aspect of discipleship.

48. The Bible reminds God's people that they have a responsibility to treat those who are far from home with the dignity and respect they would expect for themselves. "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus 19:34)
49. Brexit uncertainty, political scapegoating and racially motivated prejudice and violence have contributed to a feeling of insecurity for many immigrants, especially in the UK. While encouraging engagement with migrants and welcoming them in Christ's name, the panel is not ignorant of the complexities of the wider immigration debate. The words of Jesus are instructive: "I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16)
50. The work of the panel has focused on the completion of a Bible study resource that engages with migration through the lens of the Book of Ruth.
51. The convener of the Global Concerns Committee continues to coordinate a chaplaincy service for Larne House Immigration Detention Unit. Steps to extend this group and address a gender imbalance are presently being undertaken.
52. Northern Ireland continues to take Syrian refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. 1,258 have been given refuge as of 31 December 2018.
53. Following support from PCI and other churches, Embrace is taking steps to advertise for the post of development worker, initially on a part-time basis.
54. The committee has received with regret the resignation of the panel convener, Rev Helen Freeburn. Helen brought passion and valuable experience to the panel and deep appreciation is recorded for all her time and effort. Few people have to travel further to panel meetings!
55. The World Faiths Panel, convened by Rev Robin Quinn, continues to seek ways to 'lead the thinking' of PCI regarding other world faiths. The panel's report (See Appendix A) raises key themes, including PCI's doctrinal position; the challenge of today's ever-changing world; the need to better understand other world faiths; the challenge of going about building relationships with people of other faiths, and how to witness effectively and ethically to them.
56. The panel has embarked on some further work regarding how PCI members should understand, relate and witness to Muslims, has begun some introductory research into the foundations of Hinduism and is mindful of the importance of considering atheism and secularism in the spectrum of faiths.
57. The panel continues to see an important part of its task to be encouraging and enabling our congregations and church members to pray for the salvation of people of other faiths using the booklets, 30

*days of Prayer for the Muslim World and Hindu World Prayer Guide, 15 Days of Prayer* produced by Interserve and others.

58. These prayer guides will be made available again this year, proposing that they be used during Ramadan (6 May to 4 June 2019) and Diwali (20 October to 3 November 2019) respectively, though their use need not be confined to these times.

RICHARD KERR, Convener

## WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

59. The 2018 World Development Appeal was launched on Tuesday 23 October 2018 under the strapline, Seeking Safety. This was the second year of a proposed four-year plan for the Appeal: a plan designed to enable the wider church to 'go deeper' in understanding the long-term nature of sustainable development work and the challenges which it might encounter on the ground.
60. The intention of this four-year plan, which began with the 2017/18 year, is to, in ongoing partnership with Tearfund and Christian Aid, link the four years together under an 'umbrella' theme: the challenges of sustainable development in fragile states, and to do so with a view to being able to deepen and widen understanding within the denomination of the difficult and long-term nature of the work of sustainable development, the fragile and fluid contexts within which it occurs, and the obstacles which can impede the work 'on the ground'.
61. The partner highlighted in the 2018 Appeal materials was the National Council of Christian Churches of Brazil (CONIC), which is seeking to confront and challenge gender-based violence and in particular to prevent and tackle gender-based violence against women, with an emphasis on the important role of faith communities in addressing the problem. The project highlighted was the Casa Noeli dos Santos safe house which acts as a gateway to enable women facing situations of gender-based violence to access the support and services they need to help them move forward with their lives. A short film was produced for general congregational use along with accompanying information and materials for use in the context of worship.
62. In line with the four-year map for the Appeal, funds from the 2018 Appeal will also be channelled to Tearfund's partner highlighted in the 2017 Appeal, Congo Initiative, at the Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to empower vulnerable women by providing access to trauma counselling, third level education and skills in entrepreneurship.
63. The committee is pleased to report that at the meeting held on Thursday 7 February 2019 it was able to disburse £300,000 from the 2018 Appeal (£150,000 each to Tearfund and Christian Aid). A total of £6,667 remaining in the Special Appeal for East Africa was divided



three ways between Christian Aid, Tearfund, and the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan Relief and Development Agency.

64. The committee notes that a Special Appeal for Indonesia was launched by the Moderator on 5 October 2018 following the powerful earthquake and resulting tsunami which struck the island of Sulawesi on 28 September 2018 with devastating consequences. This Appeal had, as of 5 February 2019, raised a total of £319,031 which was divided three ways between partners working on the ground to provide humanitarian assistance – Tearfund, Christian Aid, and the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (CCI).
65. The committee further notes that a Special Appeal for Southern Africa was launched by the Moderator on 22 March 2019 in response to the devastation wrought by Cyclone Idai as it swept through the countries of Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe. Funds received will be channelled through our relief and development partners, Christian Aid and Tearfund, who are already engaged in longer term sustainable development work in the affected regions and are well-placed to direct additional efforts to the unfolding crisis, and also through our partner church, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (Blantyre Synod).
66. The committee expresses its warm gratitude to the congregations and individuals whose generous support of and interest in the work of sustainable development are both a constant encouragement and also a powerful witness to PCI's calling, as global disciples, to partner with God in the work, which he will ultimately complete, of 'pulling back' his creation towards the way he intended it to be.
67. Three Council for Global Mission partner church projects were also supported with appeal funding this year. The following grants were agreed:
  - (a) £5,000 for 2018 (year 2 of a 3 year commitment) to the Consumers' Union Mart of the Protestant Church in Timor;
  - (b) £3,000 to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for the Solai Dam Project;
  - (c) £20,202 to the Samburu Awareness and Action project of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa as it seeks to address the issues of female genital mutilation, early childhood marriage, and gender violence, primarily through a schools and community education programme.
68. As part of the committee's educative responsibility, work is ongoing on the preparation of a document offering responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the World Development Appeal. The Committee will also, through analysis of the World Development Appeal Survey outcomes, be reviewing its praxis and evaluating how it can best encourage congregations to 'go deep' and 'go wide' in their understanding of the work of sustainable development. An initial step towards broadening understanding of the reach of the World Development Appeal will be to supply details, each year, of all

projects, delivered through Christian Aid and Tearfund partners, that are supported through the appeal.

69. The 2019 Appeal will continue to add detail to the four-year map presented above, returning to consider the ongoing challenges facing the work of sustainable development in fragile states. The committee is engaged in planning how this might best be accomplished in the light of the current situation on the ground in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The launch of the 2019 Appeal is scheduled for Tuesday 22 October 2019 at 12.30pm, following a meeting of the Council for Global Mission.
70. In the meantime, the committee is grateful for the continuing prayers of the wider church as it continues to carry out and to develop the work with which it has been entrusted by the General Assembly, and it welcomes your interest.

FIONA FORBES, Convener

## GLOBAL MISSION WORKER PANEL

71. The Global Mission Worker Panel has met twice since the General Assembly meeting in June 2018. Reporting directly to the Council, the panel's key role is to provide advice and facilitate informed discussion on areas relating to human resources and member care guidelines for global mission workers.
72. **Global mission workers:** Panel members thank God for the global mission workers (GMWs) who, as his ambassadors, serve in 10 countries around the world; for those who have been commissioned as GMWs; for those whose overseas service has concluded; and for those who have passed on from earthly service.
73. Details of roles, locations, and global mission partners for those currently serving with the Council are found in Appendix B. On Sunday 24 February 2019, under the Integrate Programme of service, Chris and Rachel Humphries were commissioned by the Presbytery of Armagh for service in Portugal to take up roles in the church planting team of Comunidade Pedras Vivas in Porto.
74. Following their resignations from the Council, a Minute of Appreciation was recorded for each of the following: Steve Anderson who served in Spain from June 2014 until June 2018; David and Pamela McCullagh who served in Malawi from August 2013 until November 2018; and Alan and Tracey Johnston who served in Italy from January 2014 until January 2019. On 31 March 2019 Christopher and Nivedita Benjamin retired from 30 years of serving the Church of North India (in partnership with the Council) in London. The Moderator, Dr Charles McMullen, made a short visit to London to mark this occasion and to express the Council's appreciation for their years of service amongst Asians, especially in the Wembley area.

75. **Memorial Minutes:** Noting sympathies expressed in respect of the following former missionaries were recorded by the panel: Rev Dr Robin H.S. Boyd served in India from 1951 to 1974 and died in June 2018; Mrs Phyllis Thompson served in Malawi from 1970 until 1983 and died on 25 June 2018; Mrs Sarah (Sally) Fleming served in Malawi from 1963 until 1973 and died on 25 July 2018; Mrs Patricia Holliday served in India from 1965 to 1973 and died on 11 October 2018; Mrs Lois Macpherson served in Malawi from 1971 until 1975 and died on 8 November 2018.
76. **Human resources and member care development:** The panel recommended the adoption of:
- (a) The panel's name change to Global Mission Worker Panel;
  - (b) Changes to the initial 'setting-up home' grant;
  - (c) Changes to personal contents insurance for GMWs;
  - (d) New guidelines for the Let's Pray submissions from GMWs;
  - (e) An updated resource entitled Third Culture Kids: information/resources for parents preparing to go...
77. **Medical and debriefing services:** The panel received a progress report on the provision of regular in-service medical check-ups and personal reviews for GMWs and approved the following recommendations:
- (a) The Council continue to provide two types of debriefing;
  - (b) During home assignments HealthLink360 (in Scotland) will be the normal location for all GMWs to attend for personal review and medical check-up;
  - (c) Conduct a review analysing the various ways GMWs report/interact/reflect on their work and who is/should be involved in each process.

VALERIE CLARKE, Convener

## GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERSHIP PANEL

78. The Global Mission Partnership Panel reports directly to the Council on the following areas: the norms or principles of engagement in global mission partnerships; policy and strategy including overseas visits and visits by partners to Ireland; grants for global mission partnership projects; maintenance of a database of global mission partnerships; ensuring PCI's mission engagement through global partnerships is adequately reflected in PCI publications and website; and providing advice and support on partnership matters for other PCI mission councils and the wider church.
79. In the course of the year, the designation of 'global mission partner' was considered and subsequently recommended for the following churches, institutions and organisations:

- (a) Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (PCM) – PCI's support is important to PCM and has taken the form of partnership grants and leadership development grants;
  - (b) Association for Theological Education in Nepal (ATEN) – Partnership grants have previously been given to allow ATEN to become self-sustaining in providing theological education to Nepali students;
  - (c) Minority Focus (previously known as Focus Nepal) – Partnership grants have previously been given to allow Minority Focus to fund the education of minority Christian students in Nepal;
  - (d) St Petersburg Christian University (SPbCU), Russia – Following an exploratory visit, partnership with SPbCU was recommended. It is the only well-established centre for theological education in Russia outside the Orthodox Church and provides training for students who come from significant distances. The Council of Global Mission has received a request to send a global mission worker to teach systematic and practical theology to PhD level, as there is currently no suitably qualified local candidate for this role.
80. **Grants 2019:** In the course of the year, the Council for Global Mission approved grants for partner projects totalling £57,080 covering 11 global mission partners in 10 countries.
81. **Website:** Work to update the partnership profiles in the PCI website is ongoing.
82. Visits to global mission partners already made or in the planning since the General Assembly 2018, and some of which may have already been referenced in the reports of other committees and panels:
- (a) Rev Uel Marrs to London to meet with Edwin and Anne Kibathi on 24 June 2018.
  - (b) Miss Helen Johnston to London to visit Christopher and Nivedita Benjamin on 14 June 2018 and with the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen on 12 March 2019.
  - (c) The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen and his wife, Barbara, to Jordan to visit the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary from 11 to 21 August 2018.
  - (d) Rev Uel Marrs to Kenya, Zambia and South Africa from 28 August to 7 September to meet with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, attend the General Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Zambia Synod and visit the Theological Education by Extension College, Johannesburg.
  - (e) Rev Uel Marrs to Basel, Switzerland from 12 to 15 September 2018 to attend the Eukumindo General Assembly and Study Day.
  - (f) Mrs Heather Clements (PW Overseas Vice President) and Mrs Pauline Kennedy (PW Development Officer) to Romania to visit Csaba and Ilona Veres, who are working alongside the Hungarian Reformed Church from 11 to 16 October 2018.

- (g) Rev Robert and Mrs Christine Bell to Porto, Portugal in November 2018 to attend the inauguration of the first members to the Comunidade Pedras Vivas church plant.
  - (h) Rev Brian and Mrs Jean Gibson to Kenya in 28 November to 11 December 2018 to attend the 120th anniversary celebrations of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and visit Mukuyu Congregation.
  - (i) Miss Helen Johnston and Mr Tim Mercer to Jordan in February 2019 to visit Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary.
  - (j) Rev Uel Marrs to St Petersburg Christian University in Russia from 11 to 16 January 2019, to explore a potential partnership.
  - (k) Rev Uel Marrs to Kenya from 25 February to 1 March 2019 to attend a meeting of international partners with the Presbyterian Church of Sudan and South Sudan.
  - (l) Rev Trevor Gribben, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, Mrs Barbara McMullen, Rev Uel Marrs and Mrs Heather Clements to Greece from 18 to 21 March 2019 to explore a potential partnership with the Greek Evangelical Church.
  - (m) Rev Uel Marrs to Frankfurt, Germany from 11 to 13 April 2019 for a meeting of the Eukumindo Executive Committee.
  - (n) Mrs Pip Florit attended a partnership meeting with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar in May 2019.
83. The following overseas visitors were hosted:
- (a) Mphatso Nguluwe, Director of the Health Department of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Livingstonia Synod, visited Ireland to undertake a programme of deputation from 2 October to 2 November 2018.
  - (b) Rev Dimitris Boukis, General Secretary of the Greek Evangelical Church, visited Belfast on 8 and 9 October 2018.

HEATHER CLEMENTS, Convener

## BUSINESS AND FINANCE PANEL

84. The Business and Finance Panel met on four occasions in the past year and reports as follows:
85. **Finance and Property:** The Council records its deep appreciation for the United Appeal funding received each year that makes possible so much of its work, together with the wholehearted support and generous grant received annually from Presbyterian Women. Council for Global Mission accounts for the year 2018 indicate a net deficit on the Income and Expenditure Account of (£322) which is very close to the budgeted figure. Having been pledged a grant from the United Appeal of £1,065,000 for 2019, the Council is requesting the same amount in its budget for 2020.

86. The panel ensures the oversight, repair and maintenance of Council for Global Mission properties and has been reviewing the Council's mission property portfolio. The sale of its three existing properties in Belfast and London has been approved and it is anticipated that this will take place in the coming year raising total proceeds in the region of £1,195,000. It is planned that approximately £600,000 of this sum will be spent on two serviced apartments in order to meet the current needs of global mission workers on home assignment. Pending further review, it is proposed that the surplus of funds will be transferred to the Council's General Account over a period of 10 years to cover what has been a fairly constant overspend in the region of £80,000 per year.
87. **Mission Department staffing:** The Council is very grateful for the dedicated and faithful service of all Mission Department staff during what has been another busy year. Mission Departmental staff meetings and updates have been held periodically throughout the year.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

## VISION BUILDING TASK GROUP

88. The Vision Building Task Group met on two occasions since the General Assembly 2018 and reports as follows:
89. The task group planned and facilitated a Global Mission Council Away Day which took place on 19 June 2018, benefiting from the skillful facilitation of Mrs Julie Hoey. It proved to be a positive and worthwhile occasion out of which arose a number of next steps.
90. The Council approved that its work is all about being:  
**Global disciples sharing God's heart for the world**  
 (a) Declaring good news  
 (b) Demonstrating God's love
91. The following statements were drafted as straplines for the committees and panels of the Council, and referred to them for further consideration: *Global disciples reaching the unreached* – Outreach Ministries Committee; *Global disciples visioning lives transformed* – World Development Committee; *Global disciples equipping leaders* – Leadership Development Committee; *Global disciples highlighting opportunities* – Global Concerns Committee; *Global disciples developing partnerships* – Global Mission Partnership Panel; *Global disciples sending and supporting servants* – Global Mission Worker Panel; *Global disciples managing resources* – Business and Finance Panel.
92. Subsequently, at its October meeting, the VBTG set up two sub-groups to undertake a review of Council structures and communications.

93. **The Structures Review Sub-Group** was asked to review the current structure of the Council for Global Mission and propose any changes that would allow it to function more efficiently and effectively. This sub-group's report was subsequently submitted to and approved by Council and the General Council and is included in the General Council's report to the General Assembly 2019.
94. A **Communications Sub-Group** met and reported on its work. It was acknowledged that its report contains a great deal of good material and was moving in the right direction, not least by setting out a joint strategy between the Council for Global Mission and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness for reaching congregations. The recommendation was that the sub-group make minor adjustments to the report and give further thought to how communication might be improved within the Council.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

## APPENDIX A

### **PCI and its mission in a multi-faith society**

We read in Acts 8:7, "Those who had been scattered (by persecution) preached the word wherever they went." So the words of our Risen Lord, "you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) began to be fulfilled.

Today in the sovereignty of God the peoples of the world have come to Ireland and there are multi-cultural, multi-faith communities, literally on the doorstep. Thus the Christian church needs a renewed confidence in its message and a similar confidence to adapt its methods so that the gospel message is effectively communicated.

### **Understanding PCI's mission in today's world**

Irish Presbyterians need to strengthen their confidence in the foundations regarding what they believe, who they are, what they are called to be and do, and then be challenged to face the question of the cost and commitment involved in Christian discipleship.

Confronted with other faiths we affirm:

- (a) That 'in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, having one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit' cf WCF Chapter 2.3. Any other god is not the God PCI believes in and proclaims.

- (b) That the Church is those ‘gathered into one under Christ, the Head. The Church is his body and spouse, who fills all in all...the visible church consists of everyone in the world who professes the true religion, together with their children. The visible church is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ and the house and family of God, outside of which people cannot ordinarily be saved’ (WCF Chapter 25.2/3)
- (c) That salvation is as Acts 4:12 declares, “salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved”, that Name is Jesus.

Thus as a denomination PCI have a confidence in God, a deep joy in salvation in Christ, a clear conviction about our calling as God’s people to proclaim God’s kingdom, to love and serve all people, to steward and sustain the beauty and bounty of the Lord’s creation, to seek God’s honour everywhere and among all, now and always. This is our amazing privilege.

The people of the world’s major faiths and cults are seeking what is true, good and satisfying, if not always in the right places. Being people, made in God’s image, for whom Christ died, PCI members must share the gospel with them in the context of home as well as in distant places.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has a calling to live and serve in Jesus’ name, with a spirit of humility, an attitude of service, a willingness to listen, a capacity to understand others yet an undiminished confidence in the gospel of Christ to meet the needs of all, just as PCI members, together as part of his church, have experienced.

### **How PCI members must be equipped for mission**

PCI must address the issues raised above by considering:

- (a) How to achieve and maintain humility, “the mind of Christ” (Phil 2:5), while believing, living and proclaiming the exclusive way of salvation;
- (b) How to find ways of naturally serving people in their complete personhood, while not losing sight of their spiritual and eternal need;
- (c) How to genuinely listen to people and not lose our eagerness to speak of Jesus Christ and his offer of salvation;
- (d) How to develop an increasing capacity to understand and respect the situation, mindset, world view and aspirations of others;
- (e) How to be patient, prayerful and persevering, ‘waiting on’ God’s Spirit to do his work;
- (f) How to love as Christ loves, be willing for the cost, challenge falsehood and idolatry, yet remain winsome.

PCI needs to address how to put feet on these words and be sure that her thinking and acting are changing in the right ways, constantly seeking to be Christ-like and engage in mission in today’s world.



**PCI must explore and take forward the changes that are required**

There is a need for PCI to embark on a journey to discover the changes God is calling her to make at this time. The World Faiths Panel seeks to encourage PCI through its councils to go on this journey and to grapple with how best to share the gospel, given its exclusive nature, with people of other faiths, both in our increasingly multi-cultural, multi-faith society and to the ends of the earth.

This has implications for the envisioning, training and equipping of ministers, global mission workers, congregational officers, organisation leaders, and our church membership as a whole. The changes will influence the welcome and worship in PCI meeting houses, the range of provisions through congregational organisations, the pastoral care provided, the methods and places of outreach and the way in which PCI communicates in the public domain. It will involve a top-down and a bottom-up approach.

Engaging with people of other faiths in the name of Jesus Christ should be an extension of the confidence we have in the gospel and its capacity to transform lives and situations.

**APPENDIX B****GLOBAL MISSION WORKERS**

*Global mission workers: the names, spheres and category of service are listed below and are to be taken together with the Global Mission Worker Panel 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**

Edwin and Anne Kibathi	2009	Ministry among East Africans in east London
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**Kenya**

Stephen and Angelina Cowan	1985 1989	Outreach and development work, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuum
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144		ANNUAL REPORTS, BELFAST, 2019
Naomi Leremore	1991	Development of Theological Education by Extension materials, PCEA, Nairobi
Gary and Mary Reid	2000	Outreach and development work, PCEA, Olkinyiei
<b>Malawi</b>		
Volker and JinHyeog Glissmann	2010	Consultant to Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), Zomba
Lyn and Johnny Dowds	2011	Doctor, DGMH, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Livingstonia Synod, Livingstonia
<b>Middle East</b>		
Two global mission workers	2016	Theological education
<b>Nepal</b>		
Peter and Valerie Lockwood	2012	Programme Advisor United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Kathmandu
Peter and Jayne Fleming	2017	Integral Development Advisor UMN, Kathmandu Teacher, Kathmandu International Study Centre
<b>Portugal</b>		
James and Heather Cochrane	2008	Church planting – Comunidade Pedras Vivas, Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal (ICPP) in Senhora de Hora, Porto (since 2013)
Chris and Rachel Humphries	2019	Church planting – Comunidade Pedras Vivas, Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal (ICCP) in Senhora de Hora, Porto

**Romania**

Csaba and	2001	Coordinator –SERVANT Mission and of Diakonia, Cluj
Ilona Veres	1993	Mera children’s project

**Spain**

Derek and Jane French	2000	Student outreach with Grupos Bíblicos Unidos (GBU), Bilbao
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**Zambia**

Diane Cusick	1995	Early Childhood Development Officer, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Zambia Synod (since 2016).
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## APPENDIX C

**Global Mission Partnerships**

*PCI is currently engaged in global mission partnership with the following churches, institutions and agencies:*

**Europe**

- The Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal
- The Evangelical Reformed Church of Latvia (including the Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary)
- Faculté Jean Calvin, France
- Grupos Bíblicos Unidos, Spain
- The Hungarian Reformed Church, in Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine

**Africa**

- The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre, Livingstonia, and Nkhoma Synods, Malawi
- Scripture Union, Malawi
- Theological Education by Extension, Malawi
- The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Zambia Synod
- The Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya
- The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan and Sudan (including the Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency, Nile Theological College, and Giffen Institute of Theology)

**Middle East**

- (a) Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary
- (b) The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (including the Near East School of Theology)

**Asia**

- The Christian Church of Sumba, Indonesia
- The Evangelical Christian Church of Halmahera, Indonesia
- The Evangelical Christian Church of Timor, Indonesia
- The Church of North India
- The Presbyterian Church of Pakistan (including Gujranwala Theological Seminary)
- United Bible Training Centre, Pakistan
- United Mission to Nepal
- Association for Theological Education, Nepal
- Minority Focus, Nepal
- The Presbyterian Church of Myanmar

**Caribbean and Latin America**

- The Presbyterian Church of Brazil

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the General Assembly encourage the Council for Global Mission to continue to actively provide a lead in thinking regarding issues of global concern, not least both with regard to those issues affecting PCI's global mission partners and those which impact communities in Ireland.
2. That the General Assembly recognise the potentially valuable insights of both PCI's global mission partners and global mission workers in helping PCI develop its strategies for engaging with, and witnessing to, people of other faiths in the increasingly pluralist Irish society of today.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks for the promotion of Leadership Development in many places around the world and commend those Leaders in Training supported by PCI to the prayers of the Church, that they may grow as disciples of Christ, balance the demands of study, family life and ongoing ministry, and receive practical help where necessary, especially with language learning and processing of visas.

4. That the General Assembly give thanks for the remarkable and sustained generosity shown by congregations and members of the PCI in supporting both the annual World Development Appeal, and the more short-term but acute needs reflected in each Moderator's Special Appeal, and commend the 2019 World Development Appeal to all congregations.
5. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the dedicated endeavours of PCI's Global Mission Workers and for the generous resourcing of their work by congregations through the United Appeal for Mission and 'extra-mile' giving, encouraging the Council for Global Mission to review its strategy for communicating the story of God's global mission.
6. That the Report of the Council for Global Mission be received.

# LINKAGE COMMISSION

Convener: T.J. LIVINGSTONE

Secretary: Rev R.K. GRAHAM

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report summarises the work of the Linkage Commission from April 2018-March 2019. Matters dealt with include: the terms of leaves to call granted to 46 charges, reviews of the financial terms in various leaves to call, and reports on the work of the internal panels of the Commission. The commission continues to believe that the number of congregations within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland are too many to sustain the decreasing number of people attending our services. This sometimes creates debate when vacancies occur, with a conflict between the understandable desire to retain meeting houses and the reality of the decreasing financial sustainability of some of these congregations.

### **Vacancies**

2. The commission notes that a number of ministers who are approaching retirement age are taking steps to prepare their kirk sessions and congregations for the impending vacancy. This not only assists the work of incoming vacancy conveners but can also reduce concerns and timescales in filling the vacancy. This practice is to be encouraged.
3. However the Commission is also aware that the church is entering a period when for a few years there will be a reduction in the number of licensed assistants available to receive a call. This will increase the length of some vacancies and may have implications when the Commission is asked to consider requests from the congregations seeking leave to call an associate minister.

### **Tenure Review Concept**

4. The commission has been conscious that where leave to call is granted using reviewable tenure, which was approved as a scheme by the 1998 General Assembly, some presbyteries and congregations have been expressing concern as to how such reviews should be carried out. To address these concerns, the Commission updated its guidelines during the year and in addition held a special meeting in January to which clerks of presbytery were invited to discuss the issue. The feedback from that meeting endorsed the concept of reviewable tenure but suggested that a further revision of the guidelines would address outstanding concerns. The commission will carry out this revision once the work of the Home Mission Review Implementation Task Group is completed and its recommendations adopted by the General Assembly.

**Amalgamations and Presbytery Bounds**

5. In 2018 the General Assembly adopted resolutions to amalgamate two congregations in North Belfast Presbytery and two congregations in Monaghan Presbytery. The 2019 General Assembly may be requested to adopt resolutions to approve three further amalgamations, two of which relate to Belfast presbyteries. These amalgamations will require the Parish Bounds Panel to bring forward revised parish bounds. However by their cumulative effect they also raise issues regarding presbytery bounds. The commission will liaise with presbyteries where this is the case.

**Amalgamations and the Charity Commission**

6. The Commission has also been considering the issue of amalgamations and the requirements of the Charity Commission: it is anticipated that a further report on this matter will be included in the Supplementary Reports

**Additional Pastoral Personnel and Auxiliary Ministry Panel**

7. During the year this panel has been updating its guidelines for presbyteries and kirk sessions to enable congregations, wishing to seek approval for new additional pastoral personnel posts or extensions to existing posts, to have an enhanced knowledge of the necessary processes.
8. To date 16 individuals have completed the Auxiliary Minister Scheme but the Commission has only been requested to establish three posts, one of which requests was subsequently withdrawn. It commends this scheme to the wider church for consideration so that the gifts identified may be harnessed for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.
9. Rev Colin Gamble, who has convened the panel for the past five years is completing his service at this General Assembly. The commission wishes to place of record its thanks to Mr Gamble for the efficient and knowledgeable manner in which he has carried out this role. The Rev Brian McManus is welcomed as his successor and is assured of the commission's prayers.

**Church Architecture and Manses Panel**

10. The panel has continued to address issues where congregations who have listed buildings wish to carry out significant structural work. In line with the Partnering Arrangement signed with the Department for Communities, which was agreed to assist in securing our ongoing Ecclesiastical Exemption, the panel is required to balance the building's listing against missional requirements in each case. Where the panel is persuaded that the missional case is strong and outweighs the listing the panel will make the appropriate recommendation to the commission.

11. The panel has also been in discussion with the Department for Infrastructure with regard to Planning Fees. These fees can be significant where a large scheme is being carried out. In some cases District Councils were charging these fees and relying on advice from the department that churches were not entitled to Fee Exemption as they were not regarded as being buildings for the use of the community. The case has been made that this is incorrect and councils are now being advised by the department that notwithstanding legal advice they are 'as the planning authority for its area, free to take their own position on the application of the legislation as it relates to fee exemptions'. Congregations should ensure that when submitting schemes for planning approval their professional advisors are made aware of this advice.

### Leave to Call a Minister

12. This is only a summary - there may well be conditions to the leave to call which are not recorded here. These might include part-time, reviewable tenure deferred linkage and additional income for minister. When a figure is set, the year denotes when leave to call was granted. This figure will increase automatically under the annual stipend review. The same is the case in respect to ministerial allowances.

Congregation	Stipend	Allowances
First Keady	66.66% AMM [2018]	£4,000 [2018]
Armaghbreague	33.33% AMM [2018]	£2,000 [2018]
Second Keady	£11,000 [2018]	£3,000 [2018]
Drumhillery	£11,000 [2018]	£3,000 [2018]
Caledon	33.33% AMM [2018]	£2,000 [2018]
Minterburn	66.66% AMM [2018]	£4,000 [2018]
Clogher	60% AMM [2018]	£3,600 [2018]
Glenhoy	40% AMM [2018]	£2,400 [2018]
Balteagh	60% AMM [2018]	£3,600 [2018]
Bovevagh	40% AMM [2018]	£2,400 [2018]
Abbots Cross	£33,000 [2018]	£6,000 [2018]
Aughnacloy	60% AMM [2018]	£3,600 [2018]
Ballymagrane	40% AMM [2018]	£2,400 [2018]
Blackrock	€26,500 [2018]	€6,320 [2018]
Bray	€10,000 [2018]	€3,160 [2018]
Trinity Boardmills	£31,000 [2018]	£6,000 [2018]
Culnady	87% AMM [2018]	£5,220 [2018]
Swatragh	13% AMM [2018]	£780 [2018]



Saintfield Road	£35,000 [2018]	£6,000 [2018]
Ballygilbert	£35,000 [2018]	£6,000 [2018]
Dundalk	€6,000 [2018]	€1,000 [2018]
Aughtentaine	33.33% AMM [2018]	£2,000 [2018]
Cavanaleck	66.66% AMM [2018]	£4,000 [2018]
First Dromore	£34,000 [2018]	£6,000 [2018]
First Ballymoney	£37,000 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
Glenarm	£7,500 [2019]	£2,040 [2019]
Cairnalbana	£15,725 [2019]	£4,080 [2019]
Ramelton	75% €AMM [2019]	€7,181.25 [2019]
Kilmacrennan	25% €AMM [2019]	€2,393.75 [2019]
Ballygawley	£17,619 or 60% AMM [2019]	£3,672 [2019]
Ballyreagh	£11,746 or 40% AMM [2019]	£2,448 [2019]
Markethill	£34,000 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
Kilbride	£38,000 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
Aghadowey	66.66% AMM [2019] plus 66.66% £2,000	£4,080 [2019]
Crossgar	33.33% AMM [2019] plus 33.33% £2,000	£2,040 [2019]
Carlisle Road	£25,000 [2019]	£5,478 [2019]
Crossroads	€5,350 [2019]	€715 [2019]
Glendermott	£36,000 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
St Andrew's Belfast	£33,000 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
Lissara	£31,400 [2019]	£6,120 [2019]
Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis	50% of £33,500 [2019]	50% of £6,120 [2019]
Ballyblack	50% of £33,500 [2019]	50% of £6,120 [2019]
Mosside	£17,100 [2019]	£3,672 [2019]
Toberdoney	£11,400 [2019]	£2,448 [2019]
Castlewellan	£20,500 [2019]	£3,978 [2019]
Leitrim	£6,200 [2019]	£2,142 [2019]

**Associate Ministry.**

First Ballymena	£AMM [2018]	£5,600 [2018]
West Church Ballymena	70% AMM [2018]	£3,920 [2018]

**Reviewable Tenure Ministries**

13. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Millisle & Ballycopeland was extended for seven years from 25 September 2018.
14. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Sloan Street, Lisburn: the congregation was released from any tenure restriction from 25 September 2018.
15. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Ardglass and Downpatrick was extended for seven years from 4 December 2018.
16. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in First Omagh. the congregation was released from any tenure restriction from 22 January 2019.
17. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Malone was extended for seven years from 26 February 2019.
18. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge and Newtownbutler: the congregations were released from tenure restriction from 26 March 2019.
19. Reviewable Tenure Ministry in Kilmore was extended for seven years from 26 March 2019.

**Stated Supply Arrangements**

20. The commission renewed a number of previous nominations for a further period in co-operation with the appropriate presbytery. New stated supply arrangements in Belville and Kells, Co Meath, were effected.

**Dissolution of Linkages**

21. There were no dissolutions of any linkages.

**Congregations Linked**

22. Two new Linkages were agreed.

**Blackrock and Bray**

Terms of Linkage:

- (a) That the congregations of Blackrock and Bray be linked as from 1 October 2018.
- (b) Each Kirk Session 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 at Blackrock 9.45am; Bray 11.30am; or at a time as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
- (f) That the Stipends (2018) be: Blackrock €26,500 and Bray €10,000; Allowances Blackrock €6,320 and Bray €3,160.
- (g) That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Blackrock Manse be borne in the proportions (a) Blackrock: 50% (b) Bray: 50%.
- (h) That the Minister shall reside in Blackrock Manse.

### **Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis and Ballyblack**

#### Terms of Linkage:

- (a) That following the retirement of the minister of Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis on 1 August 2019, the congregations of Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis and Ballyblack be linked.
- (b) That each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
- (c) That each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
- (d) That in the choice of a minister, the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
- (e) That the stated services each Sunday are: (i) Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis 11.30am, (ii) Ballyblack 10.00am; or at other times as shall be agreed by the two Kirk Sessions.
- (f) That the Stipends be: (i) Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis: 50% of £33,500 [2019]; (ii) Ballyblack: 50% of £33,500 [2019]; Ministerial Allowances: (i) Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis: 50% of £6,120 [2019] plus 15p per Business Mile; (ii) Ballyblack: 50% of £6,120 plus 15p per Business Mile.
- (g) That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis Manse be borne in the proportions (i) Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis, 50%; (ii) Ballyblack, 50%.
- (h) That the Minister shall reside in Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis Manse.
- (i) That the directions of the Linkage Commission be observed in respect of the Manse and Manse property at Ballyblack.

The Stipends in the Deferred Linkage will be payable upon the installation of the new minister in Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis and Ballyblack.

**Congregations Amalgamated**

23. The 2018 General Assembly resolved as follows: *'That the congregation of Fortwilliam and Macrory be amalgamated with the congregation of Whitehouse no later than 31 December 2018, on terms set by the Linkage Commission.'*

**Terms of Amalgamation**

That the congregation of Fortwilliam & Macrory be amalgamated with the congregation of Whitehouse under the name Whitehouse, the date of amalgamation to be no later than 30th December 2018, (as agreed by the Presbytery of North Belfast in consultation with the Linkage Commission), on the following terms:

- (a) That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Congregational Committee until new Committee elections are held.
- (b) The assets (to be dispersed) are defined as Fortwilliam Church building, Halls and surrounding ground, Macrory Halls and surrounding ground, any investments and bank accounts in the name of Fortwilliam & Macrory Congregation.
- (c) With respect to these assets:
  - (i) £20,000 to the amalgamated congregation;
  - (ii) Presbytery will hold the remaining assets to cover continuing expenses (e.g.insurance/maintenance/legal costs etc.) to the point of dispersal of the assets.;
  - (iii) the remaining amount, following the payment of £20,000 to the amalgamated congregation and the costs to the Presbytery to the point of dispersal of the assets, to be paid in the following proportions: 75% to the North Belfast Urban Mission Trust Fund and 25% (by monetary value) is to be transferred to the Council for Mission in Ireland as a direct contribution for assisting in capital projects connected with church planting.
- (d) That all future assets, including legacies and bequests subsequent to the amalgamation, become the property of the amalgamated congregation.
- (e) That the amalgamated congregation will remain responsible for any Fortwilliam & Macrory liabilities following dispersal of the assets.
- (f) As the assets will not be in place for dispersal prior to the amalgamation, on the date of the amalgamation those assets will be transferred to the ownership of the Presbytery, who will be responsible for any liabilities up to the point of the dispersal of assets in (b) is complete. The Amalgamation Commission appointed by Presbytery will be responsible for the sale of the assets and the distribution as in clause (b).
- (g) that the Stipend of the new congregation is unaffected.

24. The 2018 General Assembly resolved as follows ‘That the congregation of Boyle be amalgamated with the congregation of Sligo no later than 31 December 2018, on terms set by the Linkage Commission’.

Terms of Amalgamation

- (i) That the congregation of Boyle be amalgamated with the congregation of Sligo from 1 July, 2018, or other suitable date under the name ‘Sligo’.
- (ii) That the two Kirk Sessions become one Kirk Session and the two Congregational Committees become one Committee until new Committee elections are held.
- (iii) That all existing or future assets, including property or lands not disposed of, become the property of the amalgamated congregation.
- (iv) That the amalgamated congregation will remain responsible for any Boyle liabilities.
- (v) The Stipend of the amalgamated congregation be the same as that applying to Sligo on the day before the amalgamation takes place.

## REVIEWS, ALLOWANCES AND FEES PANEL

### Reviews

- 24 In accordance with Par 236(2) of the Code, and arising out of other circumstances, the Reviews, Allowances and Fees Panel reviewed the stipend of the following Congregations:

**Presbytery and Congregation** **Stipend**

**ARDS**

Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis	No Change
Shore Street, Donaghadee	Increase by £1000

**ARMAGH**

Richhill	No Change
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**BALLYMENA**

Ballee	No Change
West Church, Ballymena	No Change

**NORTH BELFAST**

Eglinton	No Change
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**EAST BELFAST**

Dundonald	No Change
Gransha	No Change
Tullycarnet	No Change

**CARRICKFERGUS**

Ballylinney	No Change
Woodlands	No Change

**COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY**

Portrush	No Change
Portstewart	No Change

**DERRY AND DONEGAL**

Alt	No Change
Carnone	No Change
Convoy	No Change
Ballyarnett	No Change
Knowhead	No Change
Donoughmore	No Change
Raphoe and Ballindrait	No Change

**DOWN**

Ardglass	No Change
Downpatrick	No Change

**DROMORE PRESBYTERY**

Annahilt	No Change
Drumlough	No Change
Legacurry	Increase by £1,000

**DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY**

Athy	No Change
Carlow	No Change
Drogheda	No Change
Fermoy & Cahir	No Change
Maynooth	No Change

**IVEAGH PRESBYTERY**

Ballydown	Increase by £3,000
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**MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY**

Ballina	No Change
Killala	No Change
Ballymote	No Change
Clontibret	No Change
Middletown	No Change

**OMAGH PRESBYTERY**

Ardstraw	No Change
Douglas	No Change
Castleberg – First	No Change
Killeter	No Change
Enniskillen	No Change
Trinity, Omagh	No Change
Gillygooley	No Change

**PRESBYTERY**

Dundrod	No Change
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**Supply Fee**

25. The level of supply fee is determined by the Code Par 238, and for 2019 this is £108 (€160) or £72 (€106) where only a single service is supplied in one congregation. Travelling expenses should be paid in accordance with the rate set for attendance at Assembly Councils, currently 15p (22 cents) per mile.

KENNETH BELSHAW, Convener

**CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND MANSES PANEL**

- 26 The remit of the panel is: the consideration of the site and the plans of all new buildings proposed to be erected on congregational property and of all proposed demolition, structural alterations of or structural additions to existing buildings. In addition the panel considers all proposals and designs for memorials, windows, artificial lighting, installation of audio-visual system, and for seating and furnishings requisite for public worship and is responsible for subsequently making recommendations to Linkage Commission. It is also involved in respect of a variety of manse accommodation issues referred to in Guidelines on Manses, again reporting to Linkage Commission.

27. All enquiries and submissions for Church Architecture and Manse Panel, should be sent to Graham Patterson, Property Support Officer, Assembly Buildings, 2-10 Fisherwick Place, Belfast, BT1 6DW. Following congregational approval of any proposal, information should be presented to presbytery for approval and then transmitted to Church Architecture and Manse Panel for consideration and onward recommendation to the Linkage Commission.
28. The Panel has met regularly over the year and was also able to meet congregational representatives when this was appropriate. The panel recommended approval to the Linkage Commission of numerous schemes including new church and hall proposals and proposals to provide more appropriate access arrangement for those with disabilities. It advised in respect of works to listed buildings, new manse provision/alterations and generally regarding better use of our building stock.

BRIAN KNOX, Convener

## **ADDITIONAL PASTORAL PERSONNEL AND AUXILIARY MINISTRY PANEL**

29. The Commission approved the creation of 18 new Additional Pastoral Personnel (APP) posts in the past year and the extension or amendment of ten existing posts. Approval to create one new congregational auxiliary ministry post was also given.
30. The Commission updated its 'Guidelines for Congregations and Presbyteries Regarding the Employment of Additional Pastoral Personnel' to incorporate 'Guidelines for Kirk Sessions on General Employment Issues' which were issued in 2017. Copies are available from the panel convener and PCI website. The updated APP guidelines outline the necessary steps kirk sessions should take when considering the creation of an APP post. The approval of the HR support provider, presbytery and the Linkage Commission is required before any new APP post can be advertised. Guidelines for presbytery clerks were also updated.
31. The approval of the HR support provider, presbytery and the Linkage Commission is required to extend an existing APP post. Kirk sessions are asked to note carefully when an existing fixed-term contract concludes so that requests to extend an existing post are not made late.
32. At its meeting in May 2018, the Commission adopted the following recommendation with regard to job titles for APP posts: "The Linkage Commission wishes to give kirk sessions more flexibility when choosing a suitable job title for APP posts and most titles will be considered by the Commission. However, the Commission will not give permission for the use of 'Officer' or 'Pastor' as a job title. Furthermore, the titles



‘Director’, ‘Associate’ and ‘Assistant’ will only be considered if the kirk session can justify that the job description strongly warrants the use of the title.”

33. New APP salary scales for 2019 were agreed by the Linkage Commission at its meeting in October 2018. These are available from the panel convener and are shown below. Kirk sessions are required to use the salary scales when creating a new APP post.
34. The panel has become aware of a desire in some parts of the church for the addition to the existing salary scales of a higher Band C Salary Scale. A paper outlining some points for consideration appears in Appendix A and the Commission proposes in an appended resolution that the paper be sent down to presbyteries for discussion and comment. The Commission has not adopted a view on this matter, but recommends that the wider church considers it.
35. Guidelines for creating congregational ministry auxiliary posts are available from the panel convener. Proposals to create such posts should normally come to the Linkage Commission through the presbytery. Auxiliary ministers are commissioned to work, normally on a part-time basis, under the supervision of a minister of Word and Sacrament. While it is primarily a ministry of the Word, some pastoral duties may be associated with such posts.
36. Kirk sessions are reminded that organists (or similar) who receive any form of remuneration should be issued with a statement of main terms and conditions and job description. Once the documents have been issued presbytery should be notified. Before employing a new organist (or similar), the kirk session should draw up a statement of main terms and conditions, job description, personnel specification and advertisement. The approval of presbytery is required before creating such a post. Guidelines and templates are available from the Panel Convener. The HR support provider should always be consulted.
37. Ministers are reminded to seek approval from presbytery and the Linkage Commission before undertaking paid public appointments (‘Extra-Parochial Work’). This kind of work has been defined 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.” A return form, available from the panel convener, should normally be returned before the appointment begins and then annually by 15 September.

**APP RECOMMENDED SALARY SCALES 2019**

	Sterling salary pt	Euro salary pt	Level of responsibility of post	Qualification attained by employee or level of experience
Band A	£18,685 £19,355 £20,031 £20,703 £21,558 £22,226	€28,248 €29,260 €30,281 €31,298 €32,591 €33,599	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 and 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	£23,306 £24,363 £25,455 £26,582 £27,352	€35,233 €36,831 €38,480 €40,184 €41,347	General responsibility for specific areas of programme and ministry oversight; graduating to 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 and 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:**

- (a) This salary scale was initially based on the JNC Youth and Community work scale (2009) for the UK and has since been updated annually. For 2019, the NI salary scale has been increased in line with the increase in the NI ministerial minimum (2% for 2019). The ROI salary scale has been increased in line with the increase in the ROI ministerial minimum (1% for 2019).
- (b) 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.
- (c) The APPAM Panel Convener of the Linkage Commission should be contacted for the most up to date figures and for advice on their interpretation.

COLIN GAMBLE, Convener

## **PARISH BOUNDS PANEL**

- 38. The last major statement of parish bounds was agreed in 1981 when a series of maps was marked with the bounds of each congregation. Current text descriptions held in the General Secretary's Department do not precisely match the maps and a note has been made of all the changes in bounds, or new bounds set, since 1981.
- 39. The panel is drawing up draft bounds for the congregations of Maynooth and Donabate which, to date, have not had bounds set. It will consult with representatives of the Dublin & Munster Presbytery before these are finalised.
- 40. Boyle has recently been amalgamated with Sligo and new bounds will have to be set for Sligo and neighbouring congregations. The panel will consult with representatives of the Monaghan Presbytery before these are finalised.
- 41. The North and South Belfast Presbyteries have had a number of amalgamations since 1981, and that it is anticipated that further amalgamations will take place in the near future. The current boundary between these two presbyteries does not take account of the amalgamations, nor of any strategy there might be for central Belfast. Initial contact has been made with the Belfast Conference to ascertain whether there is a view on where that boundary should be. Thereafter it will be possible to set appropriate parish bounds.

JIM STOTHERS, Convener

## APPENDIX A

### Paper on adding a Band C salary scale to the recommended salary scales for additional pastoral personnel.

#### Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to consider adding a new Band C Salary Scale to the Linkage Commission's Recommended Salary Scales for Additional Pastoral Personnel (APP).

#### Current Situation

2. Whenever a kirk session wishes to create a new APP post, it is required to follow the guidelines produced by the Linkage Commission and to select an appropriate salary from the Recommended Salary Scales contained within the guidelines.
3. The current guidelines and salary scales were produced in 2011 to meet the needs of congregations at that time. The Recommended Salary Scales were originally based on the JNC Youth and Community Work Scale (2009) for the United Kingdom and have been updated annually in line with increases to the basic ministerial minimum. There are two bands.
4. The Band A Scale has six points: £18,685; £19,355; £20,031; £20,703; £21,558; £22,226 (€28,248; €29,260; €30,281; €31,298; €32,591; €33,599). These are the salary points for 2019 and are for 37.5 hours per week.
5. The qualifications for a Band A post are as follows: 'Obtained or working towards OCN level 2 and 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.'
6. The level of responsibility for a Band A post is as follows: 'Mostly direct work with children, young people or adults under close regular supervision; low management responsibility for people or projects.'
7. The Band B Scale has five points: £23,306; £24,363; £25,455; £26,582; £27,352 (€35,233; €36,831; €38,480; €40,184; €41,347). Once again, these are the salary points for 2019 and are for 37.5 hours per week.
8. The qualifications for a Band B post are as follows: 'Appropriate recognition of attainment or working towards undergraduate or postgraduate theological study or professional qualifications (including Youth and 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.'

9. The level of responsibility for a Band B post is as follows: 'General responsibility for specific areas of programme and ministry oversight; graduating to less closely supervised responsibility for programmes, strategy, volunteers or leaders.'
10. Notice that the Band B level of responsibility is 'general responsibility for specific areas of programme and ministry oversight' and 'less closely supervised responsibility for... volunteers or leaders.'

### **Emerging Situation**

11. Recent conversations with some APPs and kirk sessions have suggested to the panel that there may be a need for a higher Band C Salary Scale.
12. The higher scale would be for those posts which involve the management of other employees (in distinction to Band B posts where the post holder has responsibility for volunteers or leaders) or which involve greater responsibility or expertise than is required for Band B posts. It would also provide a pathway for career progression for those APPs who see youth work, for instance, as a long-term career choice.
13. For instance, in the case of one congregation, the kirk session wishes to employ someone to manage its other staff. Since the other staff are already on the Band B Scale, it may be appropriate for their manager to be on a higher pay scale to reflect this person's management position.
14. The panel can also foresee that a kirk session with, for instance, a large children's and youth ministry may wish to employ someone to oversee both areas of ministry and to advise the kirk session on the 'big picture' (in distinction to Band B posts where the post holder has responsibility for specific areas of oversight). The minimum criteria for such a responsible position would be higher than for a Band B post to reflect that the person appointed is an expert in the field who is able to contribute to the formation of policy and to plan strategies and programmes on behalf of the session.
15. A proposed Band C Scale is as follows: £27,030; £27,540; £28,050; £28,560; £29,070; £29,580 (£40,905; €41,663; €42,420; €43,178; €43,935; €44,693).

### **Points for Consideration**

16. The proposal raises a number of points for consideration including the following:
  - (a) APPs on Band C will receive a salary which is higher than the basic ministerial minimum (BMM) which is currently £26,695 and €39,953. While it may be possible to set down a principle that no one appointed to a Band C post should receive a salary greater than the minister's stipend, it still introduces the possibility of an APP on Band C being paid significantly more than an associate minister in the same congregation or a minister in a neighbouring congregation who is on BMM. This may be deemed unacceptable to the church, given the status ministers have in the church as

well as the training they must undergo before ordination and the duties they perform.

- (b) However, it should also be noted that it is already the case that APPs on Band B Point 5 in the UK and on Band B Points 4 and 5 in the ROI are receiving a salary which is higher than BMM.
  - (c) It should also be noted that there is a difficulty comparing the remuneration paid to ministers and APPs, given that the minister is able to live in a manse without paying rent or rates and a stipend is not the same as a salary. An associate minister, however, does not live in a manse.
  - (d) The proposed Band C Scale is also significantly higher than the remuneration paid to deaconesses and Irish Mission workers who may well match such APPs in terms of qualifications, experience, expertise and the work they do. Again consideration should be given as to whether it is acceptable that some APPs could receive a higher salary than these other workers.
  - (e) If the church is unwilling to introduce a higher salary scale, it may be more acceptable to allow kirk sessions to award a 'management bonus' to those APPs in a management role. Therefore a manager who is overseeing the work of two APPs on Band B Point 5 would receive a salary of Band B Point 5 plus a bonus to differentiate the manager's role from the other staff. However, even in this case, the manager's salary will still be higher than BMM.
  - (f) Another point for consideration is that those appointed to a Band C post may have significant influence over a congregation's ministry without themselves being ordained or without having subscribed to the church's Subordinate Standards. However, this is already the case with many APPs. A possible solution may be to introduce an accreditation process similar to the one for accredited preachers.
17. Despite the points raised above, the church may still take the view that for some APP posts, there needs to be a salary which is commensurate with the qualifications and experience required.

**Note:** The customary Schedules of Assessments have previously been included in the Linkage Commission Report:

- (a) Church Extension Charges;
- (b) Fully Constituted Church Extension Charges;
- (c) Licentiates, Ordained Assistants and Associates.

These will be included in the 2019 Supplementary Reports to the General Assembly. This change is due to the new later submission date for part B of the annual statistical returns.

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That Appendix A, 'Paper on Adding a Band C Salary Scale to the Recommended Salary Scales for Additional Pastoral Personnel' be sent down to presbyteries for discussion and comment, with report back through the Deputy Clerk by 31 December 2019.
2. That the congregation of 1st Killyleagh be amalgamated with the congregation of Second Killyleagh no later than 31 December 2019, on terms set by the Linkage Commission.
3. That the congregation of May Street be amalgamated with the congregation of Fisherwick no later than 31 December 2019, on terms set by the Linkage Commission.
4. That the congregation of Crumlin Road be amalgamated with the congregation of West Kirk, Belfast, no later than 31 December 2019, on terms set by the Linkage Commission.
5. That the report of the Linkage Commission be received.

# COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Convener: Very Rev Dr T.N. HAMILTON, OBE  
Secretary: THE CLERK

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Public Affairs met on three occasions since the 2018 General Assembly to receive reports from its committee, panels and task groups; consider responses to public consultations; and discuss its wider strategy of engagement on issues of public significance.
2. The **State Education Committee** (paragraphs 15-28) oversees matters of state education in Northern Ireland. The committee's main work is to consider educational developments and transmit thinking to the Transferor Representatives' Council, through which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland works with the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland on matters of education policy in Northern Ireland.
3. The **Peace and Reconciliation Panel** (paragraphs 29-33) handles matters of public policy that are relevant to peacebuilding and reconciliation. It was responsible for developing a response on behalf of PCI to the Northern Ireland Office consultation paper on 'Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past'.
4. The **Republic of Ireland** (paragraphs 34-40) is responsible for overseeing matters of public policy in the Republic of Ireland.
5. The **Dealing with the Past Project Task Group** (paragraphs 41-44) is responsible for taking forward the project agreed by the 2016 General Assembly to record and examine Presbyterian responses to the Troubles.
6. A substantial paper on human rights is attached for consideration by the Assembly as an appendix to this report.

### Introduction

7. This has been a year like no other in living memory. The quagmire of Brexit has virtually paralysed the UK government and preoccupied the government in the Republic of Ireland. Meanwhile the Northern Ireland Assembly has been disgracefully absent, and the scandal of the RHI has still to be worked through. Sadly, there is no obvious end to the crises we are experiencing in our democratic institutions.
8. Inevitably these have made the work of the Council for Public Affairs very difficult, and this is reflected in shorter reports to the General Assembly than is usually the case. Yet very high-grade work has been, and still continues to be done, much of it focused on being well prepared



for a return to some degree of political normality in the future, even though that will take some considerable time.

9. Exceptionally valuable work was undertaken in relation to the NIO consultation paper on 'Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past', which took account of previous deliberations within the Council alongside the views and opinions of a range of interested groups and individuals.
10. Since the 2018 General Assembly the Council has also cooperated with the Council for Social Witness and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, in the latter case responding to an Education Authority consultation paper on a proposed funding scheme for regional and local voluntary youth organisations.
11. A substantial paper on human rights is attached for consideration by the Assembly as an appendix to this report.
12. In September 2018 the Council's Public Affairs Officer – Gavin Norris – left to take up an important policy role in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The Council is immensely grateful for Gavin's time with us, characterised by his wide range of interests, his great attention to detail and a deep commitment to bringing the best understanding of biblical teaching to the complex issues faced in today's increasingly secularised society.
13. In January 2019 Karen Jardine became the new Public Affairs Officer. She comes with a wealth of experience in public policy matters as well as being an elder in one of our congregations. She has settled in wonderfully well, and the Council is already deeply indebted to her for her work and the wisdom she brings.
14. As convener I am stepping down at this Assembly. I want however to put on record my deep thanks to all those who have served on Council, and in particular to appreciate publicly those members who have served as conveners of the committee, panels and task groups. Without exception they have shown themselves to be deeply committed in their calling to seek the honour of the Lord in the public realm the length and breadth of our land.

## **STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

15. 2018-19 has been another busy year within education and the work of the State Education Committee (SEC) has reflected this. Working with our Methodist and Church of Ireland partners in the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) and with colleagues in the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC), our influence within the arena of educational policy has continued to be significant.
16. In September, Public Affairs Officer Gavin Norris, who also undertook the role of PCI Education Secretary, left for pastures new. The SEC would like to commend and warmly thank Gavin for all that he did

to further the work of the Protestant Churches in education and that of PCI specifically. Gavin was a huge asset to the SEC and the TRC, working alongside the other two education secretaries to lobby stakeholders, respond to consultation and further the vision of our churches in a nuanced and pragmatic way. The committee is delighted that his successor, Karen Jardine, has now joined us and looks forward to working closely with her as she brings her considerable skills and experience to bear upon our work.

17. The work of the State Education Committee has focused on the following three broad areas:

### **Religious Education**

18. Work in the area of RE continues to be led primarily by Rev Dr Colin McClure and the SEC is most grateful for his dedication and expertise. Earlier in the year a proposal for the continuation of the Northern Ireland Religious Education Advisory Committee was submitted to the Department of Education (DE). Discussions have continued with the Trustee body which represents Roman Catholic interest in education, DE and the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).
19. SEC has been updated on the progress of the RE Core Syllabus Working Group, representative of the four main Churches. Regular meetings have focused on presenting the learning objectives in a style consistent with other curricular material familiar to teachers. Given the current rate of progress it is hoped that this work will be completed imminently. It is therefore anticipated that material for discussion will soon be presented to the Churches for comment.
20. The status of RE and support for those who teach it remains a priority for the Churches, and the RE Support Group set up by TRC has continued to meet. The group, comprising TRC, other stakeholders and serving teachers, is investigating the potential for a dedicated website which will be a vehicle for teachers to network and share good practice; discussions with EA and CCEA are ongoing. Some initial work had been undertaken to allow for the appointment of an intern in conjunction with Stranmillis University College to gather together and make accessible existing resource material. The possibility of utilising an associate to facilitate higher order resourcing is also being discussed with the CSSC.

### **Policy**

21. The mechanism for PCI to input into education policy continues to be through the TRC, with much of the work between meetings of the Executive Committee carried out by the three education secretaries. In the period between Gavin's leaving and Karen's appointment, the SEC convener assumed responsibility for PCI in this area. At each meeting, a detailed update on the work of the EA was presented by TRC representatives on its Board and SEC would wish to record its

thanks to Rev Robert Herron and Edgar Jardine for their work on behalf of the denomination.

22. Throughout the year, TRC has been engaged in responding to and lobbying on:
  - (a) EA Draft Equality Action Plan;
  - (b) Transgender advice to schools;
  - (c) School budgets, including responding to the House of Commons NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into Education Funding in Northern Ireland;
  - (d) Education Transformation Programme;
  - (e) Shared Education;
  - (f) Area Planning;
  - (g) Jointly Managed Church Schools;
  - (h) Fair Exemption Treatment Order.

### **Governor Reconstitution**

23. By far the greatest investment in time and energy has been expended on the reconstitution of the boards of governors of the controlled sector's 558 schools, with over 1,600 Transferor Governors representing the interests of the three Churches.
24. Throughout the process it was most heartening to note that it was this category of governor which was consistently being filled most quickly. This is a testament to those who are willing to serve God in this work and the committee thanks ministers, congregations and those who have agreed to be nominated for this and for their service.
25. The view of the SEC is that the role of Transferor Governors is vital for the preservation and promotion of Christian ideals, values and ethos in controlled schools and the committee has pressed for support for churches in recruiting the right people with the right skills, and for support for those who answer this call. This is especially important as these governors need to understand what their specific roles, rights and responsibilities are in representing the interests – historic and current – of the denominations under whose names they serve.
26. To that end, TRC invested in an updated Transferor Governors' Handbook, which was sent to all congregations and commissioned a recruitment video which appeared on the three Churches' websites and was signposted to all congregations. In addition, during February 2019, TRC Executive members took a roadshow around the province entitled 'Set Apart', which gave training to around 300 Transferor Governors. With input from the Methodist and Church of Ireland education secretaries and the CSSC, and led by the SEC convener, the evenings were the first training events in some time and were widely hailed as useful, informative and empowering for those assuming this role.

27. The past year has served as a reminder of our Church's work in education since the formation of the state of Northern Ireland. It has been a proud history of educating in the midst of poverty, social injustice, conflict and secularisation. It has been a labour of love, with the Church building relationships, supporting staff and pupils, celebrating successes and dealing with tragedies. It has been a mission field for promoting the values of Christianity in an increasingly secular world and traversing increasingly sensitive issues in schools.
28. Yet this year has also shown, in research carried out, that, in spite of a changing society, we can go forward with joy and confidence, secure in the knowledge that those who work in our schools and those who send their children to them see in our values something which they appreciate and embrace. Please pray that God will continue to bless those who would seek to bring a Christian influence to the education of our children and young people.

ANDREW BROWN, Convenor

## **PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PANEL**

29. The past year has been challenging for those in our community who are working to promote peace and reconciliation. In Northern Ireland, as a result of a third year without a functioning Executive and Assembly, critical policy and funding decisions remain on ice with resulting stagnation in our public services and general disillusionment among the voters. In addition, the rancour and confusion over Brexit has been negative for political relationships within Northern Ireland, between north and south, and between the UK and the rest of the EU.
30. The legacy of the past continues to cast a shadow over many in our community. The Northern Ireland Office published for consultation proposals for addressing the past which were based largely on the Stormont House Agreement. A working group, which was appointed to make a PCI response to the consultation, met with a number of victims' groups, political leaders, and the PSNI to help inform our answers to the questions raised in the NIO paper. A response was subsequently agreed by the Council for Public Affairs and submitted to the NIO. This was published on the PCI website and has been appended to the end of this report for information and ease of reference. The outcome of the consultation, which attracted a very large volume of replies, is still awaited at time of writing this report.
31. The panel believes that it is important, despite all the current difficulties, for the Churches to be agents of reconciliation and hope within the community. It was encouraged by the initiative of the Church Leaders to meet with the leaders of the main political parties and the subsequent regional meetings with local politicians and representatives of civic society.

32. The panel held a facilitated workshop in March to consider how best PCI can be a voice for reconciliation in the public square. The lessons coming out of the workshop are being reviewed with the aim of setting out some priorities for the panel's work over the next 3-5 years.
33. The PCI Vision for Society adopted by the General Assembly in 2016 provides a sound biblical framework for the Church's work in reconciliation. Some key parts of the vision statement include:
  - As people saved by grace and called by God to grace-filled relationships,
  - We BELIEVE that the Good News of Jesus Christ challenges and equips us to develop radically new attitudes and relationships;
  - We CONFESS our failure to live as Biblically faithful Christian peacebuilders;
  - ACCORDINGLY, WE AFFIRM Christian peacebuilding to be part of Christian discipleship and reassert the Church's calling to pursue a peaceful and just society in our day;
  - We SEEK a more reconciled community at peace with each other.

That Vision is needed more than ever before.

EDGAR JARDINE, Convener

## REPUBLIC OF IRELAND PANEL

The Republic of Ireland Panel met twice since last General Assembly.

34. Presbyterians may be a small minority in the Republic of Ireland but their distinctive witness and influence continues to be recognised in the public square, not least through the participation of former Moderator Very Rev Dr Ivan Patterson in the inauguration of Michael D. Higgins as President of Ireland in November 2018, and the attendance of current Moderator Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen at an event in January 2019 to mark the centenary of the first meeting of the Dáil. Dr McMullen also met with the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney TD along with the leaders of the main Churches in Ireland in October 2018. The convener was also pleased to join a PCI delegation that met with the Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann and the chairperson of the Committee for the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in April 2019.
35. The panel continues to oversee education matters in the Republic of Ireland and this year has seen the introduction of a new admissions policy for primary schools. A key change is that all minority religions (less than 10% of the population) are regarded as one group and so schools under Presbyterian patronage can no longer prioritise Presbyterian pupils in terms of admissions. Information has been circulated to presbyteries to assist them as they navigate these new arrangements.

36. An 'education appreciation' evening was hosted by Derry and Donegal Presbytery in February 2019 to acknowledge the work undertaken by staff in schools under Presbyterian patronage in the Donegal area. The Moderator participated in the evening which also included a performance from a local school choir. The panel suggests that other presbyteries may wish to undertake a similar appreciation event.
37. The panel wishes to express its thanks to Mr Stuart Ferguson and Mr Allen McAdam who have served as PCI representatives on the Secondary Education Committee and have both recently stood down from this responsibility. The panel is grateful to Rev Dr Gerry Clinton for taking up one of these positions, with the other one due to be filled shortly.
38. Following a resolution passed by the General Assembly in 2018 in the aftermath of the referendum on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland the panel wrote to the Taoiseach to convey these views. The panel also raised two other substantive issues in its letter to the Taoiseach – the first on the protection of the role of conscience for those in the medical profession, and the second on working to find common ground to keep abortion 'rare'. Work is also underway to establish a task group to review pastoral care for women in pregnancy crises following the referendum and introduction of the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018, which came into effect on 1 January 2019.
39. A referendum on the removal of the offence of blasphemy from the Constitution of Ireland took place in October 2018. The panel supported the position of the Irish Council of Churches (of which PCI is a member), which in a submission to the Constitutional Convention in 2013 urged the government of Ireland to make the country a 'leading example of protection for freedom of religion, freedom of conscience and the human rights of minorities'. The submission went on to say 'it is vital to ensure that the rights of individuals and communities to practise and live out their faith openly are protected by law. These guarantees may be better achieved through established or new constitutional and legislative provisions for the protection for freedom of religion, belief and expression, as well as legislation against discrimination and hate crimes'.
40. The panel continues to explore ways in which PCI congregations can work effectively together, and with other churches, on key issues of concern for civic society like migration and other socio-economic issues on which the Church should be heard.

TREVOR MORROW, Convener

## DEALING WITH THE PAST PROJECT TASK GROUP

41. The task group's remit is to take forward the project agreed by the 2016 General Assembly to explore how Presbyterians responded to the Troubles from 1968 to 2000. The aim is to tell a wider story than has been available to date, to acknowledge both what is good but also to reflect upon the times when Presbyterians failed to be faithful peacemakers.
42. The task group has worked with Dr Gladys Ganiel and Dr Jamie Yohanis from the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice. It conducted interviews with 122 people including ordained ministers, security forces personnel, victims and survivors, ex-combatants, emergency responders, quiet peacemakers, politicians, some who left the denomination and critical friends.
43. Dr Ganiel has been working on a 65,000 word book provisionally entitled – *Consider Grace*. It will include the stories emerging from 100 of the interviews and it is aimed to launch the book before the end of 2019. There will be a need for others to write some essays reflecting on the book and the stories it tells. It is hoped that the book will encourage other Presbyterians to tell their own stories in a safe and supportive pastoral environment.
44. The panel is developing resources for use at congregational level, and has hosted five focus groups exploring the themes of lament, memory and reconciliation. It is planned to have one further focus group made up of ministers who have had experience of the Troubles along with those starting out on their ministry. The research has already identified a number of emerging lessons including the following:
  - (a) Many ministers in our church were also first responders i.e. those dealing immediately with an atrocity in the area;
  - (b) Many victims/survivors felt that while the pastor at the time of the tragedy was supportive, the church as an institution and succeeding pastors have been less attentive. There is therefore a need for improved training and pastoral support for ministers/lay workers still dealing with trauma;
  - (c) Forgiveness and reconciliation are complex matters both theologically and in practice, and do not have the same meaning for everyone;
  - (d) Spiritual resources such as prayer, Bible reading, pastoral visits and hymns have helped many people towards healing;
  - (e) There is a need to remedy a perceived lack of acknowledgement of victims by PCI, other churches, and wider society;
  - (f) The lack of an agreed societal manner of dealing with the legacy of the past is directly affecting present day relationships;
  - (g) There is a need to create spaces for lament as well as praise.

TONY DAVIDSON, Convener

## APPENDIX 1

### **Response of the Council for Public Affairs of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to the Northern Ireland Office consultation paper: Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past.**

#### **General comments**

1. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) has over 217,000 members belonging to 537 congregations across 19 presbyteries throughout Ireland, north and south. The Council for Public Affairs is authorised by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to speak on behalf of the PCI on matters of public policy. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Northern Ireland Office Consultation Paper: 'Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past'.
2. As one of Ireland's largest Christian denominations, and the largest Protestant Church in Northern Ireland, PCI's membership is comprised of people from all walks of life and includes victims and survivors, security forces personnel, emergency responders and many others who are profoundly affected by the Troubles. A significant number of people who were killed or injured were part of, or remain part of, our congregations, and so we have some understanding of the pain and trauma inflicted over the years.
3. It is impossible to quantify the suffering which violence has visited on so many innocent people. We cannot forget the thousands who lost their loved ones; the many who will carry injuries for the rest of their lives and all the others who have seen the destruction of their homes, farms and businesses through acts of terrorism.
4. There was never moral justification for the illegal taking up of arms by republican and loyalist paramilitary organisations. Therefore, it is incumbent upon those organisations and their political representatives to take responsibility for their actions and to acknowledge their wrongdoing. Responsibility for the vast majority of Troubles-related deaths lies with republican (approx. 60%) and loyalist (approx. 30%) paramilitaries.<sup>1</sup> History cannot be rewritten in an attempt to portray as legitimate what was morally wrong and totally unjustified.
5. The governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland should cooperate with any legacy process and be prepared to acknowledge any wrongdoing by the British and Irish states. Furthermore, allegations of illegal conduct by state forces in both jurisdictions should be investigated on the same basis as any other group or institution.
6. We remain greatly exercised that the legal definition of a victim makes no distinction between the perpetrators of violence and those attacked. This is morally unacceptable. A serious effort must be made to deal

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1 [www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/cts/tables.htm](http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/cts/tables.htm)



with the sense of moral and judicial outrage and hurt that this causes. We realise that there are strongly opposing narratives about the past, but are convinced that a failure to face this distinction in some coherent way will make progress more difficult.

7. As the consultation paper states, there is broad agreement that current arrangements are not delivering enough for victims, survivors and wider society. There are undoubtedly significant shortcomings in terms of truth, justice and care for people who have been physically and mentally injured during the Troubles. Meaningful discussion about reconciliation and related concepts of forgiveness, grace, remorse and repentance is also worryingly absent. We therefore agree that a new approach is required to address the legacy of the past. The choice we face as a society is between shaping a new approach and retaining the status quo.
8. We are acutely aware of the limitations of the institutions set out in the consultation paper. The sad reality is that, while the pursuit of truth and criminal justice are important elements of addressing the legacy of the past, it is likely that there will be few prosecutions and many families will not receive the information they seek. In this context, it is not right to raise the expectations of victims and survivors, as this will only add to hurt and trauma already experienced. However, we believe that the broad framework with revisions, including those outlined below, represents a potential opportunity to create a system that could provide some degree of closure to victims and survivors and bring a measure of healing to our society. We recognise that the broad framework builds on what was set out in the Stormont House Agreement, which built on previous work of the Haass-O'Sullivan talks and the Consultative Group on the Past. A rejection of this broad framework now would most likely set this issue back by many years or potentially forever, and in doing so add even more distress to that already endured. Therefore, we believe the outworking of the broad framework requires revision, including as outlined below.
9. PCI believes that effectively addressing the past, including the needs of victims and survivors, will enable us all to reimagine and create a better future based on 'a more reconciled community at peace with each other'.<sup>2</sup> Any suite of measures which fuels a culture of recrimination at the expense of reconciliation will have failed. A clear focus on reconciliation is needed and we welcome the high priority given to it in the opening sections of the consultation paper. PCI believes that reconciliation is fundamentally about the restoration of broken relationships. This will be the ultimate standard by which the success or failure of any new institutions is judged. However, the lack of agreement across society on what constitutes reconciliation is a significant obstacle. We believe there is scope for the Implementation and Reconciliation Group to initiate a public conversation about reconciliation, which we discuss further below.

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2 PCI Vision for Society Statement, 2016

10. Few people believe that the £150 million promised by the UK government will cover the cost of the proposed institutions. Any additional funding required must not be expected to come from the devolved administration's budget, as this would divert resources needed for health, education, infrastructure etc. These vital public services are essential to building a peaceful society and so any diversion of funds to legacy bodies would be counterproductive. Moreover, it would be disastrous for work to begin only to be interrupted by funding shortages. It is therefore imperative that the UK government and, where appropriate, the Irish government provide clear guarantees in terms of financing the institutions before any are established.

### **Historical Investigations Unit (HIU)**

11. We recognise that the number of prosecutions resulting from the HIU's work is likely to be minimal and that the HIU is more likely to deliver information to families rather than criminal justice. Even this information may fall short of expectations in many cases. That said, the HIU may provide justice for some families and has the potential to provide a level of closure to a greater number who simply seek more information about the death of their loved ones.
12. As the HIU will have greater powers than the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) we believe families who have received an HET report should have the option to request an HIU investigation, without having to meet the criteria outlined in the consultation paper.
13. It is debatable whether the Northern Ireland Policing Board is the appropriate vehicle for monitoring and holding the HIU to account. Understandable concerns have been raised about the HIU, as it investigates paramilitary murders, potentially being held to account by individual members of the Policing Board who may have held connections to those paramilitary organisations. Moreover, we would have great reservations about the Policing Board being diverted from its primary task of overseeing the day to day work of the PSNI. Therefore, an alternative oversight mechanism may be required that will command greater community confidence – one, perhaps, that has international membership. With whatever option is chosen, proper oversight and accountability must be provided for the HIU and its Director.
14. The relatives of those killed outside Northern Ireland should have equitable access to an investigation, and the UK government should receive a formal commitment from the Irish government that An Garda Síochána will fully cooperate with the HIU in respect of cases with a cross-border dimension. Neither of these points is properly addressed in the consultation paper. Clarity is also needed on the Irish government's responsibility to cooperate in relation to crimes committed or initiated in the Republic of Ireland, and perpetrators who fled there. We note the statement that 'the Irish government have committed to passing their own legislation that will ensure they can give their full cooperation to

the new institutions, in a way that is consistent with their constitutional obligations'.<sup>3</sup>

15. We are deeply concerned by the conflicting information in the public domain about the focus of legacy cases. For example, some commentators argue that the HIU caseload will include a disproportionate number of deaths attributed to the security forces. Reliable information needs to be provided by government in a way that commands public confidence.

### **Independent Commission on Information Retrieval (ICIR)**

16. Again, we feel it is a moral responsibility of those in public leadership to be realistic about the readiness of those with information about Troubles-related deaths to come forward, and the ability of the ICIR to deliver closure to families. Alleged perpetrators will not be named in family reports and there will be cases in which the information provided to victims and survivors proves unsatisfactory. However, we also recognise that some families could be provided with closure by the ICIR.
17. We share the scepticism widely expressed about the ability of the HIU and the ICIR to run in parallel if an effective firewall is to be maintained between them. This should be re-examined, as a sequential model may be more effective.

### **Oral History Archive (OHA)**

18. PCI supports the establishment of an Oral History Archive. There is a general acceptance that oral history can be one way of addressing the legacy of the past, by providing a cathartic outlet for participants, increasing understanding of other perspectives and educating wider society and future generations.<sup>4</sup>
19. It should not be assumed that a broad range of contributors will readily engage with the OHA. Potential contributors can have a variety of concerns about sharing their experiences of the Troubles, while others do not even recognise the importance of the story they have to tell. Some people are unwilling to tell their story without the involvement of a trusted intermediary. With that in mind we are concerned that outreach and the involvement of community and faith-based organisations in relation to the OHA is not discussed in the consultation paper. To raise awareness and encourage participation, it would be vitally important for the OHA to work in partnership with groups and individuals that have the trust of potential contributors e.g. churches and ministers, community groups etc. A centralised, top-down OHA model is unlikely to work effectively.

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3 Consultation paper, 53-54.

4 We note that oral history or 'storytelling' is included in a number of government-sanctioned reports, for example, 'We Will Remember Them', report of the NI Victims' Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Bloomfield (1998); Report of the Consultative Group on the Past (2009); and the Haass-O'Sullivan recommendations (2014).

20. In addition to a central repository, we suggest that a partnership scheme be established to support faith and community groups to act as facilitators. Such a scheme could provide assistance to groups in scoping and designing projects, and make available people with relevant expertise to conduct and transcribe interviews. Crucially, those holding the trust and confidence of potential contributors could raise awareness of the OHA, approach prospective interviewees, be involved in interviews and provide pastoral care, as appropriate. We would be pleased to discuss this idea further with officials.
21. We welcome the proposal for the OHA to involve ‘anyone who has been touched by the Troubles’.<sup>5</sup> Special effort should be made to involve individuals in hard-to-reach communities, such as those in the border areas, and women, whose role and perspectives are often ignored or overlooked in public discourse about the Troubles. In general, any awareness-raising about the OHA should strongly emphasise the importance of those we have termed ‘quiet peacemakers’ coming forward to tell their stories e.g. civil servants, healthcare workers, teachers, business owners and others who kept our society functioning as normally as possible in the midst of death and destruction. We believe that much could be learnt from these experiences in terms of peacemaking and conflict resolution.
22. The proposals give the Deputy Keeper of the Records significant powers and responsibilities in potentially contentious areas, not least in deciding which records should form part of the archive. The primary role of the steering group to be appointed by the Deputy Keeper is to provide oral history expertise and it would not, as currently described, provide the required level of oversight to properly support the Deputy Keeper and ensure widespread public confidence in the operation of the archive. We therefore urge the government to consider either strongly enhancing the accountability function of the steering group (in particular, a new appointments procedure would be required) or creating a separate oversight mechanism.
23. Overall, PCI sees great potential in the OHA to facilitate individual and societal healing. However, the apparent lack of vision in the consultation paper of what the OHA could achieve is disappointing. Indeed, there is no sense of what is to be achieved by the OHA beyond the production of a ‘factual historical timeline’ and the transmission of themes to the Implementation and Reconciliation Group for the production of an academic report. As listening to the perspectives of others is key to promoting reconciliation, PCI would welcome a discussion of how material gathered would be disseminated and used appropriately across society for this purpose. There is almost certainly scope within education and among community and faith groups to widen and deepen the impact of the OHA’s work.

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5 Consultation paper, 44

**Implementation and Reconciliation Group**

24. Any process to address the legacy of the past must help to restore relationships broken by the many years of violence. We therefore welcome the intention to put the IRG on a statutory footing, as a body tasked with promoting reconciliation. However, the reconciliation aspect of the IRG's work clearly requires significant development. As a first step, we suggest that the IRG initiate a public conversation about reconciliation, what it means to people across society and how it should be promoted.
25. From our perspective, reconciliation is fundamentally about the restoration of broken relationships and will involve a practical balance of the principals of freedom, justice, peace and truth. At a minimum we believe that acknowledgement and expressions of remorse must be central to any discussion of reconciliation.
26. Since healing in our society will, by definition, be a long term intergenerational process, we believe there is an important role that the IRG could fulfil in setting out proposals for public discussion on how to get that long term work underway. That said, we disavow any suggestion that the IRG alone can bring about reconciliation; there must be wide public discussion and agreement both politically and within civic society on the route and shape of societal healing over the coming years. On the basis of that discussion, the IRG could outline steps needed on a short, medium and long term basis, and offer some guidance on the modalities of those steps.
27. The current proposed membership of the IRG is limited to those appointed by government and political parties. This is unacceptable. We believe that there must be civic society involvement to enable the IRG to navigate complex and divisive issues with the necessary level of expertise and community confidence.

**Further comments**

28. We are concerned that the UK government intends to leave the establishment of a much-awaited Mental Trauma Service to the Northern Ireland Executive, which has not been functional for over 18 months. Given the suite of measures under discussion, it seems quite unreasonable for the government to set aside 'access to high quality services' for victims and survivors due to the continuing political impasse. We urge the government to reconsider this omission.
29. Similarly, we are supportive of a pension for severely physically injured victims and regret that the UK government does not currently intend to address this matter as part of a comprehensive package of legacy measures. It is wrong that much-needed support for innocent victims with life-changing injuries is held up by a dispute about a handful of contentious cases. We note that a number of suggestions have been made to find an accommodation in respect of those cases which would not imply an equivalence between victims and perpetrators. These ideas should be explored further.

30. It is imperative that government does not lose sight of the broader picture when seeking to address the legacy of the past. We are convinced that the path to a more peaceful and reconciled society will be smoother if we give attention to issues which affect our common humanity, including tackling endemic underachievement among sections of our young people, addressing social deprivation and freeing our communities from the grip of criminal gangs. When these matters, which cross the boundaries of sectarian division, are addressed collectively, we believe a better context for human flourishing and building relationships will be created.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

1. The language of ‘rights’ is never far from public debate and discussion. There are calls for a ‘rights-based society’; campaigns for the ‘right’ to die at a time and in a manner of one’s own choosing exemplify just one of the many issues that advocacy groups seek to promote; and statutory agencies with responsibility to ‘champion and guard rights’ like the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission or the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Legally human rights have an authoritative position as the context for making legislation and for the judiciary as the ultimate arbiter for disputes. The increasing promotion of ‘animal rights’ further widens the conversation.
2. Against this backdrop, and as our society places an increasingly high value on rights which are now seen as the ultimate protectors of freedom and happiness, it is important that we, as a Church, both understand the nature of the debates surrounding human rights and are able to make a meaningful and constructive contribution. This paper seeks to establish a framework, based on biblical principles, which will assist the Council for Public Affairs as it seeks to respond to rights-based issues in the public square.

#### **Definitions**

3. Broadly speaking a human right can be described as a right that is possessed, or ought to be possessed by everyone within the state or even across the world. These include the right to clean water, a decent standard of housing, to believe whatever religious views you wish and the right not to be tortured. These basic rights are often described as being based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence and are usually defined and protected by law. Internationally the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations in 1948 as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations.

4. While the UDHR might be seen as the founding document for modern understandings of human rights, it is important to note that the language of rights is neither new nor novel. Some point to the Magna Carta as the first iteration of a rights-based framework for what was to become the United Kingdom, while we are all familiar with the rights to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” enshrined in the American Constitution.
5. Rights are often considered fundamental to civilisation for they are regarded as established pillars of society and culture. In many ways the record of each right and its development can be found in the history of social conflicts. It has been said that rights structure the form of governments, content of laws, and the shape of morality as it is currently perceived.
6. The result is that it is impossible to divorce the concept of rights from the concepts of law and justice. Legal cases, for the most part, can be distilled to the enforcement of rights. For example every person has the right to expect that those with whom they come into contact will not do anything which they foresee will injure them. The law is there to enforce that right.

### **Philosophy of rights**

7. The term ‘rights’ has been used by different groups and people for a range of purposes, some of which are outlined below:
  - (a) Natural rights – universal rights which are said to apply to all people and they exist for every individual and cannot be taken away. These can also be called ‘moral rights’ or ‘inalienable rights’;
  - (b) Legal rights – based on a society’s customary laws, statutes or actions;
  - (c) Claim rights – based on duty when another person has a duty to the right holder. A claim right might be like the example cited above, of each person having a right to expect that those with whom they come into contact will not do anything which they foresee will injure them;
  - (d) Liberty rights – which may be properly described as privileges. A liberty right is simply a freedom or permission for the right holder to do something, like freedom of speech.

### **Policy framework**

8. Practice, policy and legislation relating to human rights continue to evolve. In the UK the key underpinning legislation is the Human Rights Act 1998. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the European Charter on Fundamental Rights also form part of the UK Human Rights legal framework. While withdrawal from the EU means that the European Charter will no longer have effect in the UK, the ECHR will continue to apply as it relates to the Council of Europe of which the UK will remain a member.

9. In the Republic of Ireland the Irish Constitution, ratified in 1937, contains a number of articles on Fundamental Rights (40 – 44) which include matters such as freedom of speech, religious freedom, and family and home life. The 2018 referendum which led to the introduction of legislation on abortion is a key recent change to this part of the Constitution. Ireland is also bound by the European Convention and European Charter on Fundamental Rights.
10. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was established in 2000, created as a consequence of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Its counterpart, the Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC) was similarly established in 2000. This leads to an added dimension for human rights discourse in the island of Ireland where the creation of these bodies was a direct consequence of seeking resolution to conflict. Legislation in 2014 led to a merger between the IHRC and the Equality Authority and the creation of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. In Northern Ireland the Equality Commission, also formed in 2000 as a result of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, remains a separate entity.

### **Rights and the legal system**

11. It is difficult to divorce the concept of rights from the various philosophies which underpin the legal system. Thus the concept of natural law is fundamental to the concept of natural rights. Natural law is based on the concept of third party principles, such as philosophical reasoning or religious principles. For example, the United States Declaration of Independence placed natural rights on a “self-evident” truth that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. “Natural rights” have been identified as “life, liberty and property”. These are objective criteria.
12. But the concept of unalienable rights was criticised by English philosophers in the 18th century who spoke of “legal rights” and these were rights which arise from the actions of government, or evolve from tradition and these are not alienable as they will change as actions of government change, as new traditions develop, or there is a shift in society’s moral standards. These are subjective criteria.

### **Biblical perspective**

13. Discourse about human rights can feel distant from biblical language and from the emphasis in our faith of costly service towards the other (e.g. Philippians 2). At times it can also seem like a ‘human rights agenda’ poses a challenge to the articulation, expression and demonstration of Christian belief in the UK and Ireland. However, we are also aware of the severe threat to our brothers and sisters elsewhere in the world who suffer under regimes where even the most basic of human rights, including the right of freedom to worship enshrined in the UDHR, are denied.



14. In 2010 the General Assembly received a report from the Church and Society Committee of the General Council which set out a detailed Christian perspective on human rights. That report, attached as an Annex, remains the biblical framework for our current work and can be summarised as follows:
- (a) We affirm human dignity – human beings are created in God’s image to know him, serve one another and be stewards of the earth, therefore they must be respected;
  - (b) We affirm human equality – human beings have all been made in the same image by the same Creator therefore we must behave without partiality to all; and,
  - (c) We affirm human responsibility – we have to accept that other people’s rights are our responsibility... As God has laid it upon us to love and serve our neighbour, we must fight for his rights, while being ready to renounce our own in order to do so. This, of course, is not an absolute commitment to the expectations or demands of another person, for a Christian response must itself be consistent with both the broad thrust, and specific guidance, of Scripture.
15. Those who promote human rights usually regard these rights as ‘innate’ – they are derived simply through our being human. Of course we recognise that in a very real sense societies have to be ‘rights-based’ or else anarchy would result. However, our theological reflection at the 2010 General Assembly reminds us that the foundation of our engagement with human rights from a Christian perspective is inherently different from those approaching these matters from a secular viewpoint. But this is no reason to shy away from these conversations. As a cross-party group of MPs noted in their 2012 ‘Clearing the Ground Report’ for Christians in Parliament:

*“It is a Christian responsibility to proclaim the gospel, challenging injustice and to speak out for those without a voice. In a context of competing claims for power it is critically important that Christians respond rather than react to the challenges they face.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **The 21st century**

16. How then does PCI respond rather than react to the human rights discourse of the 21st century? Should there be a reliance on natural law, or on the actions of government, or on the contemporary morals of society? How do we deal with conflicting rights?
17. In the first instance our response is immensely practical, affirming human dignity and our belief that all are created in the image of God through the provision of residential respite and day care for adults with severe learning disability at facilities like Aaron House; English classes or legal advice offered to asylum seekers and migrants who

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1 [www.eauk.org/current-affairs/publications/upload/Clearing-the-ground.pdf](http://www.eauk.org/current-affairs/publications/upload/Clearing-the-ground.pdf)  
[accessed 26/2/19]

engage with International Meeting Point; and the countless ways local congregations seek to meet the needs in their local communities through, for example, homework or lunch clubs.

18. With this in mind the NIHRC's previous work on vulnerable children in Northern Ireland who cannot be cared for within their own family, or on seeking to improve care in hospital emergency departments could have much to commend it from a biblical viewpoint, although as we have already acknowledged the starting points may be completely different. On the other hand our biblical perspective is challenged by the recent NIHRC action to bring forward a case all the way to the Supreme Court that would introduce a broader definition of termination of pregnancy to Northern Ireland.
19. Conflict can also arise between a right to freedom of conscience with rights of others who wish to do things which are within the law but which would offend the conscience of someone else. The Ashers case has been seen as a clash between the natural right of freedom of conscience as against the legal right of protection against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. But that is not a proper characterisation of it. The Ashers case did not in any way abrogate from the duty not to discriminate against anyone in the provision of services on the ground of sexual orientation. What it did say was that a conscientious refusal to promote a particular message was not discriminatory so long as any person, no matter what the personal attributes of that person might be, would be similarly refused. Interestingly, in giving its decision, and as a subsidiary explanation of it, the Supreme Court also observed that the message in support of gay marriage that Ashers were asked to display on the cake was not a proxy for any particular sexual orientation and that "the benefit of the message accrues not only to gay or bisexual people, but to their families and friends and to the wider community who recognise the social benefits which such a commitment can bring."<sup>2</sup>
20. It is also important to remember that the Supreme Court decision in *Bull v Hall* has not been changed by the Ashers case. In the *Bull v Hall* case the owners of a guesthouse refused a homosexual couple accommodation in a double room in their guest house. Their reason for that refusal was their conscientious objection to homosexual practice, and they did not want their property to be used for practices which they considered sinful. In that case the Supreme Court found that such refusal was discriminatory because a heterosexual couple would not have been refused the accommodation. The sexuality of the couple was the reason for the different treatment, and the different treatment was unlawful discrimination.

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2 [www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2017-0020-press-summary.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2017-0020-press-summary.pdf)  
[accessed 26/2/19]

## Conclusion

21. Reflecting on a Christian approach to contemporary thinking on human rights we perceive, along with Professor Julian Rivers of Bristol University that too much of current public debate and discourse is focused on individualism over and against the common good; on autonomy over the legitimate needs and concerns of others; with litigation and conflict becoming early ports of call over the painstaking work of building consensus.<sup>3</sup> This will mean that in practice the Presbyterian Church must continue to be cautious about giving full (or even at times partial) support to the growing list of human rights demands that are presumed to follow from those that are considered to be natural rights. Professor Rivers has observed that:

*“the concept of a right is a powerful tool for doing certain limited moral and legal jobs. Like any powerful tool it needs to be used carefully, but it should neither be over-worked nor abandoned.”<sup>4</sup>*

With this we can agree.

## **ANNEX TO APPENDIX 2** *(as presented to the General Assembly 2010)*

### **Human Rights Position Paper – A Church Perspective**

#### Introduction

The area of human rights has become contested in Northern Ireland. Although agreements were made in this area at the time of the Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement difference and division across the community remains. The Churches have found themselves involved in this debate, seeking to bring a Christian perspective to the issues that arise but have always faced the challenge of a highly politicised debate which sometimes fails to become realistic and meaningful outside of the political accommodations that have to be reached. This position paper therefore seeks to draw together the thinking of PCI thereby enabling Presbyterians to engage in discussions about human rights with information to hand from the church.

Clearly, overzealous approaches to this subject can give it a “bad press”. Human rights can be (mis)represented in the media as little more than a charter for criminals, terrorists and anti-social behaviour. However events in some overseas countries show the dire consequences that may

3 [www.jubilee-centre.org/beyond-the-morality-of-rights-by-julian-rivers/](http://www.jubilee-centre.org/beyond-the-morality-of-rights-by-julian-rivers/) [accessed 4/3/19]

4 As above

ensue for the vulnerable (including minority Christian communities) when human rights are disregarded, so the church cannot ignore the issue.

### **A Christian approach to human rights**

A concern for human rights is not exclusive to Christians, for they share it with people of other faiths or of no faith. Christians differ from secular people on the question of where our concern for human rights is grounded. Many secularists would simply assert, along with the American Declaration of Independence, that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” (An interesting use of the term “created”!) To Christians, attempts to find a purely secular basis for the worth which human beings have, and which accounts for their rights, are not convincing.

Christians share the belief that human rights are grounded in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being but locate the basis of that worth in the fact that each human being bears the image of God and is redemptively loved by God. John Stott (writing in 1984) said:

*The origin of human rights is creation. Man has never “acquired” them. Nor has any government or other authority conferred them. Man has had them from the beginning. He received them with his life from the hand of his Maker. They are inherent in his creation.*

(John Stott *Issues Facing Christians Today*, pp143-144).

The simple yet profound declaration of Genesis:

*So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women.* (Genesis 1:27 CEV)

means that all human beings enjoy, among other things:

- (i) the right to life and the resources to sustain it, for life is a gift from God;
- (ii) a right to human dignity, i.e. the right to receive respect irrespective of age, gender, race or rank or any other way in which we define individual human beings;
- (iii) a responsibility to secure/protect/establish the rights of others, for God is love. Rights only exist in relationship with others, albeit coming into play most significantly when relationships break down. Christians found their belief in relationship within the Trinity believing that God has made us in the Trinitarian image, for mutual relationship. It is out of this relationship of mutuality that Christians are challenged to love God and our neighbour as ourselves;
- (iv) the right to justice, for all have been created equal before God’s law. Historically Christianity has been a major influence in developing the concept of human rights; it was within the Christian theological tradition that the category of human rights originated. The atheist Friedrich Nietzsche,

intending a criticism, said, "...the poison of the doctrine of 'equal rights for all' – it was Christianity that spread it most fundamentally."

## **Biblical and theological foundations informing a Christian understanding of human rights**

### **The fall**

The fall, human disobedience before God, had lasting effects. The Creator's good gifts can be spoiled by human sin and the area of human rights is no exception. The rights that God gave to all human beings equally can easily be corrupted and spoiled by the very things which a concern for human rights seeks to address, the protection of the weak, marginalised or excluded. When fed by an inflated sense of one's own weakness, or the weakness of one's group, talk of equality in rights can degenerate into arguing for "my rights" regardless of the rights of others. The rights of an individual or group are seldom absolute and must be balanced against the rights of other individuals or groups.

The language of "rights" is usually invoked when there is a breakdown in relationships. Conflict can arise between the rights of one individual or group and those of another, e.g. in the Northern Irish context, between organisations wanting to parade in a certain area and residents who object. There can also be a conflict between the rights of an individual and those of a corporate body, e.g. between the rights of an individual worker and the rights of the company that employs him or her. In such situations of competition there can be a tendency for one group to dominate another, so minorities need to be protected from the tyranny of the majority. All such conflicts over rights are a consequence of our fallenness.

### **Scripture**

The Bible does not use the modern vocabulary of "human rights", as it usually emphasizes the responsibilities of the powerful more than the rights of the weak, but concern for human rights is implicit in Scripture. Given the difference between the Old Testament era (when "church" and "state" were coterminous and made laws for the whole community) and the New Testament era, when Christians were a small and powerless minority, it is understandable that, generally speaking, specific provisions for particular matters are found in the Old Testament and fundamental principles in the New.

#### *Old Testament*

The Pentateuch protected the weak and the vulnerable, e.g. "You shall not keep back a hired man's wages till next morning. You shall not treat

the deaf with contempt nor put an obstruction in the way of the blind.” (Leviticus 19: 13-14). It laid down laws about the right to life (e.g. the homicide laws in Numbers 35: 9ff), about property, (e.g. the land laws in Leviticus 25:25-34), and about “the stranger within your gates”. “You shall not oppress a stranger for you were strangers in Egypt” (Exodus 22:21). Concern for the poor is evident in e.g. Deuteronomy 15.11, “I command you to be open-handed towards your brothers and towards the poor and needy in your land” and in the arrangement for poor gleaners at harvest time (Leviticus 19:9-10). The right to a fair trial was recognised. “Hear the law cases and judge righteously between every man and his brother and the stranger; you shall not respect persons in judgment but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man” (Deuteronomy 1:17). The Hebrew prophets too wanted a fair legal system, e.g. “Let justice run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream” (Amos 5:24).

### *New Testament*

In the New Testament Jesus taught his disciples that being citizens of the kingdom of God required unworldly thought and action. “The kings of the pagans have power over their people...but this is not the way it is with you” (Luke 22:25, 26). Secular standards were reversed; instead of a self-righteous demanding of rights there was to be the giving of rights by the acceptance of responsibility for others and loving service to them. “Look out for one another’s interests, not just for your own” (Philippians 2:4). Old Testament provisions are sometimes repeated in the New, e.g. the command in Deuteronomy 15, 11 to be open-handed is echoed in 1 Timothy 6.17f : “Command those who are rich in this present world... to be rich in good deeds and to be generous and willing to share.”

### **Duty to God**

The primary motive for Christian concern for human rights is our duty to God. C.S. Lewis, commenting on such phrases as “What right have they...?” “You’ve no right to be here” “I know my rights” “By rights...” etc., observes that behind such phrases “...there is a tacit acknowledgement of some external standard or norm which can be a source of authority, protection or arbitration. Such a standard or norm has to be independent of the parties in the dispute for it to be worth appealing to. It has to ‘transcend’ them both.” (*Mere Christianity* Ch 1). Sometimes that authority may lie in civil law (e.g. on fair employment) but not always; many people using the language of “rights” might find it difficult to say precisely where they find that higher authority. Christians, however, should be in no doubt. “This transcendent norm is God himself – his righteousness and justice” (John Stott).

The Bible indicates that our responsibility for human rights derives primarily from our responsibility to God. Though he might dispute it,

Cain was answerable to God for his brother. Relevant Old Testament injunctions are often reinforced by such statements as “I [the Lord] command you...” (e.g. Deuteronomy 8:11; 10:13; 13:18; 24:18, 22; etc.) The Book of Proverbs observes “He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker” (Ch 14:31). Micah, in a much-quoted verse, indicates that it is the Lord who requires us “to do justly” etc. (Ch 6:8). Nehemiah 5 takes up the cause of impoverished farmers who were being forced to mortgage their land and eventually to sell their dependents as pledges to pay off excessive interest to the rich. His appeal to their creditors goes directly to their obligation to God. He asks, “Should you not walk in the fear of our God?” (Ch 5:9).

In modern society many groups are quick to fight for their own needs (though not all “needs” are necessarily “rights”) but the primary Christian motive is not self-interest. Of course there are times when the church should speak up for freedom of thought, conscience and belief; individuals, parents and religious institutions have a right to be distinct, and to promote and protect values consistent with their religious convictions. They should not be obliged by state legislation to promote views contrary to their deeply held religious beliefs (e.g. the traditional Christian view of marriage). The church is also justified in defending its own interests in areas like the employment of staff, claiming the right to employ only those whom it considers morally and spiritually suitable for church work, whatever the secular authorities might say. However, the church’s main motive for debating human rights is not self-interest but duty to God.

### **Civil law**

Given that human relationships do break down, human beings need to be protected from one another, whether as individuals or as corporate groups, and if fundamental human rights are to be enforced, those rights need to be justifiable. However civil law, though necessary, has its limitations, for laws may not make people good. Human rights conventions, charters and legislation cannot achieve everything and risk spawning endless fractious litigation. “Judicial decrees may not change the heart but they can restrain the heartless” (Dr Martin Luther King). Attitudes need to change and that is a message that the Christian gospel preaches as it calls its hearers to a change of heart.

### **Responsibility**

In line with Bible teaching, modern Christians stress responsibilities as well as rights.

“We are very suspicious of reasoning which... detaches rights from responsibilities or elevates rights above responsibilities... In Christian thinking it is sometimes better not to insist on the exercise of a perceived right in the interests of the overall wellbeing of a society... To voluntarily set aside one’s rights is not the same as having them denied.”

(PCI Church and Government submission to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, 2001).

Paul showed judgment in exercising the different rights he had. He claimed his legal rights as a Roman citizen in relation to corporal punishment (Acts 22:25) and in his appeal to Caesar (Acts 25:11), yet chose a “tent-making ministry” rather than living off the Christian community as he was entitled to do (Acts 20:33-34).

## APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

The foregoing has practical applications in at least three areas.

### *In the church*

Christian communities should strive to exhibit within their own ranks that alternative society which bears the marks of the kingdom of God. The church will thus be a sign to the world of true human existence under the authority of Christ.

“We have to take more seriously Christ’s intention that the Christian community should set an example to other communities.... The life of the local church... is meant to be a sign of God’s rule. The church should be the one community in the world in which human dignity and equality are invariably recognised and human responsibility for each other accepted; the rights of others are sought and never violated, while our own are often renounced; there is no partiality, favouritism or discrimination; the poor and the weak are defended, and human beings are free to be human as God made us and meant us to be.” (John Stott)

### *In wider society*

Christians have responsibilities towards the wider community, sharing with secularists a genuine concern for the welfare of society. The church has the right and the duty to care about that and speak about it. The Christian gospel, with its message of compassion, requires sensitivity to victims and excluded groups, especially if others are not paying much attention to them. The weak and the vulnerable need protection and the church should say so, even if it is an unpopular cause. The struggle for human rights has given the church some of its modern martyrs, e.g. Janani Luwum (Anglican archbishop in Idi Amin’s Uganda), Oscar Romero (Roman Catholic Archbishop of El Salvador at a time of ruthless government repression) or Dr Martin Luther King (Baptist minister in the USA at a time when the Afro-American community was being treated unfairly). Such Christian leaders highlighted exclusion, injustice and intolerance of difference as being among the primary causes of breaches of human rights and of conflicts between individuals and communities, and they took their stand accordingly.



*For dealing with governments*

Churches have a responsibility under God to address the powers that be. Churches have supported Bills of Rights in such countries as the USA, Canada, the Irish Republic, South Africa and the United Kingdom. No human government is perfect, and the reformed tradition in particular makes provision for the right, even the duty, to resist when human governments violate the purposes for which they were appointed. If necessary the church must be willing to become an offence to the powers that be in its support of the deprived and vulnerable.

**Summary to Annex**

John Stott provides a useful summary of the Christian position.

Here then is a Christian perspective on human rights. First, we affirm human dignity. Because human beings are created in God's image to know him, serve one another and be stewards of the earth, therefore they must be respected. Secondly, we affirm human equality. Because human beings have all been made in the same image by the same Creator, therefore we must...behave without partiality to all. Thirdly we affirm human responsibility because we have to accept that other people's rights are our responsibility. We are our brother's keeper because God has put us in the same human family and so made us related to, and responsible for, one another. The law and the prophets, Jesus and his apostles, all lay on us a particular duty to serve the poor and defend the powerless. As God has laid it upon us to love and serve our neighbour, we must fight for his rights, while being ready to renounce our own in order to do so.

*(Issues Facing Christians Today, pp. 150-151).*

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the General Assembly for a second year express deep concern and frustration about the prolonged absence of an Executive in Northern Ireland, the resulting stagnation in public policy and the negative effects on the most vulnerable in society, and repeat their call for all involved in the political process to find a resolution that establishes good and stable government based on good working relationships.
2. That the General Assembly, recognising the limitations in the proposals set out in the Northern Ireland Office's consultation paper on 'Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's past', nevertheless:
  - (a) believe that the broad framework of investigation, information recovery, historical analysis/storytelling and a reconciliation aspect, could with some modification, present a potential opportunity to contribute to bringing a measure of healing to society in Northern Ireland;
  - (b) reiterate that any one-sided suite of measures, which fuels a culture of recrimination at the expense of reconciliation and the restoration of broken relationships, will have failed.
3. That the General Assembly affirm the role of Transferor Governors in the preservation and promotion of Christian ideals, values and ethos within the Controlled Schools' Sector; and commend all those who have agreed to serve as school governors in any capacity during the 2018-2022 term.
4. That the General Assembly, acknowledging the increasing secularisation of the public square in the Republic of Ireland, welcome the opportunities for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to participate and seek to influence policy for the good of all in society.
5. That the General Assembly commend the paper on 'Human Rights' as guidance for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's engagement on rights-based issues in the public square.
6. That the report of the Council for Public Affairs be received.

# COUNCIL FOR MISSION IN IRELAND

Convener: Very Rev Dr FRANK SELLAR

Secretary: Rev DAVID BRUCE

## INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Mission in Ireland provides operational management and support to the Home Mission, Irish Mission, deaconesses and centrally managed mission projects of the church, including the International Meeting Point, South Belfast Friendship House and Nightlight. It supports the provision of a chaplaincy service in universities and colleges, the healthcare system, the prison service and the armed forces. In addition, the council seeks to assist the denomination in sharpening its missional focus by developing a strategy for mission across Ireland, and by providing advisory comment to the Linkage Commission and other agencies of the church enabling them to allocate their resources to best effect. Under the revised structures, which in 2015 gave birth to the councils, the CMI seeks to partner with colleagues in the Council for Congregational life and Witness, and in particular, the Council for Global Mission with which it forms the Mission Department.
2. The main focus of the council's report to the Assembly in 2019 is:
  - (a) The progress of the Home Mission Review. An Implementation Task Group has been meeting to examine in detail the practical consequences of rolling out the recommendations in the review. Its work needs to continue – as indeed will the process of introducing the new and creative approaches envisaged.
  - (b) The introduction of a Panel on Church Planting, which has begun its work. Reference is made in the report to New Life, New People, New Places – a theme introduced in many of the Mission in Ireland evenings across presbyteries, held in March this year.
  - (c) News of the continuing good work of PCI Chaplains in healthcare, prisons, the armed forces, universities and colleges, and the proposals for a pilot scheme for rural chaplaincy in a number of presbyteries, which the council plans to commence this year.
  - (d) The Belfast Conference. The Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee has been encouraged by the progress of the Belfast Conference. The three presbyteries have now identified a number of projects and situations within their bounds which may be referred to the conference during the incoming year. This collective approach to developing strategy across three presbyteries will

enable the council and the Linkage Commission to prioritise the allocation of money and people to anticipated work in Belfast. Lessons learned in this process may help the church develop fresh approaches in the other major cities on this island.

## HOME MISSION, IRISH MISSION AND DEACONESS COMMITTEE

Directory of Home and Urban Mission charges. Linked congregations (in brackets) are not in the Home Mission. Ministers marked \* are called by CMI as at March 2019.

MINISTER	CHARGE
Rev Colin Anderson	(Frankford, Castleblayney), Corvalley and Ervey
Rev Gunther Andrich*	Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo
Rev Rodney Beacom*	Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge and Newtownbutler
Rev Damien Burke*	Drogheda
Rev Andy Carroll*	Donabate
Rev David Clarke*	Sligo
Rev David Conkey*	Enniscorthy and Wexford
Rev Richie Cronin*	Trinity Cork and Aghada
Rev Molly Deatherage*	Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
Rev Al Dunlop*	Howth and Malahide
Rev Daryl Edwards*	Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount
Rev Helen Freeburn*	Galway (Alternating Scheme)
Rev Andrew Gill*	Blackrock and Bray (call issued 1/5/19)
Rev William Hayes*	Tullamore and Mountmellick
Rev Knox Jones	(Waterside) and Fahan
Rev Vicki Lynch (MCI)	Christ Church, Limerick (Alternating Scheme)

MINISTER	CHARGE
Rev Dr Keith McCrory*	Maynooth
Rev Gary McDowell*	Greystones
Rev Jean Mackarel*	Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan and Bellasis
Rev Colin McKibbin	(Convoy, Carnone, Donoughmore) and Alt
Rev Alan McQuade	(First Monaghan) and Smithborough
Rev Katherine P. Meyer*	Sandymount (Alternating Scheme)
Rev Alan Moore	(Cavanaleck) and Aughtentaine
Rev Susan Moore	(Kerrykeel, Milford) and Rathmullan
Rev William Montgomery*	Fermoy with Cahir
Rev Jonathan Porter*	Dundalk (call issued, 4/4/19)
Rev Mark Proctor*	Naas (pt) with chaplaincy at Tallaght Hospital
Rev Stephen Rea*	Carlow and Athy
Rev David Reid	(Ardstraw) and Douglas
Rev Daniel Reyes Martin*	Corboy and Mullingar
Rev Stephen Richmond*	Donegal and Stranorlar
Rev Rodney Thompson	(Badoney, Corrick) and Glenelly
Rev Andrew Watson*	Carrigart and Dunfanaghy (part-time)
Rev Brian Wilson	Kells (Stated Supply)
Vacant	Arklow
Vacant	(Aughnacloy) and Ballymagrane
Vacant	First Bailieborough, Corraneary, (Trinity Bailieborough)
Vacant	Clones, Stonebridge, Ballyhobridge and Newbliss (part-time)
Vacant	Inch

MINISTER	CHARGE
Vacant	Kilkenny
Vacant	Moville, Greenbank, Carndonagh and Malin
<b>URBAN MISSION</b>	
Vacant	Belvoir
Rev Rodney Cameron*	St Columba's, Lisburn
Rev Mervyn Gibson*	Westbourne
Rev William Harkness*	Great Victoria Street (part-time) with additional missional duties
Rev Robert Love*	Taughmonagh
Rev Danny Rankin*	Strand, Belfast
Rev Lachlan Webster*	Craigavon

3. As notified at the General Assembly in 2018, the proposed amalgamation of Boyle with Sligo took place on 7 December 2018.

## IRISH MISSION WORKERS & DEACONESS PANEL

4. The panel provides supervision and support for deaconesses and Irish mission workers, including the management of their annual conference and retreat, adjustments to the handbook, conduct of three-yearly reviews, granting of sabbatical leave and in-service training and other matters regarding their deployment.
5. The panel records its thanks to Helen Johnston, Mission Support Officer (Member Care) for her work in support of Irish mission workers and deaconesses.
6. The following is the Directory of Irish mission workers and deaconesses, and the location of their service (March 2019)

### Directory of Irish mission workers and the location of their service (March 2019)

NAME	LOCATION
David Boyd	Adelaide Road, Dublin
Tom Dowling	Kilkenny
Keith Preston	International Meeting Point, Belfast
Philip Whelton	Arklow
William Workman	Athy and Carlow

### Directory of deaconesses and the location of their service (March 2019)

NAME	LOCATION
Sonya Anderson	Shore Street, Donaghadee
Eileen Black	South Belfast Friendship House & Great Victoria Street
Rachel Cubitt	Whiteabbey
Eleanor Drysdale	Wellington, Ballymena
Joanne Dunlop	Chaplaincy Team – Antrim & Craigavon Hospitals
Sharon Heron	International Meeting Point, Belfast
Roberta Irvine	Greystone Road, Antrim
Phyllis Linton	West Church, Ballymena

NAME	LOCATION
Amy Magee	Deaconess without Charge
Heather McCracken	Chaplaincy Team – Royal Victoria and Belfast City Hospitals
Tracey Nicholl	St James', Ballymoney
Michelle Purdy	Ballyclare
Hazel Reid	First Broughshane
Margaret Robertson	Elmwood, Lisburn
Rosemary Spiers	Greenwell Street, Newtownards
Evelyn Whyte	First Lisburn

7. The Council received the resignation of Julie Peake as a deaconess on 30 April 2018, and in recording its appreciation for her valuable work, commends her to the prayers of the church.
8. Heidi England, as a student for the diaconate is eligible for call, and is currently serving in a part-time temporary capacity in Hydebank Wood Prison and the NI Women's Prison.
9. Eileen Black was inducted as deaconess in Great Victoria Street Presbyterian Church and the South Belfast Friendship House on 16 November 2018.
10. The Panel has begun consideration of the gender-specific nature of the role of the diaconate within PCI. These preliminary discussions include an exploration of how a non-ordained but called office of the church which may be open to all, might assist the mission of the church.

IAN CARTON, Convener

## **SOUTH BELFAST FRIENDSHIP HOUSE MANAGEMENT PANEL**

11. Deaconess, Mrs Eileen Black, commenced work in Friendship House on 1 November 2018.
12. Rev William Harkness' role has been adjusted to permit him to be Project Leader in Friendship House.
13. The project continues its valuable work in reaching out to the Sandy Row community. Activities include a foodbank, children's and youth ministry, homework clubs, the development of men's ministry, meetings for seniors and summer teams for outreach. An intern has been working alongside the team for most of the year.



14. The team is seeking ways to strengthen the links between Great Victoria Street Church and the House.

MARK SPRATT, Convener

## **INTERNATIONAL MEETING POINT MANAGEMENT PANEL**

15. The Management Panel combines representatives from CMI, the South Belfast Presbytery and the volunteers who work in support of the project through the year.
16. The project remains very busy, making connections with hundreds of migrants each week. Matters under discussion include:
17. Future options for the location of the IMP are under consideration, following the expiration of the lease on the building at 133a Lisburn Road in 2020. A number of options have been discussed and are placed within a wider set of considerations concerning the presbyterian presence in this part of the city of Belfast. Referrals will further take place to the Belfast Conference.
18. The opening of a second International Meeting Point in North Belfast has been considered by the Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee and the North Belfast Presbytery. Steps have been taken to commence this project at Carlisle Circus, which will include a charity shop aimed at young mothers and carers, and the commencement of English language classes. The pilot will run for one year as a project of the presbytery with CMI input and support. A decision will be taken following this regarding the longer term plans and arrangements and be reported to the 2020 General Assembly.

PAT MARTIN, Convener

## **NIGHTLIGHT MANAGEMENT PANEL**

19. The Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee is supervising a review into the work of Nightlight and the wider question of 'night-time' ministry in the Church. Mr Allen McCartney has been appointed as the chair of the review process, which began in March 2019.
20. The panel notes a decline in volunteer involvement in the work of Nightlight in Belfast on the ground.
21. The two Nightlight staff continue their valued work of outreach into the rapidly changing entertainment quarters of Belfast.

DANNY RANKIN, Convener

## HOME MISSION REVIEW PANEL, AND HOME MISSION REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TASK GROUP

22. A summary of the work of the panel and the Implementation Task Group is included as Appendix 1 to this report, and a resolution is appended.

ROY PATTON, Convener

IAN CARTON, Committee Convener

## HEALTHCARE, PRISONS AND FORCES CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE

### Healthcare chaplaincy

#### Directory of PCI Healthcare Chaplains and the location of their service (March 2019)

This directory does not include smaller institutions, specialist or private hospitals and hospices, most of which have their own arrangements in place with local ministers. In the Irish Republic, with some exceptions, PCI chaplains are honorary appointments, typically fulfilled by the local minister. In most Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland, chaplains are employees of the Trust.

NAME	LOCATION
Rev Michael Anderson	Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast
Rev Lindsay Blair	Altnagelvin Hospital
Very Rev Dr Godfrey Brown	Dalriada
Rev David Clarke	Sligo University Hospital
Rev Richie Cronin	Cork University Hospital
Rev David Cupples	South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen
Rev Tony Davidson	St Luke's; Mullinure and Longstone
Susan Dawson	Coordinating Chaplain, Dublin Hospitals
Rev Molly Deatherage	Mayo General Hospital
Rev Ken Doherty	Mater Hospital, Belfast

NAME	LOCATION
Joanne Dunlop (Deaconess Assistant to Chaplain)	Antrim Area Hospital and Craigavon Hospital
Rev Helen Freeburn	University Hospital, Galway
Rev John Gilkinson	Belfast City Hospital (full time)
Rev David Hagan	Cavan General Hospital
Rev Norman Harrison	Royal Group of Hospitals (full time)
Rev Keith Hibbert	Altnagelvin Hospital
Rev Jim Lamont	Letterkenny General Hospital
Rev Vicki Lynch (MCI)	University Hospital, Limerick
Heather McCracken (Deaconess Assistant to the Chaplain)	Royal Group of Hospitals Belfast City Hospital
Rev Roger McElnea	Tyrone and Fermanagh
Rev Keith McIntyre	Daisy Hill Hospital
Rev Stephen McNie	Monaghan General Hospital
Rev Stanley Millen	Dundalk District Hospital (interim)
Rev Dr Ivan Neish	Whiteabbey Hospital
Rev Jane Nelson	Tyrone County Hospital
Rev Leslie Patterson	Lagan Valley Hospital (temporary)
Rev Owen Patterson	Downe Hospital
Rev Mark Proctor	Tallaght Hospital (Adelaide and Meath)
Rev Marlene Taylor	Belfast City Hospital (temporary)
Rev Ivan Thompson	Bluestone Psychiatric Unit
Rev Alan Thompson	South Tyrone Hospital
Vacant	Ulster Hospital, Dundonald

23. The committee continues its work of liaison with the five Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland and with the Health Service Executive in the Irish Republic concerning the provision of Presbyterian chaplaincy services in hospitals across Ireland. Appreciation is noted for the work of PCI chaplains, almost all of whom are part-time, as

they provide pastoral care for patients and staff in busy hospitals.

24. Following the passing of a resolution at the General Assembly in 2018 as part of representations from the churches, the Northern Trust responded regarding its proposals to introduce the generic model of chaplaincy provision across the sites in the Trust. Their modified proposals include a welcome restriction of the implementation of the generic model to a small number of sites.
25. The Committee notes that the provision of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training in Northern Ireland may be transferred to the South Eastern Trust under the direction of the Lead Chaplain. While CPE is not an essential criterion for chaplaincy appointments in Northern Ireland, it is a preferred criterion with some Trusts insisting that successful candidates agree to take units of the course within a timeframe following appointment. Other possible means of qualification and accreditation for healthcare chaplaincy have been discussed.
26. CPE remains an essential criterion for full or substantial part-time chaplaincy appointments in the Irish Republic.

### **Prisons chaplaincy:**

#### **Directory of PCI Prisons' Chaplains and the locations of their service( March 2019)**

NAME	LOCATION
Rev Alan Boal	Mountjoy, Dublin
Heidi England	Hydebank Wood College (part-time and temporary)
Rev Colin Megaw	Woodland's Juvenile Justice Centre
Rev Graham Stockdale	HMP Maghaberry (Coordinating Chaplain, full-time)
Vacant	HMP Magilligan

27. PCI is required to provide a chaplaincy service, funded by the NIPS in the three prison estates in Northern Ireland. Rev Graham Stockdale is full-time PCI Chaplain, and Coordinating Chaplain in HMP Maghaberry. The appointment of a part-time PCI Chaplain in HMP Magilligan is pending. It is possible that a collaborative model involving the three main protestant denominations pooling their resources may result in the appointment of a chaplain with a larger number of allocated hours. Mrs Heidi England (eligible for call as a deaconess) is providing cover in Hydebank Wood College and the NI Women's Magilligan Prison.

## FORCES CHAPLAINCY PANEL

### Directory of Commissioned Chaplains within the Armed Forces (March 2019)

NAME	LOCATION
Rev Mark Donald	Army Reserve (part-time)
Rev Simon Hamilton	Royal Naval Reserve (part-time)
Rev Mark Henderson	Army
Rev Ivan Linton	Army
Rev Graeme McConville	Army
Rev Norman McDowell	Army
Rev Scott Moore	Army Reserve (part-time)
Rev Jonathan Newell	RAF
Rev Heather Rendell	Army
Rev Dr Paul Swinn	Army
Rev Brent van der Linde	Royal Navy
Rev Dr Philip Wilson	Royal Air Force

### Directory of part-time Chaplains to Youth Organisations sponsored by the Armed Forces

NAME	LOCATION
Rev Joseph Andrews	Air Training Corps
Rev Dr Paul Bailie	Army Cadet Force (commissioned)
Rev Kenneth Crowe	Army Cadet Force (commissioned)
Rev Richard Graham	Air Training Corps
Rev Ivan Neish	Air Training Corps
Rev Jane Nelson	Air Training Corps
Rev Prof. Patton Taylor	Air Training Corps

28. It is anticipated that Rev Mark Donald (Army Reserve Chaplain) will be deployed to Afghanistan with 1 Royal Irish from 22 April 2019 for three months, and will thus be serving overseas during the meetings of the General Assembly.
29. Post-ordination training courses - There are practical difficulties for some full-time chaplains to attend these courses, especially if they are serving overseas. Discussion is ongoing with the Council for Training and Ministry.
30. Moderator's visits - The Moderator and some members of the panel visited HMS Duncan during the ship's visit to Belfast. The PCI Chaplain to the Navy, Rev Brent van der Linde, was present. The Moderator has recently visited Germany to meet with Rev Graeme McConville, and plans to visit Rev Dr Philip Wilson and Rev Jonathan Newell in RAF Cranwell in May.
31. Expressions of interest in Forces Chaplaincy: A number of expressions of interest have been received and are being progressed.
32. Memorial Tablet to members of the Assembly killed in the Great War - On Tuesday June 7 1921, a Memorial Tablet to the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who lost their lives in the First World War was unveiled and dedicated in the entrance lobby of Church House. Six names were engraved on the tablet. In the various renovations to the building since, the tablet has been lost. The Forces Chaplaincy Panel has appointed a task group to research the possibility of having a replacement tablet mounted in Assembly Buildings. Work on this is ongoing.
33. Centenary of the addition of the "Royal" title for the Army Chaplains' Department: The council notes with appreciation, the centenary in 2019 of the designation "Royal" to the Army Chaplain's Department, and gives thanks to God for the faithful work of PCI forces chaplains who have served in this specialist ministry.

PATTON TAYLOR, Convener

### **Rural Chaplaincy**

34. Following agreement in principle to proceed towards the appointment of a Rural Chaplain for a three year pilot scheme in the Presbyteries of Armagh, Down, Iveagh and Newry, comment from the presbyteries has been received and considered as the papers for the creation of the post are being finalised.

DONALD PATTON, Committee Convener

## UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE

### Directory of Universities and Colleges Chaplains and the locations of their service (March 2019)

NAME	LOCATION
Rev Dr John Coulter	Ulster University, Coleraine Campus (part-time)
Rev Helen Freeburn	University College, Galway (part-time)
Rev David Gray	Queen's University, Stranmillis and Union Theological College
Rev Julian Hamilton (MCI)	Trinity College, Dublin (part-time)
Rev Vicki Lynch (MCI)	University College, Limerick (part-time)
Rev Dr Keith McCrory	National University of Ireland, Maynooth (part-time)
Rev Cheryl Meban	Ulster University, Jordanstown and Belfast Campuses
Rev Graeme Orr	Ulster University, Magee Campus (part-time)
Rev Andrew Watson	Letterkenny Institute of Technology (part-time)

35. Following the Reviews carried out in the last number of years, firstly in Belfast and then more widely, and reflecting on the feedback from the discussions at the October 2018 meeting of the council, a number of impulses have been identified as helpful in defining the next steps for shaping the approaches to student ministry across our Universities and Colleges Chaplaincy in particular.
36. University and college chaplaincy and student ministry is kingdom-building work - mission on our doorstep. Students are tomorrow's leaders but many of them (including Christian students) are struggling with their own identity and often lack the resilience to cope with the challenges they face. Chaplains also serve the whole university community - including not just the students but also the academic, administrative and ancillary staff. The committee notes with concern that within this vital missional setting, the PCI chaplaincy presence in tertiary level educational institutions (universities, university colleges; FE colleges, colleges of technology etc.) is patchy, and in many places completely absent. PCI has no chaplain in any of the Dublin

- institutions. In Belfast there are 60,000 tertiary level students and two full time chaplains and one assistant to the chaplain.
37. The committee holds to the working principle of chaplaincy as being missional as well as pastoral, and the work of a chaplain being rooted in an all-age worshipping community. In its recent review it urged that this work be designated as a special missional area within presbyteries: chaplains need to be more visible and more accessible, both on campus and in halls of residence but a part-time ministerial appointment, more often than not, simply precludes this.
  38. The committee therefore wishes to encourage churches or presbyteries to become more involved with the centres of tertiary level education within their bounds and to reach out to them. While the formal link with an educational institution might be an ordained person (or a deaconess), the actual work on the ground could be delivered by others - including interns, lay people, volunteers, post-graduate students - all of whom could be part-time members of a chaplaincy team. The key will be for those involved to have a vision for reaching students and the passion to carry it out. In some areas local churches might come together to finance a student worker, while in other places PCI may need to consider appropriate partnerships. There is a need for creativity and imagination in addressing this shortage of personnel on the ground.
  39. The committee also stresses the importance of building in training for chaplaincy work as part of ministerial and deaconess training at Union Theological College, and is grateful for early encouragements in that direction.

## **THE DERRYVOLGIE AND ELMWOOD AVENUE MANAGEMENT PANEL**

40. The construction phase of refurbishment work in Derryvolgie has been completed, with the final aspects of sign-off in progress.
41. Adjustments to fee structures in Derryvolgie have been implemented to ensure the generation of a financial reserve of future refurbishment work on the property.
42. In the Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue, and noting the General Assembly resolution in 2017 that the building be 'retained for ministry purposes at no ongoing cost to the Church', the panel has sought to re-negotiate the terms of leases of tenants in the building. It will be possible to retain the building for ministry purposes by reallocating space to permit the chaplain to have access to the appropriate rooms for the development of his work. It is doubtful that the building can be run at 'no ongoing cost to the church', but the panel has successfully reduced the costs and boosted the income to reduce the costs to



manageable levels. One tenant, having been unable to accept the revised terms of their lease, has left the building. Clements Café now operates a commercial café on the ground floor. The panel notes that The Students' Union building on the corner of Elmwood Avenue is scheduled for demolition later in 2019. This will change the footfall patterns in the area for the next three years, drawing more students past the doors of the Chaplaincy Centre as they move along Elmwood Avenue to the temporary accommodation being allocated to the Students' Union during the construction phase.

JOHNSTON LAMBE, Convener

MAUREEN BENNETT, Committee Convener

## **STRATEGY FOR MISSION COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

43. The committee seeks to assist the denomination in developing a strategy for its mission in Ireland. It affirms the broad priorities for missional development as expressed by the General Assembly in the past, including:
  - (a) The six major cities of Ireland;
  - (b) Larger population centres;
  - (c) The eastern seaboard of Ireland;
  - (d) Places where there is no other reformed witness;
  - (e) Places where PCI has a historic presence.
44. The committee affirms the importance of church planting, and has appointed a panel to address this question specifically.
45. The council delegates to the committee the provision of advisory comment for the Linkage Commission on matters requested by it, usually when leave to call is being sought.
46. The committee oversees the work of mission grants allocation, specifically the Irish Mission Fund and the Mission Support Grant scheme.
47. The committee facilitates the work of the Belfast Conference, where the three Belfast presbyteries act collaboratively in identifying and assessing existing and possible future initiatives in mission. Advisory comment to the Linkage Commission or the council can be offered from the Conference.

## BELFAST CONFERENCE

*The Very Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop writes:*

- (a) The Conference has completed drafts of the mechanism to receive referrals for advisory comment and has worked through some project and congregational proposals in principle. Presbyteries have identified probable referrals to the conference for the next calendar year.
- (b) The three Belfast presbyteries now have the same remits for their Mission Standing Committees, so that there is a uniformity of expectation when referrals are made and responses offered.

## CHURCH PLANTING PANEL

### 'New Life, New People, New Places'

#### 48. Remit of the Church Planting Panel

- (a) To act in support of existing church plants, and ministers called to this work
- (b) To support the work of church revitalisation.
  - (i) (NOTE: The committee notes the wide range of work potentially covered by the term 'revitalisation' and recognises the respective roles and remits of other bodies in the church. For now, revitalisation remains in the remit of the Panel but this may be adjusted by the Committee during the year, following consultation with others.)
- (c) To assist the CMI Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee in the identification of potential locations for church planting.
- (d) To assist the Home Mission Committee, where appropriate, in the recruitment and selection of church planters.
- (e) To engage with the Council for Training in Ministry regarding the training and equipping of students for the ministry and others for the specialist work of church planting.

#### 49. Summary of the early work of the panel. In the panel's discussions the two key issues raised were that of the Planter and the Place.

- (a) The Planter: There is a need for a process whereby we assess and identify people with the required gift-set for church planting and revitalisation in PCI. There is a need for more robust training within the denomination (including for ministry students) for church planting and revitalisation. How can the church develop a pathway for a Planter to learn and be trained whilst actively engaging in church planting? How might we suggest a range of flexible options for those considering church planting? It is noted that greater flexibility and more options in the deployment

of personnel has been developed in recent years with the introduction of Accredited Preachers, Auxiliary Ministers, part time ministry, and Community Outreach Workers. The council has commenced early discussions to explore a non-gender specific diaconate which, if adopted, may add a further pathway for staff deployment in pioneering situations.

- (b) The Place: 'where from' is at least as important as 'where to'. The target location should ideally be planted from an 'island of strength'. Either: an existing (even very small) PCI location that has a good relationship with the target community, or a strong PCI congregation nearby the community being considered. This stronger congregation may have some families living within the target community. There is a need to be sensitive to 'kairos' moments when the Spirit is working. This will encourage an organic approach to deciding 'where to'. A church should probably not be planted where there is already another reformed witness. Significant community profiling is helpful to understand the population (is it significant and growing), age profile, spiritual profile, housing trends, transport links and education facilities.

50. How can CMI work to make planting a 'normal' part of PCI?

- (a) The people: The Church Planter should seek to grow a 'core group' of people from within the island of strength who would be willing to plant elsewhere. This group should be large enough and have the right combination of gifts to form the nucleus of a worshipping community (including finance, music, pastoral gifts etc.). Experience from Donabate and Maynooth suggests that approximately 20 people are needed at the start.
- (b) Piloting: The Church Planter and core group should pilot a range of initiatives in the plant location to build relationships and connect with the community. This helps create momentum, credibility and trust prior to the official launch of the plant. Alongside the above, there is a need for careful consideration of how the plant will be financed in the first three to five years, and what pastoral/leadership support mechanism is in place to assist those involved in the church plant.
- (c) Leadership. The panel notes carefully the need for wisdom in the development of leadership in new church situations. PCI practice in the past has been that the person identified as the pioneer (such as in the former Church Extension model) has been an ordained minister of Word and sacrament called to the role, who may or may not be called subsequently as the minister of the church when it acquires congregational status. The question of a continuing role for pioneer staff, both ordained and other, in the leadership in a church plant is being actively and widely discussed, before firm proposals are brought to the General Assembly for inclusion in legislation.

- (d) Dialogue with other denominations and agencies involved in church planting are ongoing. These include:
- (i) FORGE;
  - (ii) FIEC through its revitalization coordinator;
  - (iii) The Church Planting Collective network (Acts 29, Commission and FIEC).

MARTIN McNEELY and TOM GILLIAM, Co-Conveners

## **MISSION GRANTS PANEL**

- 51. Irish Mission Fund and Mission Support Grants were assessed and allocated during the year, as shown in the Council accounts.
- 52. The panel notes that the full allocation of budget for grants was not used in the current year, and that work to promote the availability of grants for congregations seeking support for mission work should be undertaken.

KENNY HANNA, Convener

### **Wider strategic issues**

- 53. Urban Mission Network. The Urban Mission Network continues to develop its work with 40 or more members on social media and with monthly input. A group from the network travelled to the '20 Schemes weekender' event in Edinburgh.
- 54. Rural Mission Strategy. Proposals to create the position of Rural Chaplain (pilot scheme) have been developed and presbytery comment has been sought and received. Adjustments are being made to the core proposal documents before a decision is taken to advertise the vacant position.
- 55. Nightlight Review. The committee is supervising the work of a review into the work of Nightlight in Belfast, and to include a wider assessment of PCI's involvement in night-time ministry outside Belfast. In many larger towns across Ireland, the weekend culture of clubbing and late-night entertainment is a significant concern, and some congregations have taken proactive and effective steps to reach out in this environment.
- 56. Migrants Ministry. The committee has considered proposals for the opening of a second branch of the International Meeting Point in North Belfast. Steps have been taken to release the IMP Project Leader for some days each week to permit the new project to get started. The project will be monitored in its early stages by a joint working group involving representatives of CMI and the presbytery.

BEN WALKER, Committee Convener

## FINANCE AND PROPERTY PANELS

57. Finance Manager, Mr Nehru Dass, provides invaluable support to the Finance and Property Panels in their work on behalf of the council. The Property Support Officer, Graham Patterson, continues to help and advise congregations on the best way forward when considering property issues or submitting grant applications in Home/Urban Mission situations.
58. The substantial deficit on the income and expenditure accounts for 2018 was anticipated, and is largely accounted for by the completion of the refurbishment works in Derryvolgie Hall, and some required upgrading to the facilities in Elmwood Avenue prior to letting the ground floor to a commercial tenant. Some further cost overruns are explained by additional necessary work undertaken in the course of this contract.
59. Financial planning to restore funds for future maintenance and upgrading of the Derryvolgie building has been put in place, with a scaled increase in fees in line with rates charged in an expanding private sector market for student accommodation in Belfast.
60. Elmwood Avenue expenditure was necessary to upgrade aspects of the accommodation to meet the needs of a financially advantageous client operating a café from the ground floor. An estimated payback period on expenditure incurred of approximately five years on current rental income has been put in place.
61. Planned grant expenditure on the new church development in Maynooth is included in the budget for the current year and 2020 – and was not drawn down in the current period as the project has been delayed at planning stage (see item 63 below).
62. Disposal of assets. The former Carlingford church was sold during the year, generating income of €250,000 which will now be available for church planting and revitalisation work in the area.
63. Maynooth, new church building. The Property Panel notes that progress towards planning permission has been slower than anticipated, and costs have risen as time has gone on. However, the council fully anticipates that work will begin on site this year, and decisions on the full extent of grant support to the project will be taken for 2019 and 2020 as final costings are signed-off.
64. Trinity Cork and Aghada Manse. The sale of the old manse at 63 Rochestown Road, Cork, has been completed. Short-term loan assistance was provided by CMI for this Home Mission charge towards the purchase of a replacement manse prior to the induction of their new minister.
65. The Finance Panel notes with appreciation the generous support received from bequests, and the continuing income from the United

Appeal and PW, without which much of the council's work could not take place. The draft budget for 2020 anticipates a request to the United Appeal for £1,065,000 – an unchanged amount to that awarded in 2019.

66. The low uptake of grants is a matter of concern, and has been referenced elsewhere in the reports. The Mission Grants Panel is addressing this matter.

DENIS GUILER, Convener Finance Panel

CYRIL CAVAN, Convener, Property Panel

## APPENDIX 1

### Home Mission Review report (2018/19)

1. This paragraph is a summary of the main points in the Home Mission Review as received by the General Assembly in 2018:
  - (a) The purpose of the Home Mission, as described in the Code (para 114), is to provide a more flexible organisation within the general structures of the Church for missional development. Currently this flexibility is primarily exercised in the appointment process for ministers, who are called by the Council rather than the congregation. Support is largely given in the form of financial grants, with some accompaniment for Home Mission ministers by Council staff.
  - (b) The Review notes that in the current operation the scheme has become static in that congregations can enter the Home Mission but there are few incentives or encouragements to leave it.
  - (c) The Review proposes that the Home Mission becomes a process for congregations rather than a destination. The aim of the process is that, where possible, the life, spiritual health, fruitfulness and long-term stability of congregations will be enhanced and secured.
  - (d) The Review proposes the option of three pathways for congregations beginning this journey:
    - (i) Planting
    - (ii) Revitalising
    - (iii) Sustaining
  - (e) Entry into the process will be based on clear criteria, with an individually tailored plan for the process being drawn up with the congregation as it commences.

- (f) This Review proposes that the Home Mission should continue to provide flexibility for missional development in strategic settings, through accompaniment offered to the leadership. This support offered should offer a range of inputs including:
    - (i) Training
    - (ii) Mentoring
    - (iii) Networking opportunities
    - (iv) Financial grants
  - (g) Exit from the Home Mission scheme will occur when the agreed plan has reached its conclusion.
2. Progress:
- (a) An Implementation Task Group was formed to address the detailed matters of process and legislation leading to the commencement of the new scheme. It is recognised that the transition from the old to the new scheme will take several years to complete, given the number of congregations involved. Decisions required each time a congregation moves from the old to the new scheme include:
    - (i) Agreement of pathway within the new scheme;
    - (ii) Management of property;
    - (iii) Continuing terms of call for ministers;
    - (iv) Agreement of changes to review arrangements.
  - (b) Selection of ministers: In discerning the call of God upon the life of any individual minister who wishes to candidate for service within the Home Mission, those charged with the task of candidate selection will
    - (i) Recognise their dependence on God to call and equip his leaders.
    - (ii) Seek to learn from candidate selection approaches used in PCI Partner Churches and other specialist pioneering agencies.
    - (iii) Acknowledge the differing leadership gifts described in (for example) Ephesians 4:1-16.
    - (iv) Determine the gifts-set required in the local setting, while recognising that different skills may be required for the three identified Home Mission pathways within the new scheme,
    - (v) Seek evidence of the candidates' giftedness based on their past training and experience,
  - (c) Process of accompaniment for the minister and elders of the congregation. Once decisions have been made about the pathway, a process of accompaniment for the leadership of the congregation is envisaged under the new scheme. This will be delivered by:

- CMI and CCLW Executive Staff
  - The recruitment at presbytery level, of a number of senior, experienced mentors working in a voluntary capacity
- (d) In the course of 2018/19 initial and potentially valuable discussions have taken place with some other agencies including Forge (a church planting support agency based in Scotland), and Serge, (a planting and mission agency emerging from the PCA, with staff in Ireland).
- (e) Insofar as these or other agencies may assist in resourcing the accompaniment of local congregations in the new scheme, their services may be called upon.
3. Reviews
- (a) The report notes the two main reviews required under current arrangements:
- (i) Presbytery consultations undertaken on a cycle over a period of years
  - (ii) Reviewable Tenure Reviews – if this has been required by the Linkage Commission at the time of granting leave to call.
- (b) The Task Group affirms the primacy of these review processes in any additional assessment of progress and congregational health within the new scheme.
- (c) The major additional element for review in the Home Mission will be the establishment of appropriate criteria for exit from the scheme. Such criteria may include:
- (i) Local governance arrangements, which are consistent with Presbyterian policy and appropriate to the local needs
  - (ii) Financial sustainability
  - (iii) Fruitfulness and growth, both numerically and in depth, and including the development of local leadership and discipleship more generally
  - (iv) Clarity of vision for mission in the future
- (d) Issues in monitoring progress against these criteria include:
- (i) The means for determining progress towards these stated goals
  - (ii) The role of the mentor who accompanies the leadership, in assessing whether the congregation has met the criteria, and/ or what progress has been made
  - (iii) The relative roles of presbytery and the CMI in determining exit from the scheme.



#### 4. Legislation

- (a) Based on the experience of CMI and the Presbytery of Dublin & Munster (and discussed further with the Church Planting Panel) the following points of learning regarding governance in Church Plants have been noted and referred to the Code Republishing Panel for possible drafting into legislation.
  - (i) A Joint Panel, made up of representatives from CMI and presbytery, should be appointed to supervise the emerging Church Plant from its earliest days.
  - (ii) If and when the Church Plant transitions to weekly worship on Sundays, an Interim kirk session should be appointed by the presbytery to oversee the work. There ought to be a strong component of shared membership between the interim kirk session and the Joint Panel.
  - (iii) A Church Planter should be identified early and be appointed under the call of the CMI, either as a lay agent (reporting to a neighbouring minister) or an ordained minister appointed to special work. The Planter must be accountable to presbytery, but will report to the Joint Panel. If an ordained minister - the Planter will also act as Moderator of the interim kirk session.
  - (iv) The appointment of a locally identified 'Reference Group' made up of members of the emerging Church Plant could be encouraged – especially to manage the practicalities of running the regular activities.
  - (v) Further work is needed on the various roles and responsibilities of a lay agent or other non-ordained staff member as the local work gathers momentum, but the Task Group discourages the assumption that there must be no continuing role. It is noted that the skills and insights gleaned from such work may equip a local staff worker or lay agent to continue a similar role elsewhere as part of a new Plant.
  - (vi) At the time of change of status to a congregation, the General Assembly decides on the basis of proposed terms from the Linkage Commission, how and when this happens. A minister is called by CMI, under Home Mission rules, to lead the work – possibly heading up a team.
  - (vii) The consent of the people is obtained regarding the choice of their minister.
  - (viii) The planter must resign his/her charge before being considered as a candidate for the newly constituted congregation.

## 5. Conclusion

- (a) It is recognised that because the transition from the old scheme to the new scheme will take time, it will be a continuing responsibility of the CMI to monitor this progress, through its Home Mission Committee.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the General Assembly affirm the work of staff and volunteers in mission projects under the auspices of the Council for Mission in Ireland, including South Belfast Friendship House, Nightlight and the International Meeting Point.
2. That the General Assembly give thanks for the successful completion of the refurbishment of Derryvolgie Hall, and encourage presbyteries to address the significant opportunities afforded by the location of university and college campuses within their bounds for the development of student mission and ministry.
3. That the General Assembly affirm the work of the Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee, and in particular its promotion of New Life, New People, New Places in support of Presbyterian church planting.
4. That the General Assembly affirm the work of the Council for Mission in Ireland in support of the Home Mission congregations and ministers and that the Home Mission Review Panel and the Home Mission Review Implementation Task Group remain in place for a further year, pending completion of arrangements for implementation of the Home Mission review, and that, in consultation with presbyteries and the Linkage Commission, arrangements be made for the transition of congregations from the old scheme to the new scheme or, where appropriate, to enter or exit the scheme.
5. That the work of deaconesses, Irish mission workers and PCI chaplains in healthcare, prisons, the armed forces, universities and colleges be commended to the Church for prayer, both privately and in services of worship.
6. That the report of the Council for Mission in Ireland be received.

## MEMORIAL OF THE SOUTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY

### **To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on 3rd June 2019.**

The Memorial of the Belfast South Presbytery respectfully sheweth:

That for the past few years, the Assembly out of desire for the orthodoxy of their sister Church, the Church of Scotland, have sought by various means to indicate their concern about decisions taken by the Assembly of that church concerning same sex relationships and the ministry of the church.

The Presbytery is unhappy that this concern has led to refusing to send the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) to the Assembly of the Church of Scotland for several years and from 2019 onwards to make this permanent and to withdraw the invitation to the Scottish Moderator to attend the PCI Assembly.

The Presbytery recognises that, whatever the reasons may have been for these decisions, they could now be seen as churlish and a derogation of the fraternal relationships that have benefited both churches over centuries.

The Presbytery recognises the ongoing relationships on matters of mutual interest but believes that the PCI Moderator's absence leaves those who share our church's stance on these matters within the Church of Scotland, and are seeking to change the decisions of that Church from within, even more isolated at this crucial time.

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable General Assembly to accept Notice of Motion to rescind the decision of the 2018 General Assembly no longer to issue an invitation to or accept an invitation from the Church of Scotland.

The Presbytery recognises that if its notice of motion is received at the 2019 Assembly, there will be a full debate at the 2020 General Assembly, and if this is then approved at the 2020 Assembly, the invitation to the Scottish Moderator would be reinstated for the 2021 Assembly and our Moderator would be able to accept an invitation to the 2021 Scottish Assembly, if such invitation is received.

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

Adopted by the Presbytery of South Belfast at its meeting in in Windsor on Tuesday 5th March 2019.

ANNE TOLLAND, Moderator

MORRIS GAULT, Clerk

Resolution: That the Memorial be received and its prayer granted.

Proposed by: Rev Anne Tolland

Seconded by: Rev Morris Gault

# COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS

Convener: Rev COLIN MORRISON

Secretary: Rev DAVID THOMPSON

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness has met on two occasions since last year's General Assembly.
2. The report details:
  - (a) Two important themes: building the community of the church and bolstering the outward face of the church.
  - (b) The work of the following eight committees:
    - (i) Discipleship Committee (including the Good Relations Panel)
    - (ii) Global Mission Involvement Committee
    - (iii) Leadership Committee (including the Elders' Panel and Youth Assembly)
    - (iv) Outreach Committee
    - (v) Pastoral Care Committee
    - (vi) Worship Committee
    - (vii) Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee (including Presbyterian Women)
    - (viii) Youth, Children's and Family Strategy and Coordination Committee.
  - (c) The work of the Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel.
  - (d) The work of the following four task groups
    - (i) Baptism Resources Task Group
    - (ii) Church Membership Resource Task Group
    - (iii) The Evangelistic and Discipleship Pathways Task Group
    - (iv) Developing Congregational Use of Social Media Task Group.
  - (e) Partnership with presbyteries.
  - (f) Preparations for transitioning to a more streamlined structure of committees, panels and task groups.

- (g) A snapshot of big picture developments across the Council's remit since 2015.
- (h) A programme of anticipated major events in 2019/20.
- (i) The ongoing challenge of effective communication with congregations.
- (j) Three other particular areas requiring further consideration.

### **Seeking simplicity on the other side of complexity**

3. It is often said there is a simplicity which lies on the other side of complexity that should be much sought. In many ways, that simplicity is what the Council for Congregational Life and Witness is pursuing, both in its own work and, more significantly, in its support for congregations in the development of their ministry and mission.
4. There are many facets to the life and witness of any congregation. Developing our life together as the people of God in a local church entails a complex mix of worship, pastoral care, discipleship, leadership, outreach and sharing in God's wider work in the world. It involves men, women, old, young, families, singles, members who are passing through all sorts of life circumstances, happy and sad. These useful ways of viewing church from a range of perspectives can, however, too easily become silos, overcomplicating our thinking and leaving us overwhelmed by demands. This is especially true at a time when many congregations are getting smaller and there are often fewer and fewer people to do what often seems like an ever-lengthening list of more and more things. In what is also a complex time of change for the church, a multiplication of new ideas, language and programming can further contribute to our feeling paralysed, rather than energised.
5. So, can we identify a simpler way in which all these facets, of what it is to be church, better overlap and interlock? Might we usefully strip church back to two things - an inward face of congregational life and an outward face of congregational witness? The Council for Congregational Life and Witness believes so. From June 2019, as agreed by last year's General Assembly, its existing complex structure of committees and panels will give way to two core committees – one for congregational life, the other for congregational witness. Further details can be found in paragraph 90 of this report. While the breadth and complexity of the Council's remit remains unchanged, the streamlining of the way it is delivered will enable a greater coordination of the work and simplicity of message.

### **Emerging and converging themes**

6. This greater coordination and simplicity is already materialising from the complexity of the Council agenda in the evolution of one emerging and converging theme. Both reflect priorities that pop up persistently in a variety of conversations and threads that God seems to be drawing together.

7. The first is largely an issue of developing a culture that needs to undergird all of congregational life. Building the community life of the church is an essential priority emerging in areas of pastoral life, discipleship, leadership, worship and, by extension, outreach. If we are to care for one another, walk with one another in the journey of faith, lead and follow together as one in a shared direction and worship with one another in ways that are more than mere consumerism, then we need to share life together at more than a superficial level. In a world that is lonely and fractured, that community will bear a witness to others.
8. The second reflects a convergence of work which will be particularly highlighted in the Council's alternative presentation on Tuesday evening of Assembly week. It is the need to bolster the outward face of the church. Several new Council resources and initiatives to be launched at this year's General Assembly take up this theme in a variety of ways. The Share resource, about which more details can be found under the report of the Outreach Committee (paragraph 37), will help congregations reflect on how to build relationships with those outside the church, the kind of community in which they can find a home and ways of inviting encounter with the gospel message. The Good Relations Panel have been addressing the issue of what it means to be a welcoming church. The Inside Out resource, detailed in the report of the Discipleship Committee (paragraph 16), will challenge congregations in the area of biblical hospitality and approachability by others who are often not like us in a variety of ways. The Youth, Children's and Family Strategy and Coordination Committee report details a resource, crafted specially to engage with unchurched children, which has been produced in conjunction with a series of books published by the Good Book Company (paragraph 67). The Go Deep, Go Wide initiative, aimed at enlivening congregational involvement in global mission, reported under the Global Mission Involvement Committee (paragraph 19), represents a recognition that in today's global village our reach of impact as congregations in mission can extend a lot further than it used to in simple, but significant, ways.
9. All of the above represents an important rebalancing of the Council's overall remit between an emphasis on helping the local church develop the inward face of its congregational life and the outward face of its congregational witness.
10. In 2019/20, the Council will seek to identify significant ways in which to bring the priority of building the community life of the church before congregations and to build on the momentum created by the resources released to bolster the outward face of the church.

### **Accompanying the development of congregational life and witness**

11. The Council seeks to set itself in constant listening mode. As such, it derives direction from ongoing feedback from congregations, gathered in a variety of ways, including:

- General Assembly – at which there is careful consideration given to all views expressed.
  - Council meetings – at which ‘15 minute discussions’ have become a crucial way of testing and sharpening ideas with as wide a representation of congregations as possible outside of the General Assembly. Key aspects of each Council meeting are also disseminated to each presbytery with an invitation for comment.
  - Committee meetings – at which agendas are carefully shaped for facilitated discussion and meetings sharply focused on granting permissions to deliver pieces of work.
  - Presbytery events – where part of the evening gathers feedback on the three greatest challenges congregations find themselves facing.
  - Focus groups – in which smaller groups of key leaders are drawn together from a variety of congregational situations to inform agendas.
  - Major events – after which comments collected are fed forward to continue to help organising groups refine and nuance future programming.
  - Conversations – with a wide variety of those who are ministering on the ground all over the island.
12. Again, this year, the detail of the Council’s work has been divided for direction and delivery to committees, panels and task groups. The following section offers an overview of their work. Some of it represents elements that have become an established part of the Council’s output. Some is very much work in progress. Some is at an even more embryonic stage.
13. Once again, this year, Council invites and welcomes the comments of the General Assembly on what is being delivered, what is under discussion and what isn’t, but may need to be. It is committed to ongoing refinement, nuancing and fresh prioritisation of any aspect of its remit in response to the collectively expressed needs of congregations.

## **DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE**

14. This year saw the launch of two new resources for discipleship under the brand *Proximity*. As the name suggests, these resources are aimed at relational discipleship in ones or twos, rather than the larger group settings that are often both more prevalent in our church life and generally better resourced. With the launch of the first resource, *Seasons of life*, in September 2018, events in Belfast, Ballygawley, Ballymoney, Ballydown and Lucan offered insight into ways in which the tool could be used as well as some basic skills in one-to-one discipling. The second in the series came in January 2019. Entitled *Life in God’s Story*, it offers a framework for life-related discussion of the flow of the Bible story



and how it shapes our understanding of God's world and our place in it. Feedback on both resources has been positive. Two more titles in the series are planned for 2019/20.

15. A follow up to last year's Disciple Makers' Network was held in November 2018 in which a variety of congregational stories of progress in disciple making were shared. A second event is planned for Friday 21 June 2019 in Assembly Buildings, at which Mark Stirling of the Chalmers Institute will be the speaker. A Belfast-based Disciple Makers' Network is planned for 2019/20.
16. The Good Relations Panel, which reports to the committee, is launching what will be an important resource offering congregations a way of considering and developing their culture of welcome and inclusivity. Entitled, *Inside Out: Welcoming others as Christ has Welcomed us*, the resource takes the form of eight Bible studies with a variety of accompanying DVD material. Introductory sessions focus on biblical hospitality, becoming more aware of difference and developing a culture of welcome. They are followed by further sessions encouraging consideration of how to show God's welcome to those from another culture or country, adults with disabilities, and those who hold a worldview which we do not endorse, but who, as people, we want to befriend. The resource will be available as a download from the PCI website. Each part could be as a series on the theme, or as a standalone session.
17. The committee is giving attention to maintaining and developing the focus and particular contribution of the Transform event to the discipleship challenges and opportunities of the young adult season of life. Rachel Jones, author of *Is This It?* a recent book on young adult discipleship, has been invited to facilitate a group in sharpening and nuancing the young adult ministry agenda.

MARK GOUDY, Convener

## **GLOBAL MISSION INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

18. The committee has been progressing two main areas of work this year.
19. The Go Deep, Go Wide initiative will be launched at the General Assembly. It aims to encourage congregations to identify and develop at least one relationship with a person, project or place in overseas mission in which they will go deep. Going wide involves gaining an overview of the breadth of global mission. Congregations will be encouraged to maximise the potential of the variety of denominational appeals which, year on year, open up an extraordinary window on what God is doing in the world. This simple framework, has been developed in conjunction with the Council for Global Mission It offers scope for future development in refreshing and reimagining congregational

involvement in global mission as an aspect of what it means to be global disciples in an increasingly smaller world.

20. The other major piece of work is to develop a suite of resources for congregations sending mission teams overseas. The aim is to provide a usable tool to enable teams to prepare well in advance, participate well as partners, and process and pass on the story of what God has done on return. These resources are planned for release in the autumn.
21. This year, a pilot project will see a PCI team, comprising twelve young adults, go to work in George, South Africa, in conjunction with the ministry of Sports Academy. The Council remains open to developing such denominational opportunities, especially with PCI global mission workers or partners, as demand arises and capacity allows. It has been pleasing to note that a number of young people have been facilitated to serve on PCI Summer Outreach Teams in Ireland by Csaba and Ilona Veres, PCI global mission workers in Romania. The young people quickly integrated and became valued members of the teams. Conversation with the Veres' has taken place to explore how this welcome development can be further facilitated in future.
22. The Youth and Children's Project remains a popular and effective vehicle in many congregations to stimulate global mission involvement. A comprehensive resource pack offers easy ways for congregations to share and promote engagement with the particular aspects of mission being promoted. The 2019/20 project will focus on the translation and provision of children's books for ministry undertaken by Derek and Jane French, PCI Global Mission Workers in Bilbao, Spain.
23. The Council reminds members of Assembly that the Concorde Fund remains available to PCI members to provide financial assistance for travel related to involvement in overseas mission. Details can be found on the PCI website.

TREVOR LONG, Convener

## LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

24. The Emerge: Developing Younger Leaders initiative has entered its third year with significant momentum. With the aim of increasing accessibility, this year's programme was offered in two venues, Magherafelt and Belfast. It will conclude with a joint residential gathering in late June 2019. Numbers continue to increase in what is recognised as an important ministry of developing a new generation of leaders.
25. The PCI Intern Scheme has eight interns this year serving in a wide variety of congregational settings. Once again, congregational demand outstripped supply.
26. The Elders' Panel, which reports to this committee, has added more content to a significant resource offering elders outlines for use of

Scripture in pastoral visitation. These resources are available from the PCI website and have proved helpful in making elders' visits more than a perfunctory exercise. Work towards a revision of the Choosing New Elders resource is ongoing. Elders' training has been offered in Down and Dublin & Munster Presbyteries.

27. A comprehensive review of the children's and youth ministry training, undertaken by the Events, Training and Resources Panel, was approved by the committee. Recommendations will begin to be implemented in advance of the 2019/20 session. Publicity for the Children's and Youth Ministry Courses will be refreshed and updated to better capture the potential of this training for congregational leaders. Course content will be streamlined and focused, with teaching methodology reshaped, to better ensure it leaves more space for reflection on practice. A more flexible approach to regional training will allow for a variety of content. Careful allocation of staff time will strike a more finely tuned balance between Belfast-based, regionally delivered, and congregational training.
28. The committee has continued to find itself challenged by a discussion of how to create a more collaborative form of leadership in congregations in which many voices are offered an opportunity to be heard in shaping a more cohesive way forward for life and witness. This area seems to be emerging as a crucial foundation of finding focus and pursuing it with intentionality in all areas of congregational ministry and mission. Various proposals as to how to best promote and develop this theme in congregations have been tabled, but none has been found convincing. This key area for development will therefore become part of the leadership agenda of the new Congregational Life Committee after June 2019.

## YOUTH ASSEMBLY

*Co-chairs, Helen Hooks and Niamh Rankin, write:*

29. In February this year, over one hundred 15-25-year-olds from congregations right across the denomination gathered for the Youth Assembly. This year's theme was *The Anatomy of the Church: Many Parts, One Body*.
30. The main focus of the day was unity. Although delegates had come from all over the island of Ireland, participants were united as members of the Presbyterian Church, and most importantly, as the body of Christ. Discussions focussed on what unity looks like in reality. Three speakers addressed the topics of unity in our congregations, unity in our denomination, and unity as a people called to mission.
31. A large part of the discussion centred on unity across the generations, and the vital importance of good communication. However, the Youth Assembly Working Group was most excited and inspired by the feedback from section three – unity in mission. This arose from

- discussions held in the presbytery groups concerning mission in our various contexts.
32. There was an overwhelming desire for greater connection with those in presbytery groupings and a longing to put into practice possibilities arising from discussion for sharing in beyond individual congregations. This has inspired the working group to create a model and format for these conversations to continue.
  33. To develop this initiative, it will be important to link with presbyteries, to enable young people and young adults to work within existing structures. The aim is to channel the passion of delegates for working together with their neighbouring congregations, in order for them to grow in their faith and go out to reach others in their presbytery areas.
  34. Consequently, the Youth Assembly Working Group plans to partner with two or three presbyteries, to pilot a model of Youth Presbytery, mirroring the discussion format of our own Youth Assembly. The aim is to increase the engagement of young people with their presbyteries.
  35. Again, this year, the Youth Assembly Working Group is hosting a Fringe Event during the General Assembly. It will take up the theme of the Youth Assembly on developing and building unity, within congregations and beyond. The Fringe will take place on Wednesday 5 June 2019 at 6.15pm in the ground floor Conference Room, Assembly Buildings. A light tea will be served. Admission to the event is by ticket only so booking is essential and can be completed online at the PCI website or through the CLW office.

EMERSON MCDOWELL, Convener

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

36. This year the committee's work has focused on envisioning and equipping kirk sessions and other key leaders in how to lead congregations to work together and gain confidence in reaching out to others. In March 2019, Andy Frost of Share Jesus International, was guest speaker at a series of regional events in Belfast, Richhill and Londonderry. He helpfully outlined practical ways in which congregations can recapture realistic steps towards reaching others with the gospel in a rapidly changing context.
37. A new resource, entitled Share, takes up the same theme. It will offer congregations a flexible way of engaging members in considering three key areas of building relationships with those outside of church, building a community in which others can experience and explore God's presence and truth and finding appropriate ways to offer encounter with the gospel message. The aim is to stimulate an understanding of mission that is realistic, achievable and capable of being owned by every member of the congregation. A mix of sessions allow the whole church the opportunity to receive challenge and encouragement in

the setting of a Sunday service, while material equipping for more detailed and practical out workings can be explored together in other more informal settings. Full details of the resource will be provided at the General Assembly and the Council encourages congregations to explore and prioritise its use in the coming church year.

38. Summer Outreach Teams for summer 2019 have been assigned to Mullingar, Castleblaney, Sion Mills, Abbey (Belfast), St Andrews (Bangor), Dungannon, Whitehouse, Seaview, Grange, County Cavan and Friendship House (Belfast). A new training and mentoring programme for team leaders has been put in place for this year.
39. The committee has also been in discussion with the Council for Mission in Ireland about other outreach team opportunities at different times of year, offering a different range of accompaniment in mission to congregations and with a possible all-age focus. Other alternatives for outreach teams are also under consideration.

STEPHEN RICHMOND, Convener

## **PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE**

40. The committee continues to outwork their remit around a framework of developing congregational pastoral life that involves a pastoral core of a biblical understanding of life and the world, cultivating a culture of pastoral community among members and offering loving pastoral care in specific crisis situations. As this model, depicted as a pastoral life triangle, continues to be shared, it has been widely appreciated for its ability to summarise effective pastoral life in a simple and accessible manner. However, more work remains to be done in embedding this more holistic model of pastoral life across the denomination.
41. Pastoral Care Roadshows in Omagh and Dromore presbyteries were both well attended and appreciated. The roadshow model continues to prove effective in gathering a range of those involved in providing pastoral care in congregations for envisioning and encouragement.
42. The pastoral dimension of prayer ministry is another area the committee have been exploring. Following on from detailed exploration of how congregations are approaching this aspect of their work, an article in the November 2018 edition of the *Herald* offered stories of how two congregations express this ministry in their setting.
43. The committee continues to oversee the ministries of Fresh Light, the denominational counselling service, and the PCI Family Holiday. Both initiatives have undergone significant transition in recent years, but are now experiencing significant new life and seasons of fruitfulness.
44. New supervisors and counsellors have been recruited for Fresh Light and a further promotion of its ministry to congregations undertaken. It is hoped to build on that by producing a short DVD clip which will also highlight the ways in which Fresh Light can supplement pastoral

care in congregations and provide help for both members and non-members passing through difficult life circumstances.

45. Effective partnership with the Presbyterian Children's Society enables the PCI Family Holiday to continue to offer an environment in which families can spend time together over the Easter period enjoying a mixture of respite from the demands of life, a varied programme of activities, and time with God.
46. The Council notes that there is a significant decrease in requests from ministers to use the services of the Remarriage Panel. Resolution 1 seeks to explore the current need of the church for support in this area and how best that might be delivered. An associated issue, under the remit of the General Council, is clarity of communication of the church's guidelines regarding 'mixed marriages'. As both areas involve circumstances around marriage, it has been agreed to consolidate them in one resolution and, should the Assembly grant permission, to address them together.
47. The committee is aware that many pastoral issues arise as a result of the rapidly changing and increasingly complex society in which we live. Undoubtedly, under its remit of envisioning and equipping congregations for providing effective pastoral care, the Council will need to prioritise which of these require most immediate attention, also remaining aware that some of these issues are presently being explored in other areas of the General Assembly's work.
48. A significant new focus of the committee's discussion this year has been engaging with an initiative called Faith in Later Life. At present a UK mainland initiative, it aims to act as a hub around which the challenges and opportunities of evangelism, discipleship and pastoral life in the over-65 age bracket will be addressed and resourced. The committee is keen to see this theme further explored and ripened as a priority area for future development in congregational life and witness in Ireland's increasingly ageing society.

ALISTAIR BILL, Convener

## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

49. The committee's work this year centred on the construction and delivery of two main events.
50. The Organ in Contemporary Praise event was held on Saturday morning 26 January 2019 in Killead Presbyterian Church. For many congregations, the organ remains the primary and preferred accompaniment for praise in Sunday worship. In such situations, it can be easy to be locked into thinking that this restricts the choice of praise to traditional settings of psalms, hymns and songs. This pilot event opened up ways in which the organ can prove a more versatile instrument than is often imagined or explored. It offered examples of

ways in which organ music can be creatively harnessed in the service of more contemporary praise. The committee was encouraged by attendance and feedback and will explore other settings in which this event can be delivered.

51. A Worship Leaders' Training Day at Orangefield, Belfast, on Saturday 30 March 2019, was led by Sam and Sara Hargreaves of Engage Worship. They have already enriched the ministry of the denomination in two previous initiatives exploring whole-life worship and simple worship for smaller churches. The content of the day picked up on the outline of the Encounter Bible study resource launched in September 2018 and enabled anyone involved in shaping or leading worship to gain an expanded vision and imagination for their particular part in this vital aspect of congregational life.
52. The committee was encouraged by the use of the ASK prayer resource, comprising twelve postcard sized prompts for prayer for a variety of themes in congregational life and witness. Congregations embraced the flexibility of the resource and used it in a variety of ways. As the cards are undated, they remain a useful way of stimulating prayer for the coming church year for any congregation that has not yet used them.
53. A further strand of this committee's work involves progressing the production of a CD/MP3 resource providing musical accompaniment for congregations which do not always have access to a musician to lead praise.

JOHN MURDOCK, Convener

## **WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

54. The challenge of locating women's ministry, as part of, rather than something that sits apart from, the rest of congregational life and witness, remains a work in progress. Attention is drawn to the continued availability of a women's ministry DVD clip previously provided to every minister and PW group. It helpfully points to a range of aspects of church life in which women's ministry often does, or can, make a specific contribution to the overall ministry and mission of the local church. Often, a simple linkage, drawing what is already happening in women's ministry into the development of congregational life or witness as a whole, could significantly multiply impact. A number of congregations are actively exploring their model of women's ministry. The resource and the discussion questions it poses, are recommended in such situations and copies are available from the Council office.
55. Looking forward, the committee is continuing preparations to launch an initiative called Side by Side in September 2019. The idea is to encourage women to develop their gifts in relational ministry

and mission in a whole variety of areas of congregational life and witness, including discipleship, pastoral care, leadership development, intergenerational ministry, evangelism and prayer.

56. The initiative will be launched with a series of regional events in the autumn. Simple materials encouraging and equipping women to participate will also be produced. Presbyterian Women will also promote this theme, as appropriate, through its programming, publications and social media.
57. The Council welcomes how this initiative continues to develop the vision for women's ministry through Presbyterian Women as well as resourcing congregations where the PW Group is not the only, or primary, vehicle for this work. The opportunity for the theme to be outworked in a variety of ways, which reflect many of the core areas of congregational life and witness under the remit of the Council, is also helpful as progress continues towards an increasingly joined-up strategy.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

58. The Council continues to commend the particular contribution of Presbyterian Women in its work of resourcing women's ministry in congregations. Equally, the way in which it encourages prayer and raises funds for the mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, through generous grants to the Council for Mission in Ireland and Council for Global Mission, remains significant and is appreciated.
59. This year, PW Forums in September 2018 and February 2019 brought vision and enthusiasm to those who attended in the areas of developing biblical principles for leadership and the practice of relational discipleship.
60. The Annual Meeting and Evening Celebration on Thursday 9 May 2019 saw guest speaker, Helen Warnock, Principal of Belfast Bible College, open up this year's PW theme, 'He restores my soul' (Psalm 23:3). Once again, both opportunities bring together women from across Ireland to worship and celebrate all that God is doing in their lives and through his church.
61. The theme of restoration is developed for use in women's ministry settings in congregations through the annual Inspirations resource. Once again, it contains a carefully crafted range of accessible devotional materials drawn from Scripture and a range of resource ideas around which to plan a varied and imaginative programme.
62. The *Wider World* magazine has been given a fresh, new look and continues to provide its readership with a range of PW news, ideas for women's ministry, interviews, challenging articles and mission updates. In another new development, the magazine will also be available in digital copy from June 2019. This is part of the ongoing development



of the use of a wider range of mediums of communication, including Facebook and Instagram, which have also proved effective.

63. In addition to the funds raised for the two mission councils, the home dimension of the 2019/20 PW Project will support the development of Council for Social Witness specialist services in Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray's Court. The overseas aspect of the appeal will provide finance to produce Christian literature for women in the Arabic speaking world.
64. At the October 2018 meeting of the Council, a resolution was passed enabling PW LINK finances to be included and audited within presbytery accounts in line with requirements relating to Charity Commission legislation. The Council is grateful to the Financial Secretary's Department for its advice in this matter and to presbytery clerks and finance agents, as well as LINK finance agents, for their help in accommodating the new arrangements.

DAVID THOMPSON, Acting Convener

## **YOUTH, CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY STRATEGY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

65. The committee has received and considered feedback from two focus groups held in June 2018 aimed at identifying congregational priorities in supporting and assisting the development of children's, youth and family ministry. Crucial areas identified include:
  - (a) Programming: how to make a rota system of leaders work effectively;
  - (b) Doctrine: teaching key truths of God's Word in such a way as to lay solid foundations for following Jesus in the real world;
  - (c) Covenant Family: Identifying how to resource congregations to encourage and enable family ministry;
  - (d) Pathways: helping congregations develop their vision for evangelistic and discipleship pathways for children and young people that incorporate the contributions of age-related organisations and programmes into the wider life and witness of the congregation.
66. These priorities will be important going forward in shaping the Council agenda in children's, youth and family ministry. Reflection has already begun in assessing how best to respond in practical ways.
67. A three-session programme for children's ministry, aimed specifically at reaching unchurched children, has been released. This project is being developed in conjunction with the Good Book Company around a series of books entitled, *Eric says thanks*, *Eric says please* and *Eric says*

*sorry*. Originally developed for use in the setting of school assemblies, the books move from familiar events in the everyday world of an unchurched boy, through the simple concepts of thank you, please and sorry, towards biblical truths of God as provider and sustainer, understanding prayer, and repentance and forgiveness. This dynamic is key in effectively engaging with a growing number of unchurched children for whom we can assume no knowledge of basic Christian truth. As such, the books and resources model an effective means of outreach to unchurched children that needs to become increasingly common practice in mission to the upcoming generation. The resources produced to accompany the books will prove helpful in a kids' club or Messy Church environment. The themes of thanks and sorry also lend themselves to use as stand-alone sessions at Harvest and Easter. These resources are available for free download from the PCI website.

68. In the area of family ministry, the committee has recognised the value of Care for the Family's Kitchen Table Project in equipping parents of primary school aged children to share faith in the home. A very successful Starting Strong evening was held in March 2019 in Assembly Buildings, which addressed the challenges and opportunities of expressing everyday faith in everyday ways in the family. It also drew particular attention to the Kitchen Table Project resources. The Council will continue to promote both the theme and resources going forward. It is notable that a comparable set of resources, specifically aimed at equipping parents of post primary aged children, is not readily available. Work has commenced on exploring a resource which will provide a way in which congregations can begin to address this deficit.
69. A resource to help congregations assess which of a variety of models of young adults' ministry might best suit their circumstances is forthcoming. Work is also underway to better communicate directly to young adults the range of opportunities available to them through PCI including developing their leadership, mission, service, courses and discipleship events. All of these opportunities are offered with a very strong emphasis upon the need to be a committed contributor to the ministry and mission of the local church.
70. An ongoing conversation with Youth Link NI is progressing to try to narrow an identified gap between its training provision and congregational needs.
71. Useful meetings have been held with representatives of both the Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade NI. Both organisations play a prominent part in children's and youth ministry in many PCI congregations. The Children's Development Officer continues to contribute to the writing of resources for use in Girls' Brigade companies. The possibility of partnering with Boys' Brigade on an event exploring specific ministry to boys, is being explored.
72. Events play a significant part in this aspect of the Council's output. Little Day Out, Kids' Big Day Out, MAD weekend and Youth Night

continue to provide large scale, specialist ministry which supplements and builds upon the weekly work of congregations. Recent years have seen the development of suites of resources for use in congregations built around the themes developed at the events. This has proved popular for congregations, who have attended the events, by way of follow up, but the Council draws the attention of all congregations to an increasing bank of resources available from the PCI website that can provide ongoing material for children's and youth ministry leaders.

73. The Council ran two My Place gatherings in Drumreagh and Ballydown, stimulating thinking about inclusion of children with a variety of special needs in congregational life. Following two years of regional events, the next phase will involve capturing some simple top tips, drawn from the content, as an accessible guide to best practice.
74. A programme of round table gatherings for full time children's, youth and family workers continue to support those employed in this area in congregations. Discussion and feedback on a wide range of topics addressed also informs the Council of ongoing challenges on the ground.

SAM FINLAY, Convener

## **EVENTS, TRAINING AND RESOURCES COORDINATION PANEL**

75. The Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel has initiated three important reviews. A review of payments to trainers, speakers and venues used in delivering events, has brought greater clarity and consistency to this area of budgeting. A review of the Children's and Youth Ministry courses will refresh publicity and refine and renew content as reported above under the Leadership Committee (paragraph 27). An events strategy and budget review is underway. It aims to bring greater clarity to the articulation of the purpose of events, allowing assessment of impact and effectiveness.
76. The Council keeps a careful eye on the number of congregations engaging with the programme and resources it provides. From March 2018 to April 2019, 380 out of 535 congregations had attended at least one Council-run programme, event or initiative. In addition, 230 congregations have purchased at least one core resource produced by the Council in the same period. Many congregations have engaged with the Council's output in multiple ways. These figures do not include the work of individual staff members with single congregations. This is an area of work Council is keen to develop and expand.
77. The Council is committed to running events relevant to congregations and their needs and producing high quality resources. Their unique value is that they are shaped by Irish Presbyterians for Irish Presbyterian congregations and so often prove a better fit than other events and

resources derived in, and for, other ministry contexts. However, every output of the Council remains under constant scrutiny so as to avoid stagnation and failure to re-imagine, where necessary, what is done and how it is delivered.

ROSEMARY HAMILTON, Convener

## BAPTISM RESOURCE TASK GROUP

78. This task group was set up at the October 2018 meeting of the Council. It has been commissioned with bringing forward a new suite of resources for a key moment in congregational life in which the parents are bringing infants for baptism, or adults are being baptised on profession of faith.
79. The February 2019 meeting of the Council discussed the task group's initial report and agreed the following outline be developed:

### Core content

80. A DVD clip explaining the Presbyterian understanding of baptism in a positive tone. This to be accompanied by a short leaflet with the same basic content.

Additional content to offer frameworks for stimulating five particular discussions:

- between minister and parents requesting baptism for their children;
  - between minister and an adult requesting baptism;
  - in kirk sessions, facilitating a better understanding of baptism;
  - in the congregational setting of a baptism service guiding the congregation (and particularly other children present) through what is happening;
  - among young people, facilitating a better understanding of God's grace at work in covenant families and in infant baptism.
81. The task group aims to complete its work by August 2020.

GARETH McFADDEN, Convener

## CHURCH MEMBERSHIP RESOURCE TASK GROUP

82. This task group was also set up at the October 2018 meeting of the Council which also included initial discussion of what is needed in this area. Addressing the opportunity of receiving new church members represents a key moment in church life. The need for a new resource arises from a number of angles. In terms of evangelism, reception as a full church member is a key moment in integrating those who

have come to faith into the wider body of the church. In the area of discipleship, there is a clear message to be reinforced that discipleship can only take place in the context of the body of Christ and not as an individual journey. As young people progress through youth ministry, the importance of church membership also needs to be clearly explained in terms of personal ownership of following Christ, commitment to the body of Christ and the appreciation of the support it provides by way of Christian community.

83. The February 2019 meeting of the Council discussed the task group's initial report and agreed the following outline be developed.

### **Format**

- Four sessions of 60-90 minutes.
- Simple discussion starter on session theme.
- Bible passage introducing the theme of the session.
- DVD clip of a story on the theme which opens up story-sharing by participants.
- DVD clip which carries the weight of introducing, in summary, the main teaching points of each session.
- Interactive written material which adds more content to the main teaching points.
- Closing section which aids personal reflection by participants and offers a short prayer for use in the group or individually.

### **Content (working titles)**

- **Believing:** Providing a summary of core Christian beliefs that are drawn from vows made by those admitted to the Lord's Table.
  - **Sharing:** Explaining what it means to participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
  - **Living:** Emphasising the ongoing journey of following Jesus, including commitment, challenge, change, rhythms of devotion and witness.
  - **Belonging:** Emphasising the privileges and responsibilities of being a full church member, including worshipping, learning, serving, giving, and deciding together.
84. This Task Group also aims to complete its work by August 2020.

WILLIAM HENRY, Convener

## EVANGELISTIC AND DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAYS TASK GROUP

85. This task group was commissioned at the October 2018 meeting of the Council. The pathways by which congregations are seeking to reach others and accompany them on a journey towards faith in Christ and a lifetime of following him, is something that often needs to be approached with greater focus, clarity, flexibility and intentionality. There are at least four aspects to consider:
- How is the congregation ‘journeying out’ in mission? How are we going to reach others who no longer come to us?
  - How is the congregation helping people in ‘journeying in’ from evangelism to church life?
  - How is the congregation helping people in ‘journeying on’ in discipleship for growth and major life transitions?
  - How do we help congregations ask if they are ‘journeying fruitfully’? Is there intentionality about activities? Are there gaps in the pathways highlighted above? Is there connectedness between various organisations and activities? Do they need to downsize the amount of activities to avoid duplication and better focus on priorities? How are congregations actively accompanying individuals on their evangelistic and discipleship journeys?
86. An initial task group meeting has grappled with these issues and begun to consider options of what kind of resource may be of use to congregations. Once again, this task group aims to complete its work by August 2020.

JONATHAN MOXEN, Convener

### **Developing congregational use of social media**

87. A task group, which emerged from a Youth Assembly presentation and resolution to the General Assembly in 2017, completed its work in October 2018, and has been thanked and discharged. The importance of this aspect of congregational life and witness has been highlighted and actively promoted. A dedicated page on the PCI website has been established and one hundred free copies of the book *Church Online* by Laura Treener, made available to congregations.

**Presbytery partnerships**

88. The Council is glad to report progress in the planning and delivery of four specific training nights in conjunction with presbyteries in 2018/19. These have included:
- Ards Presbytery – with a wide-ranging focus on discipleship in church life;
  - Iveagh Presbytery – with a range of seminar options on small groups, men’s ministry and youth ministry;
  - Carrickfergus Presbytery – with a particular focus on outreach;
  - East Belfast Presbytery – with a focus on missional leadership in changing times for the urban church.
89. In every case, each presbytery has shaped the agenda of the evenings to address the particular priorities they identify as most important. Council staff have provided programming advice, publicity and personnel in delivery. The impact of each evening has been multiplied by inviting other key leaders from congregations to join ministers and representative elders. Congregations have the opportunity to discuss together the material delivered and think about how best it fits in their ministry setting.
90. The Council is excited by the potential of this growing partnership with presbyteries. Already dates have been set for similar evenings in Coleraine and Limavady, Route, Templepatrick and Newry presbyteries in 2019/20. Details for a further event in Derry and Donegal Presbytery are under discussion and the Council Secretary accepted an invitation to engage with members of Dublin & Munster Presbytery to assess how best the Council can offer support and equipping across the vast geographical area covered by its congregational spread.

**Transitioning to a more streamlined structure of committees, panels and task groups**

91. In 2017/18, the Council worked through a careful and consultative process designed to streamline its structure of committees, panels and task groups. Having sought the approval and support of the General Council and General Assembly for the proposal which emerged, a new structure will come into place from June 2019. By way of brief summary of what has been fully discussed and finally agreed, the new structure will see the following basic re-arrangement of direction and delivery of the remit.
- A Congregational Life Committee overseeing the development of the areas of leadership, discipleship, worship, pastoral life and prayer.
  - A Congregational Witness Committee overseeing the development of the areas of evangelism, community witness, good relations and global mission involvement.

- A Programme, Finance and Coordination Committee which will receive recommendations from the other two Committees (with additional input from the Children, Youth and Family Strategy Panel and Women's Ministry Strategy Panel) and prepare budgeted options for consideration by the Council.
  - Children, Youth & Family Strategy Panel and a Women's Ministry Strategy Panel offering age and gender specific input.
  - The Council as the final decision making body (under the General Assembly) receiving options for ongoing agendas and establishing priorities.
  - Time-limited task groups drawn together to work with staff to deliver major pieces of work.
92. Existing committees and panels have already been transitioning towards these new arrangements by compiling the work they have completed, considering what ongoing work remains to be finished and capturing what anticipated work needs to be transmitted for the consideration of the new committees. This careful preparation and clarity will aid a smooth transition.
93. The Council is grateful to conveners and all who have contributed to the progress of the work up to this point and expresses its thanks for their commitment.

### **Looking for fruitfulness**

94. Since the Council's inception in January 2015, each of the core areas of its remit have gained significant momentum through a very intentional means of resourcing congregations, developed around the following framework:
- Envisioning – presenting possibilities and painting pictures of different ways of doing things.
  - Equipping – providing resources and training directly to congregations and/or upskilling key leaders to develop effective practices of ministry and mission in the local congregation.
  - Enabling – journeying with individual congregations as they work out and work towards, realising their vision.
  - Events – supplementing local congregational ministry and mission with larger scale events of the kind which require specialist input.
95. At its February 2019 meeting, the Council reflected on the following snapshot of big picture developments in support of core areas of congregational life and witness within the last four years.



Area of remit	Envision: 'Big idea'	Equip: Resources available	Enable: Work more directly with congregations	Events: Major one-off or annual initiatives
<b>Discipleship</b>	Discipleshaping Church Settings 5000 (Worship) 72 (Service) 12 (Small Group) 3 (Relational)	Essentials DVD Bible study Proximity relational discipleship resources Mentoring DVD clip	Disciple Makers' Network	Conferences Discipleshaping Church Discipleshaping Preaching Discipleshaping Worship Transform (young adults' discipleship overnight)
<b>Pastoral Life</b>	Pastoral Life Triangle Core (Scripture) Community Care	Pastoral Triangle DVD clips	Presbytery-based training	
<b>Leadership</b>	Shared leadership and more collaborative decision-making	Valuable Leadership DVD clips Elders' and Kirk Session resources	Elders' training	Emerge:Developing younger leaders Intern Scheme
<b>Outreach</b>	Share Relationship Community Encounter	Share DVD resource* Inside Out DVD Bible study resource* Vision for Society		Overflow conference (Dave Male) Reach conference Share regional events (Andy Frost)

Area of remit	Envision: 'Big idea'	Equip: Resources available	Enable: Work more directly with congregations	Events: Major one-off or annual initiatives
Worship	Encounter Anticipate Appreciate Participate	Encounter DVD Bible study material		Worship leaders' training event Organ in Contemporary Worship event
Involvement in Global Mission	Go Deep, Go Wide initiative* Global disciples Deep - 'Live' link with a person, place or project Wide - denominational opportunities	DVD clip* Partnership and prayer materials*		
Congregational Prayer		Prayer Journeys Fruitful Congregations People of God ASK prayer cards		
Family ministry	Close to Home Contemporary expression of covenant theology	Close to Home DVD Bible study material Kitchen Table Project (Care for the Family)	Regional training	Close to Home launch evening Starting Strong evening

Area of remit	Envision: 'Big idea'	Equip: Resources available	Enable: Work more directly with congregations	Events: Major one-off or annual initiatives
Children's ministry		Models of Sunday morning children's ministry resource Toddler group resource Schools ministry resource ERIC resources Children's ministry basics DVD clips	Regional training	Kids' Big Day Out Little Day Out
Youth and Young Adults' ministry		Youth Fellowship resources Youth ministry basics DVD clips Models of Young Adult's ministry resource *	Regional training	MAD weekend Youth Night Youth Assembly
Women's ministry	Side by Side initiative*	Concept literature and DVD clip*	Regional events*	PW events & women's ministry celebration evening

\*Pending in 2019/2020

96. It should be noted that beneath and beyond what is listed above, is a wealth of other work including staff enabling individual congregations.
97. Council members were encouraged by what God has grown and trust members of the General Assembly will be as well. In keeping with the Council's theme of fruitful congregations, what is reflected above is the result of careful tending, planting and pruning. Not every area of the vineyard is cultivated in the same way. Season by season, some areas exhibit rapid growth, others show signs of stagnation. In still other aspects of the Council's work, we labour not quite knowing what God is doing in the moment. Some parts require further, patient, ripening. Others display early signs of a first fruits.

### **Good ground in which to plant**

98. The preparation for transition to a more streamlined structure is important because it should be anticipated that the period from June 2019 to June 2020 will be dominated by warming up the new committees and panels, as well as the Council, to function to deliver their particular parts of the jigsaw in a coordinated way. However, from experience and feedback gathered over the last number of years, the following programme of anticipated major events, in various areas of the Council's remit, has been approved for 2019/20:

#### Leadership

- A maximum of two elders' regional training events
- Emerge: Developing Leaders' programme
- Children's and Youth Ministry courses
- A maximum of three regional training events in a variety of formats to encompass elements of children's, youth and young adults' ministry

#### Pastoral Care

- A maximum of two Pastoral Care regional training events
- PCI Family Holiday

#### Worship

- Consideration of another regional Organ in Contemporary Worship event
- Consideration of another worship leader's training event

#### Discipleship

- One Disciple Makers' Network programme

#### Outreach

- Programme of Summer Outreach Teams (maximum 12)

#### Global Mission Involvement

- Consideration of one overseas team

## Youth Ministry

- MAD weekend
- Youth Night

## Children's Ministry

- Kids' Big Day Out (primary school aged children)
- Consideration of one Little Day Out or similar event (toddlers)

## Young Adults' Ministry

- PCI Intern Scheme
- Transform (discipleship event)

## Full-time Children's, Youth and Family Workers

- Full-time Children's, Youth and Family Workers' Round Tables (maximum 3)
- Annual retreat

## Women's Ministry

- Side by Side regional events (maximum 5)

## Equip Presbytery Evenings

- Maximum of five on themes decided by presbytery
- A bespoke response to equipping in the Dublin and Munster Presbytery in response to its particular geographical challenges

Two major denominational conference programmes (delivered in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, or regionally)

- Building the community life of the church.
- Bolstering the outward face of the church.

99. In transitioning to a more streamlined structure, the Council aims to continue to grow its work on the good ground already established. The new arrangements offer significant potential in increasing accountability, responsiveness to the expressed needs of congregations, more strategic budgeting and coordination of a wide remit both within the Council and with other Councils of the General Assembly.
100. The challenge will remain to be attentive to the leading of God's Spirit, discerning what he is doing among us, and being courageous in taking the kind of decisions that, in any given season, prioritises, and is willing to cease doing things as well as commence new initiatives.

### **The ongoing challenge of effectively communicating with congregations**

101. The Council continues to struggle with the challenge of communicating effectively with the congregations it is charged with supporting in their work. There is an ongoing struggle to keep key events and resources before the church. There has been some improvement in this area, and the introduction of a system in which every congregation has a

named person, in addition to the minister, dedicated to receiving and disseminating communications, is eagerly awaited. However, more remains to be done in developing existing mediums of communication and making the most of new possibilities.

102. Oversight of developing effective mediums of communication between councils and congregations and their members is the responsibility of the General Council. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness at its February meeting discussed this matter and recognised that there was still need for significant improvement in these areas. The work of the Council was suffering because of this, and some congregations were having difficulties in accessing online resources. The Council has expressed its view that there needs to be improvements in PCP's website and social media platforms. The Council welcomes steps taken by the Support Services Committee to address these issues, but reiterates the urgent need for progress.
103. One way of improving the publicity and communication of Council resources and events, that has already been pursued, is the recruitment of a Communications Intern. Their particular contribution would be in the gathering and production of content to be shared on social media. A post has been advertised commencing in September 2019. It is hoped that a suitable intern can be recruited. This is a one-year volunteer post, on an expenses only basis. It is envisaged that the Intern will work mainly within the Council for Congregational Life and Witness and in conjunction with the Creative Production Department, although their expertise will also be available to other Councils.

### **Three other particular areas requiring further consideration**

104. The Small and Fruitful initiative has been significant in helping identify the nature and capacity of the majority of congregations served by the Council. At its February meeting, the Council discussed what a next phase to the regional events in 2018, at which Karl Vaters was guest speaker, should involve. The feedback was inconclusive. However, this year has seen the opportunity to develop the theme and some basic material in a number of congregations, with a group of ministers and in the East Belfast Presbytery event referred to in paragraph 87. In every case, the material offered a stimulus for significant discussion, particularly among congregations who are experiencing transition from being a medium-sized to a small congregation. A number of helpful concrete steps about how to navigate such change, while retaining a focus on fruitfulness rather than being paralysed by fear, are beginning to emerge. They may form an important future conversation within congregations and with the Council for Mission in Ireland and Linkage Commission.

105. Last year's report highlighted the opportunity for congregations to invite Council development officers to come and work with their kirk session or other key leaders to train, share ideas, facilitate and stimulate conversations about any area of the Council's remit. Since then, there has been an encouraging upturn in congregations requesting this kind of support. One reason this particular strand of the work is increasingly important is that the challenge of time-poverty makes it more difficult for members to attend events outside the normal rhythms of congregational activities. The Council has more work to do in publicising these possibilities of working directly in the local congregation and finding an appropriate balance between this way of equipping, and regional and church wide conferencing and training.
106. In 2016, the General Assembly approved a framework for partnership work with other organisations. This has proved helpful in setting parameters for engaging in conversation, assessing approaches from others and proactively identifying opportunities. It is noticeable that the nature of such partnerships is changing from engaging in formal, ongoing relationships, to time limited, project centred collaboration. This greater nimbleness and flexibility is to be welcomed. It will be helpful for the Council to reflect further on the particular areas in which others may provide specialisms to supplement its work.

### **Fruitfulness in depth and breadth**

107. It is never an easy thing to measure spiritual fruitfulness. However, Scripture gives evidence that it shows itself in both depth and growth.
108. Paul, writing to the congregations in Galatia, spoke of the need for a growing depth in their congregational life expressed in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Let us pray and persevere for the building of such community in our congregational life together.
109. Reporting to congregations in Colossae, Paul also delights to tell them of a growing breadth to the gospel's reach – that, 'all over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing' (Colossians 1:6). For this bolstering of the outward face of our congregational witness and its impact, we also long and labour.

## APPENDIX

1. In 2002 the General Assembly established the Church Hymnary Trust Fund, under the Public Worship Committee of the Board of Communications, to operate under the following terms:  
That the General Assembly retain the balance of the amount accruing from the Church Hymnary Trust for the following purposes:
  - (i) The production of a new hymnary in electronic format.
  - (ii) Costs incurred in the launch of the new hymnary.
  - (iii) Cost incurred in the provision of the proposed resource centre.
  - (iv) Likely revision of the psalter.
  - (v) Possible supplements to the new hymnary.
  - (vi) Such other purposes in connection with public worship as the Assembly may approve.
2. Following restructuring in 2015, enabling the development of all aspects of the worshipping life of congregations is under the remit of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. The Council has concluded that the uses for the fund itemised i–v above, have all been actioned, or are no longer relevant for the future development of key elements of public worship in congregations.
3. In an attempt to honour the spirit for which the fund was established, but to release monies for currently relevant purposes (and after consultation with the Clerk of Assembly), the Council is requesting that the General Assembly approve the widening of the application of item vi above to put the resources contained therein at the disposal of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness for the support and development of all aspects of the worshipping life of congregations.

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the General Assembly instruct the Council for Congregational Life and Witness to review the provision made for guidance and support given to ministers asked to marry a couple where one or both individuals has been married before and is divorced, or, in situations of ‘mixed marriage’, and report to the 2020 General Assembly.
2. That the General Assembly place the resources contained in the Church Hymnary Trust Fund at the disposal of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness for the support and development of all aspects of the worshipping life of congregations.
3. That the report of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness be received



# COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY

Convener: Rev N.J. McCULLOUGH

Secretary: Rev T.J. STOTHERS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Ministerial Studies and Development Committee reports on a revised training pathway for ministry and the introduction of a flexible training pathway.
2. The Union Theological College Management Committee reports on the changing relationship of the college with Queen's University and future plans for the college.
3. The Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee reports on its oversight of those who are applying to be received as ministers of our Church and of those who have been granted the status of ministers without charge.
4. The Deaconess Training and Selection Panel reports on its oversight of the deaconesses presently in training.
5. The Accredited Preacher and Auxiliary Ministry Panel reports on the training of further accredited preachers and a new auxiliary ministry course.
6. The Pastoral Care of Manse Families Panel reports on a responses to the paper 'Caring for Manse Families' which was sent down to presbyteries.
7. The Conciliation Panel reports on its work of providing conciliation and conciliation training for the church.

### Convener's Introduction

8. At the time of writing the Council has met four times since the last General Assembly. Much varied and valuable work has been done through the council but the issue that has dominated its work has been the changing relationship of Union Theological College with Queen's University Belfast.
9. Queen's University announced a review of the Institute of Theology in June 2018 and, on the basis of this review, on 18 December suspended undergraduate programmes for September 2019. On 9 April the university decided that all programmes (including post-graduate programmes at Union, the Methodist Edgehill Theological College, Irish Baptist College, and Belfast Bible College) would be withdrawn and there would be no further intake of students. The college will

continue to teach the current first and second year students and those enrolled on part-time courses to the end of their programmes. The ending of the relationship is highly regrettable but the Council and the College are committed to ending it well. While the adjustments to be made are significant, the Council is in no doubt that an exciting future for the College lies ahead. In particular, there are new opportunities for flexibility in training ministry and other students that it is believed will lead to a better student experience and better outcomes.

### **UTC Review Task Group**

10. In the light of the developing situation with Queen's University, a task group was set up by the Union Theological College Management Committee to review how the college might best train our ministry students and what financial savings could be made. The task group comprises Moderator and Clerk, the Council and Committee Conveners (with the Council Convener to convene), the Council Secretary, the Convener of the Finance, Property and Administration Panel, the Convener of the Curriculum Panel, Professor John Gillespie, Professor Paul Hanna, Mrs Avril Heenan, Sir Nigel Hamilton, with the Principal to sit and deliberate. A wide range of options has been considered including:
  - all awards, both undergraduate and postgraduate, made through PTFI;
  - a validation arrangement with another Irish or UK university;
  - co-operation with another local institution;
  - Union College delivering ministry training only;
  - training ministry students in another local institution with Presbyterian staff involvement.
11. Having considered other options, the task group remains convinced that training ministry students through the College is the best way forward. At present the Presbyterian Theological Faculty of Ireland (PTFI) royal charter allows for graduate entry awards to be made and the small number of students who do not have a prior degree are able to follow the same course and be fully trained, though without an award.
12. The task group is also convinced of the benefit of the college teaching non-ministry undergraduate students alongside ministry students and options are being considered as to how this might be possible in the future. Achieving this will not be straightforward however, and it is likely that it will be several years before undergraduate theology is available at the college.
13. The true costs of running the college have for many years been masked by the income gained through non-ministry students. It is possible that online courses and, eventually, new undergraduate students will provide valuable income streams, but it needs to be realised that,

even in its most stripped back form, the cost of training our ministry students is significantly more than is being provided by the United Appeal currently.

### **Dismissal of a Professor**

14. The Rev Professor Laurence Kirkpatrick was dismissed on 19 March 2019 on grounds of gross misconduct. The particular charges that were upheld and led to this were that:
  - (a) his contribution to the Talkback Programme on 13 June 2018 brought Union Theological College, and by association, his employer, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, into disrepute.
  - (b) his comments on the Talkback programme had a significant and material adverse impact on PCI's relationship with Queen's University, Belfast, and caused hurt and damage to the faculty's relationship and cohesion.
15. Four other charges of a lesser nature were also upheld. It should be noted that neither the Council for Training in Ministry nor the Union Theological College Management Committee had any role in this: the procedures relevant to employees under the Staff Disciplinary Rules and Procedures of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland were applied.

### **Ministry Applicants**

16. Last year the Church was asked to pray for God to call more people to apply for ministry. This prayer has been answered in that 15 candidates were interviewed at Easter. Whilst very grateful, the Council is not complacent and asks for continued prayer for this crucial part of the Church's work and witness.

### **Pathway Flexibility**

17. Last year an appeal was made at the General Assembly for the Council to provide more flexibility in its training pathways, especially for those who are already well qualified and who have significant experience. The Ministerial Studies and Development Committee is proposing a flexible pathway arrangement that it is hoped will provide this.

### **BibleMesh**

18. During the year a question was raised by the Ards Presbytery about the relationship with BibleMesh, the platform which hosts the online courses developed by the College. In particular the presbytery was concerned about a course on the wider BibleMesh website which appeared to promote views on the eligibility of women for ordination contrary to the position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the impression that might be given that this was also the position of PCI. The Council notes that BibleMesh hosts courses from many different organisations representing many different viewpoints on numerous issues. In

addition, the BibleMesh doctrinal statement does not refer to this issue. The Council is keen for the College to develop further online courses and while the Council values the assistance received from BibleMesh it is important to note that the College does not promote, endorse, or use any courses from any organisations that have not been approved by the College and Council. In all instances, the courses made available by the College on BibleMesh are designed, administered, and overseen, exclusively by the Union College Faculty.

### **Gratitude**

19. The events of this year have meant an immense pressure and workload for, among others, the principal and faculty of the College and the Secretary of the Council. The Council is deeply grateful for their selfless service.

### **Students' Bursary Fund**

*Rev Adrian Moffett, Students' Bursary Fund agent, writes:*

20. The Students' Bursary Fund exists to make financial provision for students for the ordained ministry and their families during their time of study.
21. In the academic year September 2018 - June 2019 there are 14 students in receipt of grants, 13 of whom are studying at Union Theological College, Belfast, and one completing a placement in a congregation. The cost to the fund of grants, fees and all other expenses for this period will be in the region of £230,000. This is being met through offerings at services of licensing, of ordination and installations of ministers and elders and through personal and congregational donations as well as congregational assessment. Thanks are due to all members of the Church who generously support the Students' Bursary Fund.
22. All those who have responsibility for planning a service of licensing, of ordination and installation are asked to ensure that full use is made of the Students' Bursary Fund literature (available from reception in Assembly Buildings), especially the Gift Aid envelope. Experience has shown that where literature is handed out at an earlier service, those attending the special service are more likely to make use of the Gift Aid scheme. It would be appreciated if any unused literature could be returned to Assembly Buildings following the service.

## **MINISTERIAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

23. Four students commenced ministerial training this autumn, giving a total of 16 students currently in training.

**Pathway review**

24. As intimated in the Council's report to the General Assembly in 2018, the committee undertook a significant review of the application pathway for ministry students this year, including consultation with presbytery student agents. Currently applicants are required to have passed the Accredited Preacher Scheme (APS) before interview. This process has been helpful in many ways, giving candidates further experience of preaching and being mentored. In addition the feedback from the course has been useful for interview panels. It has, however, thrown up some unexpected issues, particularly in respect of the responsibility placed on one person to pass or fail a candidate for APS, which would effectively end a ministry application. The intention of the revised application pathway is to retain the benefits of the APS whilst eliminating the pass/fail element. It also streamlines the process as much as is possible. An outline of the recommendation is attached in Appendix 2.

**Applications**

25. Fifteen candidates for ordained ministry were interviewed on 15 and 16 April 2019. The interviewing panels comprised Revs Dr Paul Bailie, Albert Baxter, Robert Beggs Amanda Best, Gordon Best, Robin Brown, Daryl Edwards, Mark Johnston and Niall Lockhart; Mrs Isobel McAuley, Rev George McClelland, Very Rev Dr Ian McNie, Dr Lena Morrow, Rev Jane Nelson, Mr Roy Thompson. The input of HealthLink360 again proved to be extremely useful. Having completed the process, 13 are being nominated to the General Assembly.
26. The current applicants are part of a growing trend where many have previous theological training and indeed ministry experience within local churches. Our current system is not sufficiently flexible to take such training and experience into account. Therefore, in another large piece of work this year, the formation of a Ministry Pathway Panel is proposed. It would bring reports concerning any student who may already have completed some of the Church's requirements, while making sure that all candidates complete the elements set out by the General Assembly for ministry students. It is expected that most candidates will follow the current five-year training pathway in its entirety, but the committee does want to be responsive to the way God has already gifted, taught and used people before they have applied for ministry. A paper is attached in Appendix 3.
27. Due to the current situation regarding the College and Queen's University, there will no longer be the facility for our ministry students to study for a BD at the college. However, the training of our students will carry on uninterrupted, with the General Assembly's requirements continuing to be taught.
28. While encouraged by the number and quality of applicants this year, the committee feels it is important to continue to place the opportunities for ordained ministry in front of people so that they can consider and

respond to God's call on their lives as easily as possible. With this in mind, MSDC has undertaken, along with the Creative Production Department, to make three short videos that will inform and encourage people to explore whether God is calling them into pastoral ministry. The first film will aim at possible applicants aged 18-30; the second at people within congregations who have the role of identifying and encouraging people to explore God's call on their life; and the third will profile the pathway for application. These videos will include both male and female ministers and potential applicants, and it is hoped that the first one may be available to be screened by the time of the General Assembly.

### **Termination of Pathway**

29. The Council accepted the recommendation of the Ministerial Studies and Development Committee that the candidature for the ordained ministry of Dr Kevin Hargaden be terminated, but noted that the committee will warmly welcome a further application in the future. A resolution is appended.

### **Licentiates**

30. Fourteen licentiates became eligible for call on 1 September 2018.

### **Sabbaticals**

31. The committee has again looked at sabbatical guidelines with regard to academic study, recognising this in a difficult area to get right. It is acknowledged that many people find academic study to be refreshing and therefore a good use of sabbatical time and there is no desire to prevent those people from using it in this way. The guidelines have been altered to allow for this, while encouraging ministers to prioritise refreshment in planning sabbatical leave.

### **Post-ordination Conferences**

32. The theme for the 2019 conference was self-care and resilience, with Christopher Ash as the main speaker, along with Jen Charteris and James Hyndman. In 2020, the conference will look at the area of leadership with Marcus Honeysett and a team from Living Leadership.

### **Pre-retirement Conferences**

33. These conferences continue to be greatly appreciated by attendees.

ANDREW FAULKNER, Convener

## UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

34. The Committee has had a busy year as unfolding events led to many more meetings than normal.
35. During the year Queen's University Belfast carried out a review of the Institute of Theology and, eventually, future enrolment for all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes was terminated.
36. It became clear in December 2018 that this outcome was likely and so the Union Theological College Review Task Group was set up to review the options for the college, the training of ministers and what financial savings might be made. A fuller report of its work is given under the convener's introduction.
37. Student intake in September 2018 was significantly reduced and the drop in associated income together with the suspension of enrolment for September 2019, means that the budget income for 2019 in relation to non-ministerial students will be around £592,600 rather than the anticipated £791,500 – a decrease of £198,900. The committee is giving consideration as to how financial savings may be achieved to help to offset the inevitable shortfall in revenue.

### Courses

38. When concerns began to emerge about the relationship with Queen's University the council encouraged faculty to look at the possibility of developing an additional student base through online courses. Faculty have worked tremendously hard and next year it is planned that ten courses will be offered through Union College with seven being fully online. These are listed and described in Appendix 4. The potential to develop this work is significant and this could prove to be great resource for the global church as well as having the potential to provide income for the college.

### Bequest

39. A bequest 'for the work of training ministers' was received from the estate of the late Elizabeth Steele. The initial amount was for £53,450.76 and it is likely to rise by another £150,000. The committee is very grateful for this bequest.

### QAA

40. A QAA Monitoring Visit in October 2018 stated that the College is making progress in monitoring, reviewing and enhancing its higher education provision since the October 2017 monitoring visit, but that further improvement is required, in particular with regard to Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland pathways. The College is currently undergoing a full Higher Education Review and the review

visit is scheduled for 20 May 2019. The College has worked hard to address the matters highlighted and awaits the outcome of the review.

41. An internal Quality Assurance process is now in place for programme design and module review including a three-year review cycle for the college.
42. Due to the extended work and review now undertaken by the Curriculum Panel (with regard to monitoring and evaluation), the committee seeks approval from the General Assembly that the name of the panel be changed to the 'Teaching and Learning Panel'.

### **Staffing**

43. The contracts of two lecturers, due to expire this autumn, were extended for a further year from September 2019.
44. A professor has been dismissed after due process. This is referred to in more detail in the convener's introduction.

### **Students**

45. In the 2018/2019 academic year 13 ministerial students were enrolled, four in first year, four in second year and five in third year. In addition, there are 95.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate QUB students studying theology, 12.5 FTE postgraduate students, three student deaconesses, and eight A-level students. 40 QUB students are taking single modules.
46. There is a significant increase in ministry students for September 2019. The ministry training programme is designed to prepare all our students, both graduates and non-graduates, for effective and fruitful ministry within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Graduates commencing their ministry training pathway may be enrolled in a new PTFI Master of Divinity programme, and, for those suitably qualified, there is the possibility of working towards a Master of Theology degree during their time at Union College. The PTFI Charter only permits awards to be made to those who already hold an undergraduate degree.

IVAN PATTERSON, Convener

## **RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES COMMITTEE**

47. The committee has met four times since the 2018 General Assembly.

### **Enquiries**

48. Twelve people contacted the RMLC during the year for information about transferring to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Only one of these has, to date, followed through with a formal enquiry.



**Transferring Ministers**

49. Rev Gunther Andrich, a minister of the Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa, completed a two-year assistantship at Elmwood (Lisburn) in August 2018. Having satisfied the committee in all formal assessments, he was declared eligible to be called as a minister within PCI. Subsequently on 18 January 2019 he was installed in the Home Mission and inducted in the congregations of Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo.
50. Rev Andras Gilicze, a minister in the Hungarian Reformed Church, commenced a two-year assessed assistantship in Stormont on 5 February 2018. His training and formal assessment continues, with a view to eligibility for a call in February 2020.
51. Rev Dr Zachary Cole, an ordained minister from the United States of America, and currently teaching in Union Theological College, has completed one year of part-time assessed assistantship in Maze, as well as a full-time summer assistantship in First Monaghan and Smithborough. Dr Cole's assistantship is tailored to fit with his college teaching role. At the time of writing it is anticipated that, prior to the meeting of Assembly, he will have been inducted as part-time Moderator's Assistant in Maze.
52. Rev Laszlo Orban, an ordained minister of the Hungarian Reformed Church (in Romania), commenced a 2-year assessed assistantship in Joymount, Carrickfergus on 1 October 2018. His training and formal assessment continues, with a view to eligibility for a call in October 2020.
53. Rev Enrique Tagle Aguiar, an ordained minister in Havana Baptist Church, Cuba, was interviewed by the committee on 28 November 2018, and subsequently received as a transferring minister. He commenced a two-year assessed assistantship in First Carrickfergus on 1 April 2019, with a view to eligibility for call in April 2021.

**Application to be received as a Transferring Licentiate**

54. Mr Derek French, who is currently a PCI missionary in Spain was interviewed by the committee on 28 November 2018, and approved in principle for reception as a transferring licentiate. As Mr French is unavailable to return from Spain until mid-2020, he will undertake a supplementary interview prior to confirmation of his reception.

**Process for Transferring Ministers and Licentiates**

55. Formal reviews of transferring ministers/licentiates are now conducted after 6, 12 and 19 months in assistantship. Previously the final review was conducted at 24 months, but this was found to be too late in the process, and was thus brought forward to 19 months.
56. It is noted (a) that the cost of any courses required by the committee as part of the transfer process will be borne by the Council for Training in Ministry, (b) that transferring ministers will normally be required

to undertake the usual five years of Post-Ordination Training after being settled in a charge and (c) that a transferring minister/licentiate is officially 'under the supervision' of the presbytery within whose bounds he/she is serving as an assistant.

### **Rules for Transferring Ministers/Licentiatees**

57. A set of rules for transferring ministers/licentiatees was approved by the 2018 General Assembly, with the exception that one paragraph was referred back to the council for further consideration, namely 'A Transferring Minister who has not received and accepted a call within 12 months of becoming eligible shall normally cease to be eligible'. The committee considered this matter, and determined that, taking everything into account, it would be reasonable to extend this period of eligibility from 12 months to 18 months and this is brought to the Assembly for approval. For ease of future reference, the full set of rules is at Appendix 5.

### **Ministers without Charge and Licentiatees**

58. Under the Code, Par 219(4), presbyteries seek authorisation through the committee for the retention of ministers without charge and of licentiatees not serving an assistantship under Code Par 219A. Following a recommendation from the General Council, the committee continues to adopt an approach which is more fully in line with the Code than in former years. It continues to make ongoing adjustments to documentation and procedures to better serve this purpose and is grateful to clerks of presbytery for making annual returns in good time so that requests may be received in time for recommendations to be included in the General Assembly reports.
59. The recommendations are included in Appendix 6.

### **Requests for Permission to Preach in Vacancies**

60. Following formal applications, appropriate accompanying documents and written requests from the relevant vacancy conveners, two applicants were interviewed and granted permission – viz.: Terry Price to preach in Arklow and Will Ackles to preach in the Bailieborough group as well as First Monaghan/Smithborough.

### **Restoration of status under Code Par 219(5)**

61. A request for restoration of status as a minister without charge was received from a former minister of our Church who is currently in a full-time appointment which is not under the jurisdiction of the Assembly. This request was not granted.
62. In general terms, it is recognised that a former minister or licentiate may wish to seek a call and so seek restoration of status under Code Par 219(5). Under the wording of Code Par 219(4)(d)(i), which indicates that someone in a full-time appointment which is not under

the jurisdiction of the Assembly is deemed to have resigned (there are exceptions for some forms of church work), someone would have to resign from their full-time appointment before making application for restoration of status. There would be no certainty that he or she would be received, and even less that he or she would receive the call. An overture to address this difficulty will be presented.

### **'Order of Permissions' in Code Par 219(5)**

63. It is recommended that requests for the restoration of 'Minister without Charge' status should go in the first instance to the committee, in order that those which are clearly not permissible under the law of the Church can be dealt with prior to presbytery consideration. The overture referred to in the previous paragraph seeks also to address this matter.

ALBERT BAXTER, Convener

### **Recognised Ministries**

*Rev Dr WJP Bailie, Mission Africa, writes:*

64. Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) is one of Ireland's oldest mission agencies, currently in its 132nd year of operation. Mission Africa continues to pray that God might continue to be pleased to use the mission for His sovereign purposes.
65. The mission concentrates on three areas of ministry: 1) evangelism and church planting, generally in difficult places and circumstances; 2) the strengthening of the African church through theological education; 3) medical and compassionate ministry, especially amongst disadvantaged and marginalised populations, such as women, children and the elderly. These ministries are carried out in partnership with various evangelical African denominations, and often like-minded mission agencies. Mission Africa is a member of Global Connections (Evangelical Missionary Alliance) and Mission Agencies Partnership. I am particularly pleased to report warm relations with the Council for Global Mission.
66. The mission continues its work against a background of financial challenge, a diminishing interest in foreign mission amongst Western churches and at a time when many within the church cannot adequately distinguish mission and aid and development work. Nevertheless, we continue to send out full time missionaries and operate a short-term programme of teams and medium term placements. We also continue to operate branches in Scotland and England.
67. As Chief Executive I have responsibility for strategic planning; pastoral care of missionaries; supervision of personnel and finance at home and overseas and partner relations with a variety of churches and agencies. I am particularly involved in promoting theological education in Africa and I am currently developing plans for police and military chaplaincy in Africa.

68. 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), the Council for Training in Ministry and the subsidiary committees of the CTM. I am particularly glad to serve the Church through part-time teaching of Old Testament at Union Theological College, and ACF chaplaincy. I am honoured to be one of the Moderator's Chaplains for 2019-2020.

*Rev Dr Ruth Patterson, Restoration Ministries, writes:*

69. Restoration Ministries celebrated its 30th anniversary last year. There were many highlights, chief among which were a day conference at Dromantine with the Very Rev Dr John Dunlop, a meal for the Friends of the Ministry in St Brigid's, Derryvolgie and a thanksgiving service at Harmony Hill with Rev John Bell of the Iona Community. Another highlight of the year was a trip to the Holy Land at the request of Veritas Publishers. I was asked to accompany a group and simply absorb the experience, with the remit to return home and write some spiritual reflections as part of a larger Pilgrim's Guide, to be published later this year.
70. Faith and Friendship, 20 years old this past year, is now in eight different centres in Northern Ireland and continues to have a quiet reconciling influence in those communities. My commitments with L'Arche International continue as does my involvement in Centering Prayer. There are continuous requests to give retreats in various parts of the island and beyond – a wonderful privilege. The work of spiritual direction is ongoing.
71. This year we lost two faithful volunteers who were also dear friends, both of them Presbyterian – Hilton Henry (Legacurry) and Beth Moore (Knock). We are so grateful to them and all those volunteers over the years who have committed themselves to the vision of peace, healing and reconciliation.

## DEACONESS SELECTION AND TRAINING PANEL

72. Having completed their summer placements, the three student deaconesses began their second year placements on 24th September 2018 in the following locations:
- Paula Burrows – Belmont
  - Louise Davidson – Dunmurry
  - Sylvia Santos-Bryce – Greenisland
73. Students spend six sessions per week, plus Sunday, in these placements. In addition, they spend Fridays in college and have two sessions per week for study. The panel is very grateful to Rev Dr Liz Hughes for meeting with the students each Friday. Upon the satisfactory completion of the course, the student deaconesses are due to graduate with their diploma on 23 May 2019.

74. First year student feedback, chaired and collated by Pauline Kennedy and Helen Johnston, has been fed back to the panel and faculty. This will play an important role when the course on Diaconal Studies is prepared for any future cohort of students.

ROBIN BROWN, Convener

## **ACCREDITED PREACHER AND AUXILIARY MINISTRY PANEL**

### **Auxiliary Ministry Scheme**

75. After a lapse of two years, an Auxiliary Ministry Scheme course is planned for 2020. The application date is 6 September 2019 with training due to commence in January 2020. The panel is discussing the possibility of making some aspects of this course available to the wider church. Further consideration of this will continue after the application date for the 2020 course expires.

### **Accredited Preacher Scheme**

76. 2018 Course: Two courses centred in Belfast and Dublin are now nearing completion with the service of accreditation taking place on 19 May 2019 in Sandys Street, Newry.
77. 2019 Course: Interviews have taken place and 26 trainees will commence their course with an intensive classroom teaching week from 1 to 5 July 2019 in Union College.

OSSIE McAULEY, Convener

## **PASTORAL CARE OF MANSE FAMILIES PANEL**

### **Introduction**

78. The 2018 General Assembly sent down a report, from the Council for Training in Ministry, entitled 'Caring for Manse Families' to presbyteries for discussion and comment. Responses were received from each of the 19 presbyteries. The panel places on record its appreciation for the thoughtful, constructive and honest way in which each of the presbyteries engaged with this process.
79. In summary presbyteries welcomed this opportunity for 'moving the discussion forward' on what is clearly considered to be 'a very important topic' within the life of the Church.
80. Models currently at play include pastors pastorum, 'a pastoral couple', pastoral teams, and ad hoc arrangements as and when required. In

many contexts these are clearly appreciated, especially in times of reactive need. However, it would be fair to say that there is a collective acceptance that even at our best, in practice pastoral care of ministers and their families is an underdeveloped aspect of what it means to be part of PCI. No presbyteries responded in a way that suggested they were content to advocate for the status quo.

### Key Proposal

81. The Council's paper placed the following key proposal before presbyteries for discussion and comment: 'That a new layer of pastoral care for ministers and manse families be encouraged within PCI, namely: That each minister should be encouraged to take responsibility for naming someone who they and their family would look to as their pastor.'
  - Two out of 19 presbyteries embraced this proposal without any expressed reservations (1 of these has already begun to implement the suggested model).
  - 15 welcomed the proposals, indicating a willingness to implement them, with caveats (see below).
  - Two did not express a clear view on the proposal.
82. The dominant caveat expressed regarding the implementing of the above proposal, across the denomination, was that 'one size does not fit all and never will', or as another presbytery put it 'one size fits none.'
83. The variance within the responses can best be illustrated by the following examples:
  - (a) Five presbyteries felt it would be important that the chosen 'pastor' should be a minister from within the presbytery. 8 felt it would be important for the chosen 'pastor' to come from outside of the presbytery.
  - (b) Six felt it was important that the chosen 'pastor' should be an ordained Presbyterian minister. 5 felt it was important that the chosen 'pastor' could be a non-ordained person or, indeed, someone outside of PCI.
  - (c) Six felt that it would be important for clerks to keep records regarding pastoral link-ups. 4 felt this would be unhelpful and indeed unnecessarily intrusive and bureaucratic.

### Common Ground

84. Whilst responses to the content, and core proposal of the paper were varied, one key point of commonality emerges, namely a strong acceptance across presbyteries that the pastoral care of ministers (and by association their families) is, within a Presbyterian ecclesiology, a matter with which presbytery rightly concerns itself.
85. Whilst welcoming the stimulus of suggested models of pastoral care, the strong message coming back from across the denomination is, as

summed up by one response: ‘We believe that arrangements for pastoral care should be left to each presbytery to determine what is best in their situation.’

86. The panel believes that this is the view of the Church (as expressed in the responses) and that therefore it should not ask the General Assembly to prescribe specific models to presbyteries as to how they should provide pastoral care for ministers and their families.

### Analysis

87. A number of presbyteries expressed concerns about the usage of the phrase ‘Manse Families’. They argued that this phrase in itself can perpetuate stereotypes, create unhelpful expectations and overlook the circumstances of ministers who (for example) are not married or who do not have children.
88. In response to these comments the panel suggests that this discussion be reframed within PCI to that of ‘Pastoral Care of Ministers and their Families’, and that the panel itself (sitting under the Council for Training in Ministry) be renamed accordingly.
89. This change in terminology away from ‘Manse Families’ helps to defuse any perception that ministers, and their families, are unique in facing pressures,<sup>1</sup> with the attendant expectations that such perceptions can bring. However, it is important to acknowledge, that as in many occupations, ministers will face particular pressures because of the peculiar challenges of their work.<sup>2</sup> Presbytery responses suggest that there is need for an ongoing conversation within the Church regarding ways of improving vocational support for ordained ministers (embracing areas such as mentoring, supervision, in service training, sabbatical leave etc).<sup>3</sup>
90. One area however where ministers (who serve in congregations) are in a unique situation is that that their households are the only households within PCI which do not, by default, have a ‘minister’. Interestingly at the time of the Scottish Reformation John Knox foresaw this pastoral deficit in an emerging system of church governance that no longer had bishops to pastor the pastors.<sup>4</sup>

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1 For a survey of pressures facing individuals and families today see, for example, Shona and David Murray, *Refresh: Embracing a Grace-Paced Life in a World of Endless Demands*. (Crossway Books, 2017) and Kevin DeYoung *Crazy Busy* (IVP, 2013).

2 See for example: Peter Shaw and Graham Shaw, *Living with Never-Ending Expectations*, (Regent College Publishing, 2017); Peter Brain, *Going the Distance*, (Matthias Media, 2003); Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell and Jason Byassee, *Faithful and Fractured*, (Baker Academic, 2018).

3 Recent changes to the Consultation Process have been pointing a way forward on this issue.

4 Knox suggested the appointment of ‘Superintendents’ to address this issue. See Gordon Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, (Scottish Academic Press, 1972), p63.

91. It is a central tenet of a Presbyterian ecclesiology that presbyteries are meant to fulfil the role of care and oversight (episcopate) for our ministers. When the first presbyteries were formed in the Church of Scotland in the late 16th century this relational and pastoral aspect of presbytery life was assumed in a context where the first presbyteries met, often over a full day, on a weekly basis.

### **Beyond Theory to Good Practice**

92. Whilst PCI has inherited this ecclesiology in theory it has not of course inherited it in practice. The result is that presbyteries, now cast as essentially administrative ‘courts’, struggle to give real expression to their oversight function, notably in the areas of the personal discipling, vocational encouragement and pastoral care of ministers (and by association their families).
93. Eugene Peterson in his book *Working the Angles*,<sup>5</sup> speaks about how the practice and experience of ministry is often determined not by the ‘big things’ but by what he calls ‘the angles’, those things that set the direction for where we are travelling.
94. Within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland it is the Code which ‘sets the angles’ helping various bodies within an ordered church understand what is expected of them. For reasons (perhaps as outlined above) the Code of the Church nowhere identifies presbytery as having any pastoral character or role, it is an aspect of a presbytery’s oversight that, is perhaps, merely assumed.
95. As the panel seeks to move forward on this key issue of the pastoral care of ministers and their families, and having reflected upon the presbytery responses, it is suggested that several changes to the Code could help to ‘re-set’ the angles of how the church sees pastoral care for ministers and their families developing within the life of PCI. These suggested changes are as outlined in the appended resolutions.
96. The panel encourages the church not to see these changes as mere semantic adjustments but rather to see in them the roots of a renewed commitment across PCI to fellowship with, and care for, real, named, colleagues who are our neighbours and fellow presbyters.
97. The panel appreciates the candour of a number of the responses we received. Relationships within some of our presbyteries are not always easy. Even where there is perceived theological alignment personalities can clash and relationships can be strained. Yet it is also noted that there are stories emerging from within presbyteries of new and creative models of corporate friendship that are being pursued.<sup>6</sup>

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5 Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*, (Eerdmans, 1993).

6 One Presbytery gave a stimulating outline of how active ministers have begun to meet regularly over a packed-lunch for ‘story telling’, ‘sharing resources’, and prayer. This ‘Company of Pastors’ offers one example of a Presbytery finding a model that works in their context and is helping them to deepen fellowship and mutual care.



98. The panel seeks to be an encourager within PCI for a renewed Presbyterian church culture that leans into relationships with one another rather than finding ways around them. It thanks presbyteries for their thoughtful engagement thus far and commend the appended resolutions for consideration by the General Assembly.

### Addendum

99. In addition to the issues raised in this report, three further strands emerged from presbytery responses:
- (a) **Expectations re employment**: There is a general (though not universal) awareness that ministers are not in the legal sense 'employees'. Yet as one presbytery response put it: 'Although not strictly an employer, we also recognise that PCI has, in some sense, a duty of care for its ministers serving in local congregations.' Nine presbyteries raised points that link into this issue, including the question of whether funds can be made available (for example through the Ministerial Development Fund) in situations where ministers could benefit from vocational counselling.
  - (b) **Hard stories**: The consulting process which presbyteries were engaging in did not invite individual responses. However individual voices have come through within some of the responses given. Two things are noteworthy:
    - (i) A sense that when a minister is off long term (through illness) there is often a sense of disappointment from them (and / or their spouse) as to the unstructured and 'thin' nature of the pastoral support they receive – even (for example) in the lack of clearly understood pathways for e.g. phased return to work etc.
    - (ii) When ministers are facing judicial proceedings, the question is posed as to the level of specialist training needed for those pastorally caring in such situations – when home / livelihood etc. are literally 'on the line'.
  - (c) **Relationships**: All who are ordained to serve within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland share a common, and publicly expressed, acceptance that the Presbyterian form of church government is 'founded on and agreeable to the Word of God'.<sup>7</sup> That same Word of God however alerts the church to the fact that good and loving relationships among those who serve do not simply happen, they need to be worked at and encouraged.<sup>8</sup> Six presbyteries explicitly picked up on the relational challenges that they experience within presbytery. Such realism is to be welcomed, encouraging all to work for a church where 'peace and unity'<sup>9</sup>

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7 See for example Code para 212 (5) (vi).

8 See for example Philippians 4 vs 2-3.

9 See Code para 212 (5) (iv).

are aspired to, and experienced, at all levels of the church's fellowship and governance.

NIALL LOCKHART, Convener

## CONCILIATION PANEL

100. Since June 2018, the Conciliation Service has been engaged in two main areas: supporting congregations dealing with conflict and delivering training courses. While the number of cases remains small, the requests for training in related areas continue to rise, with the 'Healthy Decision Making' course being most regularly requested.
101. Elders' Roadshows have offered a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of the Conciliation Service and several of the training requests this year have come as a result of that initial experience. The number of training days for licentiates was increased from two to three, allowing for fuller exploration of the Service's key training themes, with positive feedback being received from all of those who participated. Update training for conciliators took place in November 2018 and March 2019.
102. The Conciliation Panel continues to explore ways to raise awareness of the service across PCI and to encourage people to feel comfortable and confident to ask for support in conflict situations where the service might play a helpful role.

MARY POTTER, Convener

## APPENDIX 1

### SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	David Morrison	Union
ARMAGH	John Graham	Union
	Richard Hill	Union
	Matthew Kelso	Union
BALLYMENA	Mark Rodgers	–
	Chris Wilson	Union
	Matthew Horner	Union
NORTH BELFAST	Gareth Keaveney	Union
	John McCracken	Union
	Paul Lutton	Union
SOUTH BELFAST	Paul Lutton	Union
EAST BELFAST	Philip Boyd	Union
COLERAINE AND LIMAVADY	James O'Neill	Union

DOWN	Peter Burke	Union
DUBLIN AND MUNSTER	Kevin Hargaden	–
NEWRY	David Bingham	Union
TEMPLEPATRICK	Billy Abwa	Union

## APPENDIX 2

### MINISTRY APPLICATION PATHWAY REVIEW

#### PROGRAMME

Applications should be made by 15th September in any year.

Note that a requirement would be introduced that applicants must have preached at least three times in a PCI church setting. Applications must be accompanied by references from two people who have heard them preach. This is currently a requirement for APS application, but not ordained ministry.

Applications sent immediately to Presbytery.

Presbytery Nomination – 2nd week in November

#### Residential One – Third Friday in November

Friday night – interview panel present

- Introductions
- Worship
- Testimonies of applicants and panel

Saturday – interview panel not present

- Setting out process
- Called and qualified
- Bible reading journaling
- Leadership seminar
- Introduction to online preaching module and watching first session

#### Residential Two – Second Friday/Saturday in January

Friday night – interview panel present

- Worship
- Informal interaction

Saturday – interview panel not present

- Preaching workshop [similar to current Accredited Preacher Scheme]

### **Placement One – Five Sundays/Four weeks November**

Format of existing applicant placement

- One session per week
- Supervising minister and applicant read *Fruitful Leaders* by Marcus Honeysett together and discuss as part of contact session, with emphasis on self-reflection
- Involvement every Sunday
- Conduct full service on final Sunday
- Supervising minister provides evaluation covering preaching/leading worship; teachability; pastoral interactions/emotional intelligence
- evaluation forms to be completed by supervising ministers and others should contain direct and challenging questions concerning the applicant's suitability for ministry

### **Placement Two – Six Sundays/Five weeks in different location, February / March**

Format of existing APS mentoring

- Applicant preaches on weeks three, six
- Supervising minister mentors sermons
- Assessment on week six by two CTM assessors [not interview panel members] with report for panel
- Supervising minister completes mentor's report for panel
- As with APS mentoring, there is an option to have the first and second service/sermons at a midweek, or at a small gathering of elders. The final service should be at a Sunday service, ideally a Sunday morning.

### **Psychological Assessment – October/November**

Health Link 360 consultants invited to meet with Interview Panels on the Friday afternoon of second residential

### **Reading**

Interactive journaled reading of books recommended by the Council.

At present the list consists of:

- *Christ-centred Preaching* – B. Chapell
- *Raiding the Lost Ark* – J. Rhodes
- *What Grieving People Wish You Knew* – N. Guthrie

**Online preaching**

Applicants will follow a preaching course approved by the Council for Training in Ministry, currently by Bryan Chapell, Covenant Seminary.

**Westminster Confession of Faith**

Applicants write assignment similar to current APS WCF assignment. It is not 'marked' but Dr M. Cowan is asked to read assignments and append a short comment. Assignment and comment are forwarded to interview panel.

*Bible Journaling* – as present.

*Easter Interviews* – as present.

**Implementation**

Proposal brought to 2019 General Assembly with resolution that the new arrangements begin for 2020 applications – i.e. 2019 applications will follow 'old' system with APS requirement.

Therefore, applications in 2020 will have no APS requirement.

	September-Easter
Application Date	15 September
Returned from Presbytery	Second week November
First Residential	Third Friday November
Second Residential	Second Friday January
First placement	December and January
Second placement	February and March
Main interview	Easter

**Additional points to note for applicants outside Ireland**

- Attendance at residentials is a requirement for application.
- Alternative arrangements will be made for placements for those living outside Ireland.

## APPENDIX 3

### FLEXIBLE TRAINING PATHWAYS FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY

#### The Pathway

1. Columns 1 and 2 of the annexed table set out the General Assembly requirements for those training for the Ordained Ministry. Every trainee must continue to meet these requirements, however with the introduction of Flexible Pathways, it would be possible to meet these in a variety of ways, as shown in the other columns of the table.
2. It is hoped that where students satisfy one or more of the requirements through prior learning or ministry experience, it could offer space for them to study modules specific to their individual gifting and calling, e.g. Church Planting, Church Re-vitalisation, Chaplaincy Ministry etc.

#### The Procedures

3. Potential pathways for trainees will be considered, in the first instance, by the Ministry Pathway Panel [the Panel].
4. The Panel will consist of the Council for Training in Ministry Convener and Secretary; the Ministerial Studies and Development Convener and Secretary; the Principal and the Professor of Practical Theology.
5. The Panel will sit under, and report to, MSDC, which will bring recommendations to CTM.
6. The Panel will have access to all application information and may consult with interview panels.
7. The Panel will not be able to make recommendations which set-aside any of the Assembly requirements for training, but will be able to recommend how these can be fulfilled – through study, comprehensive assessment, prior learning, ministry experience. It will also be able to make recommendations regarding the duration of the training pathway, both pre- and post-licensing. In exceptional circumstances, the Panel will be able to recommend that an applicant is licensed on acceptance by the General Assembly, with any Assembly requirements being completed during the licentiate-ship. If these requirements are not completed during this period, eligibility for call and ordination will not be granted.
8. In making decisions on pathways, the Panel will consider:
  - (a) an applicant's prior theological learning and qualifications;
  - (b) ministry experience;
  - (c) recognised gifts for ministry;
  - (d) demonstrable ministry formation.

9. It is important to note that where an applicant has some theological qualifications and ministry experience, these will not automatically result in a shortened pathway but it will not, either, be unnecessarily lengthened. In such cases the Panel may recommend that some Assembly requirements are deemed to have been fulfilled by prior learning, or will be fulfilled by comprehensive assessment, and that other courses of study are added, along with additional time and/or evaluation in congregational placement.
10. The Panel will bring pathway recommendations to MSDC for all applicants being recommended by the Committee to CTM for nomination as ministry students. The Panel will bring its recommendations to MSDC on the Wednesday following the ministry interviews. The Committee will subsequently bring recommendations to CTM on applicants regarding nomination and pathway.
11. Following this meeting of CTM, applicants will be informed of their nomination, or otherwise, and of the pathway that will be recommended to the Assembly.
12. The CTM report to the Assembly will include both the names of those nominated for acceptance and recommendations for the duration of their training pathway. This will maintain the current situation of the Assembly being the only body able to grant such changes to the training programme.

### **Right of Review**

13. Where a presbytery is not in agreement with the training pathway recommended by the Council for Training in Ministry for a candidate it has nominated, it may seek a review of that decision [Code Par 146(1) (c)].

### **Finance**

14. As there would be a variety of contexts and duration of training pathways, it is likely that in some cases financial arrangements would need to be flexible also. This may mean, at one extreme, that some trainees remain in paid, ministry-related employment in their existing situations with the Students Bursary Fund paying fees.

### ANNEX TO APPENDIX 3

#### General Assembly requirements for those training for ordained ministry

Requirement	Elements	Study Module	Comprehensive Assessment	Prior Learning	Ministry Experience
Old Testament	Introduction Selected Texts Biblical Theology				
New Testament	Introduction Epistles Johannine Theology				
Biblical Languages	Greek Hebrew				
Church History	Early Church 16th Century Irish				
Systematic Theology	Introduction Key Doctrines WCF Christian Ethics				
Practical Theology	Introduction Homiletics and Worship Pastoral Care Missiology				
Placements	Year 1 Summer - 14 wks Year 2 Summer - 14 wks Year 3 part time				
Licentiatehip of 26 months and completion of licentiate training					



## APPENDIX 4

### Listing of courses offered in 2019/20

#### Graduate Certificate in Theology/Graduate Diploma in Theology

The Graduate Diploma is an online programme offering students the opportunity to begin accredited theological studies. For graduates without a theology degree the graduate diploma may provide a pathway to masters study. Candidates who only complete two modules may graduate with the Graduate Certificate. The Graduate Diploma can be completed in one year of full time study.

#### Postgraduate Certificate in Greek/Postgraduate Diploma in Greek

The Postgraduate Certificate in Greek is an online programme offering students the opportunity to study the equivalent of four semesters of biblical Greek. This is a media and technology rich programme based on the BibleMesh Biblical Languages Curriculum. Students who have completed two of the four modules may graduate with the Postgraduate Certificate in Greek. Typically students will complete the Postgraduate Diploma in two years part-time.

#### MTh in Reformed Theology/Postgraduate Diploma in Reformed Theology

This programme is available either fully online or with blended online/campus delivery. This taught masters allows students to gain advanced historical and theological knowledge of central Christian doctrines. The diploma is available for those who complete the teaching modules without the dissertation. The four core modules are Creeds, Councils and Confessions, Reformation Theology, The Holy Trinity, and The Holy Spirit. The modules draw on excellent learning materials developed by publishers such as Zondervan Academic that provide students with access to first-rate learning resources. This programme is ideal preparation for students hoping to pursue theological research at doctoral level. It is one year full-time or two years part-time.

#### MTh in Theological Ethics

This programme is blended online/campus delivery. This taught masters allows students to gain advanced understanding of theological ethics with two intensive residential seminars: The Christian Ethical Tradition and Contemporary Ethical Issues. The online modules will draw on first-rate learning developed by Zondervan Academic that provide students with access to first learning resources. It is anticipated that leading ethicists will participate in the residential aspects of the programme. This programme is ideal preparation for students hoping to pursue ethical research at doctoral level. It is a two year part-time course.

### **MA in Christian Theology**

This MA is a professional or practice master's degree that is designed to provide broad and practically relevant understanding of theological issues. The seven taught modules cover the main theological topics and provide students with the opportunity to reflect carefully on the biblical material under discussion and also to integrate their thinking with life and ministry. The seven taught modules are Christian Foundations, The Doctrine of God, Christology, The Holy Spirit, Church and Salvation, Making Ethical Decisions, and Eschatology. The modules will draw on learning materials developed by Third Millennium Ministries that provide students with access to history channel style video resources, giving students accessible introductory material for each module. Students will have access to the Cerego learning app to enable them to develop mastery of key content. There is also a dissertation/research project. It is anticipated that this practice masters will have variable completion lengths depending on the particular circumstances of each student. It is designed to be as flexible and accessible as possible. This online programme is particularly suited to graduates of disciplines other than theology who have ministry experience and wish to study theology at graduate level.

### **Master of Divinity**

The Master of Divinity is a three year part-time residential programme orientated towards the practice of Christian Ministry. The six core modules are Old Testament Prophetic Texts, Synoptic Gospels and Acts, Pauline Theology, Reformation Theology: Past, Present, and Future, Reformed Catholic Dogmatics, and Practical Theology. There is also a dissertation / research project.

### **PhD**

The PhD is a research programme requiring students to produce a dissertation of between 75,000 and 90,000 words. Full-time students typically complete the programme in 3-4 years and part-time students in 6-7. Students may be residential or non-residential.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Rules to be followed in the reception of ministers and licentiates from other churches:**

1. All applications from licentiates or ministers of other churches to be received under the care of the Church shall be made to the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee.

2. The term 'Licentiates' will be taken to include anyone who had completed their studies in another denomination and is eligible to receive a call within that denomination.
3. Potential applicants shall undertake a week of orientation within Ireland at the direction of the Convener of the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee, prior to formal application.
4. Following formal application, which shall be on the form prescribed by the Committee, each applicant shall be interviewed and a report brought to the Committee which shall have power to issue\* and may approve or reject any application.
5. A minister or licentiate whose application has been approved in this way shall have the status of a 'Transferring Minister' (or 'Transferring Licentiate' as appropriate – hereinafter simply 'Transferring Minister').
6. A Transferring Minister shall not be eligible for call until he/she has successfully completed any studies and/or assistantship required by the Council for Training in Ministry: this assistantship shall normally last two years.
7. The assistantship will be the equivalent of a Licentiate Assistantship, including equivalent remuneration, except that an ordained person may in addition celebrate the sacraments.
8. The placing of the Assistantship shall be determined by the Committee in consultation with the Assignments Panel.
9. A Transferring Minister will be under the supervision of the presbytery in which he/she is serving as an assistant, but will remain a member of the denomination he/she is transferring from until installed or inducted in a charge within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
10. The Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee will normally review and evaluate the progress of a Transferring Minister every at 6, 12 and 24 months in consultation with the Supervising Minister.
11. The Council for Training in Ministry may re-assign a Transferring Minister or terminate his/her pathway. Termination may take place either at the end of the period of assistantship or, if it becomes clear that he/she will not satisfactorily complete his/her studies and/or assistantship, at any point before that.
12. A Transferring Minister whose pathway is terminated ceases to have any status within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
13. A Transferring Minister who successfully completes the studies and/or assistantship required by the Council for Training in Ministry shall be deemed to have been received by the General Assembly and is thereby eligible for a call under Code Par 193(1)(b) or 2(b) as appropriate.
14. A Transferring Minister who has not received and accepted a call within 18 months of becoming eligible shall normally cease to be eligible.

15. A Transferring Minister may request a review of any reassignment or the termination of his/her pathway, which will operate under the review procedures of the Council for Training in Ministry as applicable to a Licentiate. [Note this is the equivalent of an appeal under Code Par 146(1)(c), and the outcome is final.]
16. (a) In cases where the reception of a minister is being sought to facilitate the work of a Council of the General Assembly the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee may make special interview arrangements and the Council for Training in Ministry shall have power to issue or to refer the matter to the General Assembly. The Committee may apply certain conditions before the minister may receive a further call within PCI, including, but not limited to: specification of a length of time that must pass; a requirement to take part in post-ordination training applicable to PCI ministers; participation in mentoring arrangements.
- (b) In cases where a vacancy commission seeks to approve the placing of a minister of another denomination on a list for hearing, the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee may make special interview arrangements and the Council for Training in Ministry shall have power to issue or to refer the matter to the General Assembly. If approved, and subsequently called, the presbytery, if the Linkage Commission so nominates, will appoint him/her as Stated Supply, on terms set by the Linkage Commission, and normally reflecting the Terms of Call. The Transferring Minister will carry out the normal duties of a minister of a congregation for a period of two years. It is recommended that he/she be invited to sit and deliberate at presbytery during that time. The Committee will set requirements for college courses and/ or participation in post-ordination training. Following successful completion of the Committee requirements, and successful reviews of progress at 6, 12 and 24 months, the Transferring Minister will be installed by the presbytery as minister of the charge and have the status of full minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
17. No one with an active application as a Transferring Minister, and not yet declared to be eligible for a call, may be approved for placing on a list for hearing by a congregation under the previous paragraph.

\*Power to issue was given by the Council on 19 January 2015: That the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee be given power to interview and issue on behalf of the Council concerning all applications from students, licentiates or ministers of other churches to be received under the care of the Church.

## APPENDIX 6

### **Recommendations concerning Ministers Without Charge and Licentiates Not Serving an Assistantship under Code Par 219A**

Presbyteries have sought authorisation for the retention of the following as recognised licentiates or ministers without charge under Code Par 219(3) (c)(i), and the Council for Training in Ministry makes recommendation as detailed. At the time of writing, a report is awaited on one further minister without charge.

#### **Ards**

Rev C.D. Mawhinney to be retained as minister without charge  
Mr K.J. Ward not to be retained as licentiate

#### **Armagh**

Rev J.W.P. McConnell to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be advised to apply to a local reformed denomination for reception under their care, and to respond by 31 December 2019

#### **North Belfast**

Rev Dr L.E. Carroll to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that she be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
Mr David McCarthy to be retained as licentiate  
Rev C.I. McKnight to be retained as minister without charge (retired)  
Rev Samuel Newell to be retained as minister without charge  
Rev W.A. Shaw to be retained as minister without charge  
Rev W.M. Smyth to be retained as minister without charge (retired)  
Rev F.W. Vincent to be retained as minister without charge for one year

#### **South Belfast**

Rev Dr L.H. Eagleson to be retained as minister without charge for one year subject to further clarification of his role in the church plant in Berry Street  
Rev J.D. Maxwell to be retained as minister without charge  
Rev K.M. Mbayo to be retained as minister without charge  
Rev Dr P.G. McDowell to be retained as minister without charge  
Rev J.A. Peacock to be retained as minister without charge

**East Belfast**

- Rev J.M. Casement to be retained as minister without charge
- Rev W.J. Harshaw to be retained as minister without charge (retired)
- Rev Dr D.J. Montgomery to be retained as minister without charge
- Rev B.J. Walker to be retained as minister without charge
- Rev Dr M.J. Welsh to be retained as minister without charge

**Carrickfergus**

- Mr C.M.S Barron to be retained as licentiate for one year and that he be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

**Coleraine and Limavady**

- Rev Dr R.A. Kane to be retained as minister without charge

**Derry and Donegal**

- Rev D.A. Edgar to be retained as minister without charge (retired) for one year
- Rev K.G. Patterson to be retained as minister without charge for one year
- Rev S.W.K. Glendinning to be retained as minister without charge
- Rev J.C. Teeney to be retained as minister without charge

**Down**

- Rev Dr B.C.G. Black to be retained as minister without charge

**Dromore**

- Rev W.J. Todd to be retained as minister without charge

**Monaghan**

- Rev D.J.M. Boyle to be retained as minister without charge

**Newry**

- Rev A.D. Mullan to be retained as minister without charge
- Rev B.A.H. Wilson to be retained as minister without charge

**Route**

- Rev Dr Victor Dobbin to be retained as minister without charge (retired)
- Rev R.J. Gilkinson to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
- Rev Peter Turton to be retained as minister without charge

**Templepatrick**

Rev J.A. Gordon to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Mr J.R. Kernohan – a recommendation, if appropriate, will be included in the Supplementary Reports.

Rev J.L. Tosh to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

**Tyrone**

Rev T.J. Conway to be retained as minister without charge

Rev W.I. Ferris, to be retained as minister without charge for one year and that he be required to obtain communicant membership within a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Rev J.M. Gracey to be retained as minister without charge

NOTE: Since last year the following are no longer recorded as Licentiates or Ministers without charge.

**DECEASED**

**Ards**

Rev David McKee

**STATUS CHANGED TO MINISTER EMERITUS**

**North Belfast**

Rev J.S.B. Drennan

**Carrickfergus**

Rev R.J. McCullough

**Dromore**

Rev A.S. Thompson

**RESIGNED**

**Ards**

Rev Simon Henning

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Council for Training in Ministry, be accepted as students for the ordained ministry, and placed under the care of their presbyteries:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Presbytery</b>
Paul Bradley	Millisle and Ballycopeland	Ards
Stephen Cairns	Whiteabbey	N Belfast
Martin Delaney	High Kirk, Ballymena	Ballymena
Tom Finnegan	Sloan St, Lisburn	Dromore
Andrew Frazer	St Andrews, Bangor	Ards
Stephen Gaston	Abbot's Cross	N Belfast
Jeff Gawn	Enniskillen	Omagh
Mark Hawthorne	Waringstown	Armagh
Stephen Kerr	Legacurry	Dromore
Andrew Martin	Sloan St, Lisburn	Dromore
Thomas Moore	First Saintfield	Down
Wallace Moore	Scrabo	Ards
Neil Stewart	Stormont	E Belfast

2. That the candidature for the ordained ministry of Dr Kevin Hargaden be terminated with immediate effect.
3. That the Assembly welcome Union Theological College's developing relationship with BibleMesh which enables development of online courses and understand that this in no way undermines any theological position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
4. That the Assembly give approval of the direction of travel contained in Appendix 3 concerning Flexible Training Pathways, and give permission for the Council to pilot the scheme and report back to the General Assembly in 2021.
5. That the Assembly welcome the development of the courses detailed in Appendix 4 and encourage the Faculty to further develop online presence and appropriate courses under the oversight of the Management Committee and the Council for Training in Ministry.
6. That the Assembly approve of the renaming of the Curriculum Panel's name to the 'Teaching and Learning Panel'.
7. That the recommendations in Appendix 6 concerning those whose retention as licentiates and ministers without charge has been sought by presbyteries be adopted.



8. Consolidated Resolution
  - (a) That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme be set to raise £130,000.
  - (b) That the assessment for the Students' Bursary Fund be set to raise £150,000.
9. That the Assembly approve of the renaming of the Pastoral Care of Manse Families Panel to the 'Pastoral Care of Ministers and their Families Panel'.
10. That the report of the Council for Training in Ministry be received.

# COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev Dr TREVOR McCORMICK

Secretary: Mr LINDSAY CONWAY, OBE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The report addresses the general work of the Council for Social Witness, underlining the bigger issues impacting on the life of our church and within our communities. These include welfare reform, mental health, safeguarding and homelessness. The Council discussed and finalised the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.
2. The Disability Services Committee oversees the routine work of the services provided and has discussed major issues affecting this sector of care. Low occupancy numbers in Lawnfield House and the takeover of Peacehaven are major issues for the committee.
3. The Older People Services Committee commends the dedicated staff who provide a high level of care throughout our homes and the professionalism of the senior team. The committee is encouraged by the high occupancy within our homes, but is aware of the underfunding in the whole area of fees.
4. The Taking Care Committee has had a particular focus on the legislation in the Republic of Ireland, the appointment of the new Head of Safeguarding post and the Taking Care Audit.
5. The Specialist Services Committee continues to oversee the work in our Criminal Justice and Addictions units. Mental health and drug and alcohol addictions remain a major concern of both the staff groups and committee.

## MAIN COUNCIL REPORT

6. Although a work of fiction, the society described in Konrad McKane's *Alkaya: the Legend of Empyro* has a chilling ring of present day reality: "They teach that everyone is a separate entity, and you should look out for number one, creating a selfish meism society." Unsurprisingly the prophecy of Ezekiel warns of this very attitude: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought

back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.” (Ezekiel 34:2-4)

7. It is against this backdrop that the Council for Social Witness continues its diverse work, spurred on by the Council’s vision statement, ‘People matter to God!’ and its aim ‘To live out the love of Christ through a caring Church within our communities.’ We continue to care for and minister to ‘the weak, sick and injured’, and through daily worship, Bible study, and personal witness endeavour to bring back ‘the strays and the lost’. And this with compassion, or as in Eugene Peterson’s paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 5: “We work urgently with everyone we meet to get them ready to face God. God alone knows how well we do this, but I hope you realize how much and deeply we care. ...Christ’s love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do.”
8. In previous years the Council’s report has concluded with an acknowledgement of the dedicated and professional leadership of staff, in homes and units, and particularly in Assembly Buildings. This year the report begins with a focus on staff, for in October the Residential and Supported Services Manager, Linda Wray, was appointed manager of the Croft Community, working with adults with learning disabilities to help them live fulfilling lives within the community. For 26 years Linda made an unparalleled contribution to Social Witness throughout the church and wider community. Her passion and compassion have been a motivation for herself and the innumerable individuals and groups with whom she had contact. Beginning with the Presbyterian Residential Trust, Linda brought vision and energy as that work approached its 70th anniversary. With her inspiration and guidance facilities were renewed and the work expanded with regular refurbishments and the replacement of Corkey House and Sunnyside House, the creation of Harold McCauley nursing home and, most recently the re-location of Ard Cluan House and York House to the magnificent Trinity House in Garvagh. Linda’s responsibilities increased with a developing ministry for those with disabilities and special needs. The development of Willow Brook and Topley Court in Coleraine, and taking responsibility for Aaron House, Lawnfield House and Peacehaven is evidence of her boundless energy and uncontainable enthusiasm for work and witness. Nor did she spare herself in deputation work, through which Linda not only shared the news of this aspect of PCI’s mission and ministry, but encouraged many others to get practically involved, making twiddlemuffs, fundraising, gardening, befriending residents, developing the ‘Christmas Cracker’ scheme, and the list could go on. Unseen have been the many ways in which Linda supported staff in the office and in the various facilities with thoughtful and kind words and gifts, expressing concern, understanding and support. Such a record of ministry and service is an example to all and Linda deserves warm thanks and appreciation.
9. The Council recognises the high professional standards of the Senior Team and their personal commitment to the work of the Council.

A new senior staff structure has been agreed and implemented (see Appendix 1).

10. During the year there have been several opportunities to celebrate: anniversaries in River House and Harold McCauley House; first place award to River House for Best Kept Health and Social Care Facility in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Region; and the Long Service and Recognition Awards celebration when the array of commitment and creativity throughout the Council and in many congregations was both humbling and inspiring.
11. Nevertheless, it is important to report some significant challenges encountered by the Council and its committees during this past year. There are financial strictures limiting this work – the continuing absence of local government ministers has resulted in little or no increase in funding although there are increasing costs attached to the services provided. Although it is a constant struggle to ‘live within our means’ there is a careful management of resources at all levels and diligent stewardship of what is entrusted and available to this area of witness.
12. Regarding property, the Council reports the sale of Denegarth House at Mallusk and the marketing of York House in Portrush. There are some legal processes to be sorted before Ard Cluan in Londonderry can be placed on the market. At the time of writing the legal arrangements regarding Peacehaven in Greystones continue to be a source of much legal enquiry and discussion. It is hoped that this protracted business can be satisfactorily resolved in the near future. The wise and patient guidance of the General Assembly’s Solicitor is, as ever, greatly valued.
13. The work of the Council is never static. There are increasing needs, new opportunities and emerging challenges. During the year there has been growing awareness of the increasing need for dementia care, the explosion of scams and hoaxes aimed at all age groups, and the increase of domestic abuse. Recognising that resources of time, finance, and personnel have to be deployed with discernment the Council and its committees have given prayer, thought and time to formulating a strategic plan for the Council’s work over the next three years.
14. The Council is greatly concerned that the infrastructures and institutions within social care are broken and no longer fit for purpose. In recent weeks the Church Leaders have had a series of ‘Civil Society Dialogue’ events involving MLAs and community leaders, including many of the Council senior staff (giving them an opportunity to tell their stories). Staff were able to state that health and social care was on its knees, that education was in crisis, that housing was not fit for purpose, and farmers and the business community who attended brought their concerns in relation to Brexit.
15. Hebrews 13, verse 16 says, “Make sure you don’t take things for granted and go slack in working for the common good; share what you have with others. God takes particular pleasure in acts of worship – a different kind of sacrifice – that take place in kitchen and workplace

and on the streets.” Eugene Patterson in his introduction to the book of Hebrews states this: “The focus becomes clear and sharp again. God’s action in Jesus. And we are free once more for the act of faith, the one human action in which we get in the way, but the way.” That is Social Witness in 2019, a different way of navigating through the poverty and reduced services. Darren McGarvey in his book ‘Poverty Safari’ states “Poverty is a quicksand that consumes us despite our best efforts to escape its pull. Poverty is at an all-time high, with any hope of reducing child poverty by 2020, basically evaporated.” The church has always connected well with the overall welfare of its members and the wider community, both as service-providers and advice givers.

16. The Council received a report following the recent ‘Homeless & Housing’ seminar hosted by Union College. This seminar dealt with the whole issue of civil and human rights in relation to the right to have a home. The main speakers gave a comprehensive overview of the state of social housing in Northern Ireland with particular reference to these facts: that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive may have to decommission 43,000 homes in the coming years as being unfit and that 148 of our fellow citizens have taken their own lives while awaiting housing since 2011; that housing associations are not meeting targets and welfare reform is impacting on the ability to pay rent, housing association rentals being higher than housing benefit. The whole stigma of homelessness was highlighted. The Council Secretary as a panel member was able to outline how our Church was to respond to many of these issues in a pastoral way.
17. **ScamwiseNI.** The Council welcomed the new Scamwise initiatives, involving the uniformed youth organisations and the Post Office. A challenge programme will be launched with the main uniformed organisations in the summer and the Post Office now provides valuable advice and support to all customers experiencing scams or the threat of a scam. Earlier in the year the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, endorsed the ScamwiseNI key message: ‘If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.’ He also encouraged clergy and church members to spread the Scamwise message to friends and family, especially those who would be more susceptible to scams: “It is important that we all become more aware of the daily potential of being scammed – which could be online, by telephone or at our own front door. As a Church we are committed to playing our part in getting that information into congregations.” The Consumer Council released figures from its Consumer Insight Survey revealing that 32% of people have been targeted by a scam in the last three years – with emails being the most common form of fraudulent attempt, accounting for 74%. Scamwise material will be available for all congregations at the General Assembly.
18. **Flourish.** The Council continues to support and promote the Flourish programme and encourage more ministers and pastoral workers to take advantage of the training materials. Mental health issues have dominated many of our discussions over the past year along with

dementia, drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and the aftercare of families. The growing issue of loneliness and isolation of all age groups is clearly linked to the general mental health and wellbeing of society, an issue which our Council and congregations must address.

19. **Dr Paul Gray.** The Council congratulates Dr Paul Gray and wishes him God's richest blessings on the occasion of his retirement from the Presbyterian Children's Society. It has appreciated Dr Gray's support over the years, especially in the area of Taking Care and the launch of the 'pocket guide' series of resources.

### **Strategic Objectives 2019-2022**

20. The Council in auditing its Strategic Plan 2015-2018, celebrated that out of 74 individual action points, 40 were achieved, 25 part-achieved and 9 not achieved at all. In reviewing the audit, the Council acknowledged that there needed to be a clear separation of the professional tasks and the strategic planning of the Council and committees, as the Council embarked on a new strategic planning process. This resulted in all routine and mandatory tasks being removed. Both the committees and Council spent considerable time in discussing the strategic objectives for 2019-2022, focusing on the major tasks, as detailed in Appendix 2.
21. This has been one of the busiest periods ever for our Council. It finds itself being challenged on a regular basis by so many external factors. Funding is agreed by government departments and trusts, admissions depend on trusts agreeing the appropriate packages. Repairs and redecoration are dependent on housing associations. Occupancy and staff retention are at an all-time high and the use of agency staff has been greatly reduced. Under-funding is a major issue in many areas of work, especially in the whole area of Dementia Care. RQIA Inspections are in the main very positive and feedback from residents and relatives very encouraging. The following reports of each of the committees present a kaleidoscope of care and witness that has been undertaken and the strategic plan indicates how this is to be maintained and extended. A key area is that of "engagement" – Social Witness is a work in which the whole Church could and should be involved. Much is already being done at local level, more could be done by sharing good practice and spurring one another on in good work. Members of the Council and staff would welcome opportunities of deputation to share the good news of this witness of PCI and encourage wider participation.

## **DISABILITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

22. **Disability Units.** The committee continues to be encouraged by the work being done and care provided in Aaron House, Lawnfield House, Willow Brook/Topley Terrace and the Kinghan Church, with positive reports being received from RQIA visits and inspections.

23. **Managers and Staff.** The committee deeply appreciates the care and commitment shown by the managers and staff in each of our facilities to our residents, clients and their families, and prays that they will know God's blessing as they seek to provide the best possible environment in which they may blossom and flourish both as individuals as well as caring communities.
24. **Aaron House** residents and Day Centre clients enjoy a very positive experience through a range of activities both in-house and within the wider community. Good working partnerships are maintained with everyone involved in both residents' and clients' care. The sensory garden has been extended by Eden Landscape Gardening and will provide a lovely outdoor setting for all.
25. **Lawnfield House** has not seen the increase in occupancy rates hoped for during 2018, leaving the home facing very challenging financial pressures. Lawnfield is a specialised centre for respite and short-term care but also has some permanent residents. The committee continues to both monitor the situation carefully and consider ways to improve the financial viability of the home. The Council has agreed that it makes an approach to the Muckamore Hospital Review group to inform them that there is some capacity to take a small number of discharged patients.
26. **Willow Brook and Topley Terrace** continue to provide a high standard of service to the adults living in this supported housing scheme. Some property issues need to be resolved in order for the tenants to be able to use the sun room which has been out of bounds for some time.
27. The takeover of **Peacehaven Trust** continues to prove challenging on a number of legal aspects. However, the three properties are at full occupancy, with renovations and alterations having been completed in Blake House and Applewood House, with further work planned to improve the quality and use of the properties. Improvements to the care packages for the residents have also been made and are kept under continual review.
28. **'Christmas Cracker'** enjoyed another successful year, being held in five locations – McQuiston Memorial, Belfast; West Church, Bangor; Hillsborough; New Row, Coleraine; and Lislooney, Armagh. A task group will explore the development of this valuable respite resource to other locations within local presbytery areas.
29. The **Kinghan Church** continues to operate as a church and a community for deaf people in Northern Ireland. The committee appreciates the support of Rev Will Murphy, the Church of Ireland Minister for the Deaf, who is currently covering the majority of Sunday Services held in Kinghan and, also, the pastoral care being provided by Mrs Judith Currie, Congregational Support Worker. The committee is also glad to see increasing links being established between Kinghan and Windsor congregation, enabling the life and witness of Kinghan to move forward. The Kinghan Church Task Group has agreed to formalise links with Windsor congregation and the streaming of services to other congregations.

30. The committee continues to be concerned about the impact of welfare reform on individuals and families living with disability on a day to day basis. The lack of a working Stormont Assembly only serves to make life more difficult for such families, compounding the pressures upon them as additional support measures are not being explored, proposed or implemented.
31. In seeking to implement our strategic objectives, the committee will continue to examine the viability of, and options for, our present homes and units, so that it can build on the excellent provision they offer; develop current and additional practical initiatives, such as ‘Christmas Cracker’; and explore new opportunities in areas of disability in which the Council is not yet involved.
32. The Disability Services Committee greatly appreciates the contribution made by Local Support Committee members and ‘Friends of’ groups who enhance the work through the provision of activities, outings, fundraising, spiritual input, quality auditing and so on.
33. Finally, a word of deep gratitude and best wishes to Linda Wray for her vision and commitment to all things disability. From the planning and opening of our first housing project, Willow Brook in Coleraine, to our latest addition, Peacehaven, Co Wicklow, and everything in between, not least ‘Christmas Cracker’, Linda made an incredible contribution to the work of Social Witness over her years of service. She made a huge difference to people’s lives in the field of learning disability and the Council wishes her every blessing in her new role with the Croft Community, Bangor.

PETER DICKINSON, Convener

## OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES COMMITTEE

34. **Presbyterian Residential Trust.** This year as a denomination the Council give thanks to the Lord for PRT which was established 70 years ago. The Council pays tribute to the vision that established this important ministry to older people, which has enabled us through the years to be a witness for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ to the residents in our homes and their families. The work of Older People Services seeks to continue the work established 70 years ago and build on that excellent foundation through the development of the work of the homes.
35. **Council Staff.** The committee would pay tribute to the staff of the Council for Social Witness in Assembly Buildings for their faithful commitment to the work of Older People Services.
36. The committee are grateful to Presbyterian Women for their ongoing support of the Dementia Project in Trinity House, the provision of £15,000 to assist with the Caravan Project and staff training is much appreciated. This innovative protect will assist greatly in the overall management of residents with dementia and in their socialisation with



family and friends. The committee also acknowledge the gift of a red phone box from the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

37. **Staff and Volunteers.** The committee is also indebted to a large number of staff and volunteers who provide a high standard of care and support in our homes on a daily basis.
38. **Activity Coordinators** are now in place in most homes. It is hoped that all homes will have an activity coordinator soon.
39. **Estates Reviews** have been completed by Colin Muldoon, retired RQIA inspector, in Adelaide, Corkey, River, Sunnyside, Aaron, Lawnfield, Carlisle and Thompson Houses.
40. Our new **Property Service Advisor**, Mr Harry Orr, is doing an excellent job. Harry is working alongside Older People Services homes' handymen and with the housing associations responsible for the maintenance in the homes.
41. **Harold McCauley House Flood Protection.** This has now been completed. Discussions have taken place with the Western Health and Social Services Trust with regards to arranging a practice evacuation with the ambulance service to ensure that residents could be taken to safety in the event of a flood.
42. **Dementia Unit.** The Older People Services Committee has agreed to explore the extending of Harold McCauley to accommodate a dedicated dementia unit.
43. **Scamwise NI.** Lindsay Conway has been attending the Scamwise NI meetings in conjunction with the PSNI. Scamwise leaflets will be distributed to congregations in the near future.
44. The Council has been able to appoint new **Home Managers** for Corkey House and River House. It is hoped that the vacancy for Home Manager at Harold McCauley House will be appointed at the earliest opportunity.
45. **Top-up fees.** This issue remains under review.
46. **Occupancy** in all homes remains good. (See Appendix 4)
47. **Strategic Objectives.** The committee has spent a significant amount of time considering how to develop our strategic objectives for 2019-2022 and would present the following to build on the excellent work previously achieved.

NIGEL REID, Convener

## TAKING CARE COMMITTEE

48. **Head of Safeguarding.** Following a long vacancy in Taking Care, a new Head of Safeguarding has been appointed. This new post will be key to both safeguarding in congregations and to the Council as a service provider.

49. **Jurisdictions.** Safeguarding in PCI covers two jurisdictions. In order to adequately advise and represent the congregations in the Republic of Ireland, a task group was created to consider issues which have arisen due to the legislation, Children First Act 2015 and Tusla Child and Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and Practice. Several congregations and ministers had concerns and these became clear after meetings on 25 November 2018 and 26 February 2019. Progress has been made to provide congregations with the required documents to display on church premises; namely a PCI child safeguarding statement and child protection risk assessment statement.
50. **Republic of Ireland.** The Garda Vetting Act 2016 requires the individual to be vetted for the venue, unlike Access NI which vets the individual. This causes difficulties with the installation of ministers as the 'Call' is not recognised. Ministers must be vetted for all the hospitals, residential homes, schools they are associated with. No exceptional circumstances exist to accommodate visiting preachers from outside the ROI, missionaries or other accredited preachers. Kirk Sessions in these congregations need to be updated on these matters as they are responsible for oversight of all safeguarding issues.
51. **Training.** The day to day work of our Taking Care office has continued during the prolonged vacancy with the administrator organizing a total of 138 events: 34 Foundation training, 97 Refresher training and three Designated Persons training sessions during 2018. The committee is grateful for the input of both members of staff as during 2018 they processed 1,671 Access NI checks and 465 Garda vetting forms.
52. The **Taking Care Audit** has recently been sent to congregations (see Appendix 5). This will afford the committee an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of our policies and procedures and plan for the future needs of safeguarding with the denomination.
53. **Training Review Task Group.** The Taking Care Committee plans to review all aspects of its existing training, looking at the possibility of introducing e-training for the Foundation component. The committee looks forward to the recommendations of the task group working with the recently appointed PCI Head of Safeguarding to advance all aspects of this important ministry.
54. **Staff.** The Ccommittee is indebted to Cathy Mullin, assisted by Marjorie Coulter for their dedicated work during the time of the prolonged vacancy.

PAMELA MARSHALL, Convener

## **SPECIALIST SERVICES COMMITTEE**

55. **Staff.** The committee wishes to acknowledge the continued dedication of all staff working at Carlisle House, Gray's Court, Thompson House and also the support of CSW office staff.

**56. Thompson House:**

- (a) During 2018, 63 residents were accommodated. Six bible studies took place with an average of five residents attending each session. At times the Christianity Explored course was used; at other times staff facilitated issue based studies. Gideon Bibles have been provided for all bedrooms. Staff find these useful as they have a list of verses at the front that help residents deal with particular issues they are struggling with.
- (b) Issues with drugs continue to be a problem area for the majority of residents. On the Probation Board for Northern Ireland's (PBNI) website, PBNI's Director of Rehabilitation, Dr Geraldine O'Hare states: "Within Probation 76% of people who are on supervision are assessed as having an alcohol or drug offending related problem. That means that drug or alcohol abuse directly contributed to their offending behavior. There is a well-established link between drugs, alcohol and crime. In fact, one of the biggest factors that influences whether someone will reoffend is their use of drugs and alcohol." That means at least 76% of Thompson House clients will have issues with alcohol and drugs.
- (c) Throughout 2018 there were nine serious incidents that raised incident reports to PBNI and Supporting People. After all incidents staff are offered support from the Inspire counselling service, other staff and from the wider Presbyterian Church.
- (d) PBNI state that 80% of clients on Extended Custodial Sentence licenses on release from prison are recalled for breaching their license condition. During 2018 only 25% of Thompson House clients were recalled for breaching license conditions.
- (e) Each resident is allocated a key worker who will engage with residents and help them address any issues which have led to their offending behaviour and will help them to move on to appropriate accommodation when they leave Thompson House.

**57. Carlisle House:**

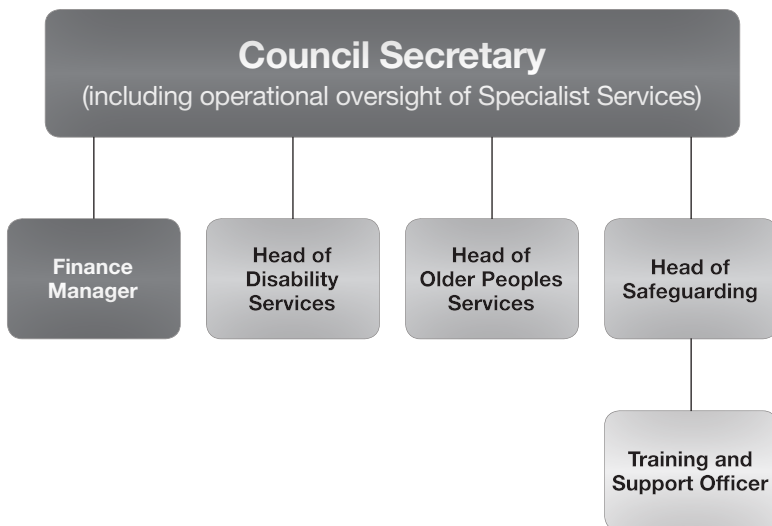
- (a) 2018 has been one of the most challenging years with regard to recruitment of staff. Two senior members of staff required periods of six months' sick leave, while two other staff members also availed of maternity leave. Replacing highly trained and valuable staff is difficult; three new staff was sourced; two only stayed for a short period citing that the job was too stressful, and one nurse is currently on probation as a result of having difficulty adjusting to the post. Historically, recruitment for qualified therapeutic posts has been difficult.
- (b) As Carlisle House seeks to continue to provide the quality treatment which is required by the Public Health Agency and Health Trusts, then this issue of recruitment must be resolved.

- (c) Referrals from the Community Addiction Teams are becoming more complex, with an increasing number with comorbid conditions. The majority of referrals are now coming from one of the two detox hospitals, Downshire and Holywell. This has resulted in making it more difficult to meet the contract bed day target for each Trust, Belfast and Northern. This is due to keeping 'empty' beds to dovetail with seamless transitions to ourselves. Staff works extremely hard in trying to manage this seemingly impossible task.
  - (d) Carlisle House continues to develop the Integrated Systemic Approach to treatment, drawing upon Attachment, Narrative and Systemic theories and concepts. Feedback from Clients remains very positive. One client stated that she had been to several of other treatment centres and found their programme didn't come anywhere near the quality and effectiveness of the treatment she had received at Carlisle House.
58. **Gray's Court.** Supported living continues to run with a high rate of occupancy under the management and care of Frances Craig.
59. **Strategic Objectives.** A lengthy discussion took place with regard to new Specialist Services Committee Strategic Objectives for 2019-2022. It was decided to recommend three new objectives for approval by the Council. The first two objectives relate to the work championed by the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan; seeking to add to and enhance the work already completed.
60. **Dr Gillian McBride** has stepped down from the committee after completing her term as a member. The committee wishes to acknowledge and express thanks to Dr McBride for the valuable contribution she has brought to the table over the years.

JOHN STANBRIDGE, Convener

## APPENDIX 1

### NEW SENIOR STAFF STRUCTURE 2019



## APPENDIX 2

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2019

#### **Council Objectives**

The Council shall deliver an effective social care service for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to the wider community by the provision of residential, nursing, supported housing, respite and day care, and community based programmes.

#### **Strategic Objective 1**

To review the structure of the Council.

#### **Strategic Objective 2**

To develop a Republic of Ireland Panel.

#### **Strategic Objective 3**

To develop a strategy to improve engagement with the whole Church.

#### **Strategic Objective 4**

To raise awareness of particular needs identified by our work and consider how they may be addressed.

#### **Strategic Objective 5**

To develop a strategy to facilitate engagement with other Councils and agencies on emerging issues.

#### **Disability Services**

The Disability Services Committee (DSC) – will deliver a high standard of day, residential, supported housing and respite care in all of our Units. Oversee the ministry of the Kinghan Church and wider ministry to the deaf. Contribute to the disability, health and wellbeing work of the wider Church in partnership with the Council for Congregational Life and Witness.

#### **Strategic Objective 6**

To expand ‘Christmas Cracker’ through the Task Group and explore other forms of supported respite.

#### **Strategic Objective 7**

To examine the viability of, and options for DSC facilities.

**Strategic Objective 8**

To encourage the development of ministry to the deaf community through the Kinghan Task Group.

**Strategic Objective 9**

To explore and develop provision for pastoral support in DSC homes.

**Strategic Objective 10**

To explore and signpost resources for areas of disability in which DSC is not currently involved.

**Older People Services**

Older People Services Committee – 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 support of those requiring support in their own homes.

**Strategic Objective 11**

To examine and explore the need for additional homes throughout the island of Ireland.

**Strategic Objective 12**

To explore the role of chaplain for pastoral and spiritual care in the homes.

**Strategic Objective 13**

To encourage involvement by congregations in our homes through the 'Getting on Board' volunteer scheme.

**Strategic Objective 14**

To undertake and develop older people's ministry by seeking to share best practice throughout the denomination.

**Taking Care Committee**

Taking Care Committee (The Safeguarding Programme of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland) – creating a safe environment for all our members, users, volunteers and staff. For those working with or in contact with children and adults at risk.

**Strategic Objective 15**

To develop Taking Care 3.

**Strategic Objective 16**

To correlate results of the Taking Care Audit and review and revise training in the light of the responses.

**Strategic Objective 17**

To progress the work of the Republic of Ireland Task Group.

**Strategic Objective 18**

To raise awareness of Adult Safeguarding and, in particular, ScamwiseNI, human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence.

**Strategic Objective 19**

To raise awareness and signpost resources on the use and misuse of social media.

**Strategic Objective 20**

To develop relationships with public protection partners and other faith and voluntary groups.

**Specialist Services**

The Specialist Services Committee – will deliver a high standard of service to those with addictions, offending behaviours and who require supported housing.

**Strategic Objective 21**

To regularly review, evaluate current practices and explore new ministries within Thompson House, Carlisle House and Gray's Court.

**Strategic Objective 22**

To pursue the expansion of 'Fresh Start' within the Criminal Justice sector.

**Strategic Objective 23**

To establish a Task Group to provide a scoping study on how local churches can support individuals and existing agencies address issues regarding Mental Health and Suicide.

**Business and Finance Panel**

Business and Finance Panel – will monitor the Financial Management, Personnel Functions, Information Technology and Property Management of the Council supported by the Finance and Staffing Commission.



**Strategic Objective 24**

To regularly review CSW terms and conditions of employment and make recommendations to ensure that we reward staff effectively and maintain competitiveness in the market place.

**Strategic Objective 25**

To promote training and development and career progression opportunities within the Council.

**Strategic Objective 26**

To provide a caring and supportive working environment for our staff.

**Strategic Objective 27**

To negotiate an IT policy which is fit for purpose in all units.

**Strategic Objective 28**

To develop a conversation with United Appeal with regards to funding.

### APPENDIX 3 HOMES AND UNITS 2019

Home/Unit Manager	Home name	No of residents/ tenants	Presbytery
Disability Services			
Isabel Harper	Aaron House	16 (14 permanent and 2 respite)	East Belfast
Liz Wilson	Willow Brook	9	Coleraine & Limavady
Isobel Leslie (Manager) Patrick Kerr (Acting Team Leader)	Lawnfield House	20	Iveagh
Judith Currie (Congregational Support Worker)	Kinghan Church		South Belfast
Michael Williams (Director)	Peacehaven	16	Dublin & Munster

<b>Older People Services</b>			
Norma Picking	Adelaide House	44	South Belfast
Rosemary Gilbert	Corkey House	35	North Belfast
Stephanie Moore-Archer	River House	29	Iveagh
Anna McCaffrey	Sunnyside House	45	Ards
Jayne Bellingham	Trinity House	50	Coleraine & Limavady
Janet Clements (Acting Manager)	Harold McCauley House	32	Omagh
Richard Zipser	Tritonville	40	Dublin & Munster
<b>Taking Care</b>			
Head of Safeguarding	Taking Care Office Assembly Buildings 2-10 Fisherwick Place Belfast BT1 6DW		
<b>Specialist Services</b>			
David Cuthbert	Carlisle House	12	North Belfast
Frances Craig	Gray's Court	7	North Belfast
David Farrow	W.J. Thompson House	19	North Belfast

**APPENDIX 4****OLDER PEOPLE SERVICES OCCUPANCY  
PERCENTAGE RATES SUMMARY 2018 (%)**

Adelaide House	99.35
Corkey House	98.17
River House	98.79
Sunnyside House	95.16
Trinity House	75.27
Harold McCauley House	90.65

## APPENDIX 5

### 2019 TAKING CARE AUDIT

#### SECTION 1 - CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Name of congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Does your congregation have a  
Child Protection (CP) Policy in place? YES      NO

On what date was it last reviewed? e.g. June 2017 \_\_\_\_\_

Does safeguarding/CP appear as an agenda item  
for Kirk Session meetings? YES      NO

#### Record Keeping

**Designated Person**  
*(choose more than one option if necessary)*

Do you store information in paper or electronic files for the following:

	Paper	Electronic	None
Recruitment (references, AccessNI/Garda Vetting applications)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer leaders / helpers (register of all leaders)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safeguarding concerns (report of concern form)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Congregation**  
*(choose more than one option if necessary)*

Do you store information in paper or electronic files for the following:

	Paper	Electronic	None
Recruitment (application forms, references)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training records (who has attended and who is due to attend)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Parental consent (special consent, residential/outing consent forms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safeguarding policy and reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accidents / incidents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaders/helpers and contact details (register of all leaders)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(If applicable)			
Personal care plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Code of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Independent Organisations

An independent organisation is a group that while not operated by the church, nonetheless uses church premises e.g. Scouts, Guides, a dance teacher

List names of independent organisations using your congregation's premises:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Does your congregation hold documentation for independent organisations e.g. 'Sample Form of Approval for Independent Organisations wishing to use Church Premises'? (see Section 12.16 in *Taking Care Two guidelines*)

YES                  NO

How do you store information relating to their:

	Paper	Electronic	None
Child protection/safeguarding policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaders/helpers and contact details?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child protection/safeguarding concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insurance policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SECTION 2 – CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Volunteers – Working with Children and Young People**

Does your congregation have the following groups or organisations?

<b>Christian Education</b>	number of children attending (approx.)
Sunday School(s)	<input type="text"/>
Bible Class	<input type="text"/>
Youth Fellowship	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="text"/>

**Babies and Toddlers**

Creche	<input type="text"/>
Parents and Tots	<input type="text"/>
Play Group	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="text"/>

**Uniformed Organisations**

Girls Brigade	<input type="text"/>
Girl Guides	<input type="text"/>
Boys Brigade	<input type="text"/>
Scouts	<input type="text"/>
Campaigners	<input type="text"/>

**Non-uniformed Organisations**

Youth Club	<input type="text"/>
Holiday Bible Club	<input type="text"/>
Afterschool/Homework	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="text"/>

Please estimate the number of **leaders**, overall, who help out at these groups:

**Volunteers - Working with Vulnerable Persons / Adults at Risk**

**NI Definition:** An ‘adult at risk of harm’ is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics (which may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain) – and/or life circumstances (may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions).

**ROI Definition:** A ‘vulnerable person’ is an adult who may be restricted in capacity to guard him/herself against harm or exploitation. Restriction of capacity may arise as a result of physical or intellectual impairment. Vulnerability to abuse is influenced by both context and individual circumstances.

Does your congregation have the following?

Pastoral Care Visitors	YES	NO
Groups for Older People	YES	NO
Counselling service	YES	NO
People with special/additional needs groups	YES	NO
Other (please specify) _____	YES	NO



Please estimate the number of **leaders**, overall, who help out at these groups:

**Employed Staff**

Does your congregation employ the following staff?

For Children and Young People

Playgroup Leader	YES	NO
Youth Worker/Pastor	YES	NO
Family Worker	YES	NO
Other (please specify) _____	YES	NO

For Adults

Counselling Service	YES	NO
Pastoral Worker	YES	NO
Family Worker	YES	NO
Other (please specify) _____	YES	NO

**Designated Person (DP)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Appointment / duration in role (approx.) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (if more than one DP) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Appointment / duration in role (approx.) \_\_\_\_\_

Have they attended training specifically for Designated Persons?

YES NO

When did they last attend? (approx.) \_\_\_\_\_

What amount of the DPs time is spent on the following tasks? On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is the least amount of time and 5 is the most, please rate how time is spent on each task (circle no. as appropriate):

Coordinating the recruitment of Leaders and Helpers?	1	2	3	4	5
Coordinating AccessNI checks/Garda Vetting of all relevant volunteers?	1	2	3	4	5
The organisation of Taking Care Training for your congregation?	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping Kirk Session and Committee updated on relevant issues?	1	2	3	4	5
Upkeep of relevant administrative duties?	1	2	3	4	5

**Training and Criminal Record Checks**

When did your congregation last receive Taking Care Training? (approx.) \_\_\_\_\_

How many people attended that training event? (approx.)

What is the total number of trained leaders you have currently helping? (approx.)

Are all your current leaders Garda Vetted / AccessNI checked?  
 YES      NO

Within your congregation, have you any leaders, working with those with additional needs, who would benefit from specialised training? (If none – enter 0)

If so, please specify type(s) of training required:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Promotion of the Taking Care Programme**

Does your congregation:

Display your Child Protection Policy?	YES	NO
Refer to the Taking Care folder?	YES	NO
Use We Care 4U ? (the pocket guide for children)	YES	NO
Use We Care 4U too ? (the pocket guide for leaders)	YES	NO
Use We Care with U ? (the pocket guide for parents)	YES	NO
Use Taking Care of All ? (pocket guide to adult safeguarding)	YES	NO
Use the Taking Care section of the PCI website?	YES	NO
Display Taking Care posters on noticeboards?	YES	NO
Hold a Taking Care Sunday?	YES	NO

**Taking Care / Child Protection Issues**

Have you reported any Child Protection issues over the past 5 years?

YES NO

If you answered Yes, tell us how many there were:

**The Taking Care Office**

On a scale of 1-5 where 1=Very Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 3=Good, 4=Very Good and 5=Excellent, please give an evaluation of your experience of the Taking Care Office on the following (circle no. as appropriate):

Accessibility – <i>e.g. were you able to access information required</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Advice given – <i>e.g. were staff knowledgeable</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Outcome – <i>e.g. were you satisfied with result of contact</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Resources – <i>e.g. usefulness of website; pocket guides</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

**Additional Comments**

We welcome feedback on any of the matters raised here. This is a good opportunity for you to draw our attention to the things that are important to you, so that we can consider them when planning ahead.

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This form must be signed by either the Clerk of Session / Designated Person / Minister (please specify)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: (in BLOCK CAPITALS) \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Person: Do you have an email address that we can add to our records, so that you can be kept up-to-date with Taking Care news?

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the General Assembly recognise the work of the Scamwise Partnership in Northern Ireland and encourage congregations to use its resources.
2. That the General Assembly thank congregations who participated in the recent Taking Care Audit, which will assist greatly in the future planning of Safeguarding training and resources.
3. That the General Assembly give thanks for the dedicated workforce throughout units, homes and services run by its Council for Social Witness and recognise the contribution of partners and stakeholders.
4. That the General Assembly express real concern that in the absence of the Northern Ireland Assembly vital legislation and appropriate funding is being denied to essential Health and Social Care Services.
5. That the report of the Council for Social Witness be received.

# Overtures

## OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

### GENERAL

1. **Purpose** – to provide a second option for a body to which congregational property may be transferred (to facilitate the receipt of grant aid etc) while ensuring that the body (in this case a company limited by guarantee) remains under the ultimate control of the kirk session (by ensuring that the members of the company and its directors have to be members of kirk session, and the power to appoint new directors lies solely with kirk session) Clause (a)(ii) is the new clause.

### Anent Par 53 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 53 of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

53. Appointment of Trustees and Declarations of Trust. Every congregation shall ensure that:
  - (a) congregational trustees are or have been appointed to receive and hold the property of the congregation upon trust for the congregation and subject to its directions so far as those directions comply with the terms of such trust and with this Code save that, but subject to the provisions of par 57(5), congregational property may be transferred to:
    - (i) trustees (who shall be not less than three voting members of the congregation) for a separate body set up by, under the jurisdiction of, and accountable to the Kirk Session of the congregation; or
    - (ii) to a company limited by guarantee of which the members and directors must at all times be members of the Kirk Session of the congregation and in respect of which the powers of appointing and removing directors shall at all times rest with the members of the Kirk Session of the congregation; and in either case.
  - (b) the terms of such trust are set forth in a deed or deeds and, if drawn after the commencement of this Code, are in conformity with the provisions of the relevant rules.

2. **Purpose** – to correct drafting errors

**Anent Par 57 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 57 of the Code, sub-paragraphs (7) and (8) be deleted, and the following substituted in their place:

- (7) In all situations where augmentation or incremental grant is being paid to the minister of a congregation the Presbytery shall consult with the Linkage Commission and obtain the Commission's consent before authorising any project under sub-paragraph (6) above.
- (8) Notice of the convening of a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of giving an approval required under sub-paragraphs (2) or (6) or paragraph 46(f) shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.
3. **Purpose** – to include new consultation process and allow for visitations in special circumstances

**Anent Par 70(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 70(b) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in its place:

- (b) hold consultations with, and visitations of, congregations. (See Pars 246-247)
4. **Purpose** – to enable Army and other Service Chaplains and Global Mission Workers (who by nature of their sphere of service were usually unable to attend Presbytery meetings), to continue as full members of Presbytery without having to be Charity Trustees.

**Anent Par 70(d) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 70(d) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in its place:

- (d) act as charity trustees and be responsible for its compliance with the requirements of charities legislation in Northern Ireland and/ or the Republic of Ireland as appropriate, save that ministers or elders who come within paragraph 61(c) of this Code, for so long as they continue to serve in a role specified in that paragraph, shall not be required to act as charity trustees for the Presbytery but shall nevertheless remain members of the Presbytery.

## NEW OVERTURES

### GENERAL

1. **Purpose** – to change the order of permissions for requests from former ministers and licentiates for restoration of status; and to give temporary standing to former ministers and licentiates applying to be made eligible for a call

#### **Anent Par 219(5) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 291(5) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in its place:

- (5) (a) A former licentiate or minister without charge of this Church whose name was removed from the records under the previous sub-paragraph, and who wishes to be restored to his or her former status, shall make application to the Reception of Ministers and Licensiats Committee, producing references of health and character together with the reasons for the application.
- (b) The Reception of Ministers and Licensiats Committee shall determine whether the application is in order and, if so, refer the matter to the applicant's former Presbytery which shall consider the application and, if in all the circumstances of the case it is satisfied, refer the case back to the Reception of Ministers and Licensiats Committee, which shall have Assembly powers -
  - (i) to restore the applicant to his or her former status; or
  - (ii) to refer the case to the General Assembly.
- (c) When the Reception of Ministers and Licensiats Committee refers to a Presbytery the case of someone who has been engaged in ministerial work outside of Ireland, having previously been a minister or licentiate of this Church, and having received credentials from this Church not more than five years before the date of application, the Presbytery shall have power, on the presentation of satisfactory credentials of standing, and without further reference, to receive the applicant at once under its care as a minister without charge or licentiate.
- (d) When an applicant continues in a full-time appointment which is not under the jurisdiction of the Assembly, but wishes to become eligible for a call to a particular vacant charge, or to a particular position under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly, the Reception of Ministers and Licensiats Committee shall:



- (i) have power, normally having consulted with the former Presbytery, to declare the applicant eligible for such call on a temporary basis, such temporary eligibility to be subject to the normal provisions relating to calls, and to cease on the applicant being eliminated from the process of that call;
- (ii) inform the relevant presbytery or council of such temporary eligibility;
- (iii) if a call is made out and accepted, issue credentials, such credentials shall be deemed equivalent to those issued by a presbytery as per Par 196(10) and received as per Par 211(1).

#### **Anent Par 72(j) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 72(j) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in its place:

- (j) receive licentiates and ministers without charge having satisfactory credentials from another Presbytery in the Church or from the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates Committee; and receive and report applications for admission from licentiates and ministers in active duty or ministers without charge of another Church;

2. **Purpose** – to restore a provision that allows a minister to retire (as opposed to resign) through ill-health and which appears to have been removed ‘by accident’ as the 2017 Assembly.

#### **Anent Par 222(3) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 222(3) of the Code be deleted, and the following substituted in its place:

- (3) When, from illness or infirmity, a minister becomes permanently unfit to discharge the duties of his office, and is medically so certified, he may either
  - (a) apply through the Support Services Committee to receive benefit from the Prolonged Disability Fund according to its rules, as agreed from time to time by the General Council, or
  - (b) apply to Presbytery for leave to retire; and the Presbytery may, but only after full investigation and by a unanimous vote of the Support Services Committee, grant him the desired leave upon such terms as that the Committee or General Assembly may decide.

## LINKAGE COMMISSION

1. **Purpose** – to take account of the fact that ministerial expenses have been replaced by allowances.

### **Anent Par 128(5)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that in Par 128(5)(b) of the Code, the words “ministerial expenses” be deleted and the words “ministerial allowances” be substituted in their place.

### **Anent Par 198(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that in Par 198(b) of the Code, the words “Expenses and house allowance” be deleted and the words “Ministerial Allowances” be substituted in their place.

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

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

237. Payment of ministerial allowances as agreed with the Linkage Commission shall be made by a congregation that has fulfilled its promise to pay stipend with increase and such payment shall be included and published in the appropriate statistical returns.

## COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY

1. **Purpose** – to formalise the generally assumed duty of presbyteries to provide pastoral care for their ministers and to change the duties of the council in respect of pastoral care of ministers and their families to a more appropriate wording.

### **Anent Par 69(2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 69(2) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

69. (2) The Presbytery shall, so far as lies within its powers, observe the laws and directions of the Assembly and ensure that those subject to its jurisdiction and within its fellowship do likewise.

### **Anent Par 73 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 73 of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

73. The Presbytery shall –
  - (a) see that ministers preach the Word faithfully to their congregations, regularly visit the families under their charge, visit the sick, promote peace and temperance among the people, adopt means for the instruction of the young in Gospel doctrine and

the distinctive principles of the Presbyterian Church, encourage education and missionary enterprise and discharge all other duties of the pastoral office;

- (b) see that the duties of the eldership are properly discharged and that elders are suitably equipped;
- (c) require that Kirk Sessions maintain two services each Lord's Day, unless the Session decides otherwise, and that they make provision where practicable for the holding of meetings during the week for praise and prayer and the religious instruction of the people;
- (d) ensure that a minister or licentiate in active duty shall not accept any paid public appointment, unless it be of an occasional kind, without the consent of his Presbytery and the Linkage Commission. A breach of this rule shall amount to contumacy, for which the Presbytery shall proceed against the offender;
- (e) ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the pastoral care of ministers and their families.

**Anent Par 275(3)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly that Par 275(3)(b) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

- (b) encouraging and resourcing Presbyteries in their provision of pastoral care for ministers and their families.

# JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: Rev Dr D.J. McKELVEY

Secretary: THE CLERK

1. This report is unusual in that that the commission has only met once in the year to date.
2. It is pleasing to report that only one appeal was received this year and when the commission met and reviewed the papers, it concluded that the reasons for the appeal did not meet the criteria of being adequate and appropriate and the appeal was dismissed. Pastoral advice was given to the appellants and the presbytery concerned.
3. If, however the full commission has set a record in paucity of meetings, the opposite is true of the panel working on the re-publishing of the Code. To date they have met in excess of 30 times and are well on the way to completing the third chapter in their first draft. In a separate booklet you will receive the first two chapters to indicate the style and scope of the work done so far. The report of the panel as received by the full commission at its meeting is included below in this report.
4. As convener I would express thanks to all the members of the commission for their willingness to serve, and in particular the Clerk (Trevor Gribben), the General Assembly Solicitor (Stephen Gowdy) and the judicial chair (Philip Gilpin) for their wisdom, hard work and commitment to the work of the commission. I would include with them their predecessors in these roles, which it has been my privilege to work with over my 11 years on the commission, of which I have served nine as convener.

*The Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev Trevor Gribben writes:*

5. Those who know him will testify to the fact that Derek McKelvey is a man who possesses gifts of both heart and mind. He has used those gifts well in the service of this Church on its Judicial Commission. Derek not only has a sharp and insightful mind, but throughout his service he has brought to the commission a great deal of sanctified common sense. But above all else, it has been his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and the church that bears his name, that has marked Derek's leadership of the commission over these last years. In a body which by its very nature must often make difficult judicial decisions on behalf our Church, Derek has sought to ensure that what the Commission has to do, and how it does it, has also a pastoral focus and ultimately honours the Lord and Head of this Church. As Derek retires from his convenership of the Judicial Commission, having already gone the extra mile, the thanks, warm appreciation and good wishes of his colleagues go with him.

## CODE REPUBLISHING PANEL

6. The General Assembly of 2017 authorised the Judicial Commission to implement the republishing of the Code as outlined in its report of that year. The relevant section of the report reads:

### CONSIDERATION OF REPUBLISHING THE CODE

13. *The Code was last republished in 1980 almost forty years ago. Since then:*

- *It has been heavily amended and in some parts almost rewritten, but the piecemeal amendments sometimes sit uneasily with other parts of the Code.*
- *The church itself has changed radically in the last 37 years and the assumptions that lie behind the Code's provisions both in society or in the life of the denomination have also changed.*
- *Often the information required in a particular situation is to be found in multiple places.*
- *The Code is not written in inclusive language, although the General Assembly rewrote the Rule of Faith (Chapter 1 paras 12-14) in inclusive language some years ago. The commission itself has not attempted thus far to write either new sections or amendments to the code inclusively, as they would jar with the sections into which they are inserted. If we bring the rest of the Code into line with the Rule of Faith, it is not as was realised at that time a matter of replacing 'he' with either 'he/she' or 'they' but of recasting sentences so they read well and intelligibly.*
- *Recent Charity Commission legislation has caused major revision of some parts of the Code to comply with the Civil Law, but its implications for other areas need to be assessed.*
- *Some matters prescribed in detail in the Code should more properly be Assembly Guidelines and some matters presently Assembly Guidelines might well be better in the Code.*
- *There are inconsistencies in the naming of some bodies in the Church in differing places in the Code.*

14. *The objective in republishing would be to simplify and make the Code more user friendly without placing the Church in danger of exposure to difficulty.*

15. *What a republishing of the Code will NOT do is to change principles or current policy or practice except by the usual method of specific overtures to the Assembly. If in the course of the review, there was a matter that appeared to require change, it would be submitted separately to the Assembly for decision, not bundled in with the whole.*

7. In light of that decision the Judicial Commission appointed a panel to advise and undertake the work of preparing the Code for republication. The panel began its work in the autumn of 2017 and by the end of March 2019 had met 30 times.
8. The panel considered the present format of the Code and recognised that there are three distinct but related sections to it – the Basic Code, Rules and Appendix. Over the years there has also evolved a growing number of guidelines, some approved by the General Assembly, others issued by the former boards or present councils. While these do not have the authority of the Code it is sometimes helpful to be aware of them in reading the Code.
9. After careful consideration the panel concluded that to fulfil its remit of providing a more user friendly document the distinction between the Basic Code and Rules should be removed so that it is possible to bring all relevant information on a particular topic together in one section of the republished Code. In practice the only real distinction is in how the two parts of the Code may be amended and a recommendation on this will follow. The present Appendix is largely a collection of useful documents and pro-formas which will be considered later. It may well be extended to include some of the relevant guidelines which have been previously published in the Reports and Minutes of the General Assembly.
10. The panel endorses the consideration set out in the 2017 report that it is important to have consistency in definitions used throughout the republished Code. Further discussion is needed as to whether a set of definitions should be provided with each chapter or for the whole Code. A decision on this is probably best made when the shape of the whole document has been agreed.
11. The present Basic Code has ten chapters. Chapter 6, which is on synods, has become redundant. The only content to this chapter at present relates to the historic synods whose union constituted the General Assembly. After considerable research the General Assembly's solicitor has concluded that these have been subsumed into the General Assembly and no longer need to be retained as separate entities. Chapter 10 consists largely of definitions which, as already indicated, the panel proposes to deal with in a different way (see 10 above).
12. The remaining eight chapters of the present Basic Code are on: General Principles; the Kirk Session; the Congregation; the Presbytery; the Minister; the General Assembly; Organisations and Agencies; Church Discipline. It is proposed to rationalise this to six basic chapters, which will also include, where it is relevant, material from the present Rules. These six chapters are:
  - (i) General Principles
  - (ii) The Congregation, including sections on the Kirk Session and the Congregational Committee
  - (iii) The Minister

- (iv) The Presbytery
  - (v) The General Assembly, including its Organisations and Agencies
  - (vi) Church Discipline
13. To illustrate the nature of its work the panel is submitting as an appendix to this report an early draft of the first two proposed chapters (see separate Judicial Commission Booklet). It must be emphasised that this is a work in progress and these chapters are intended to give to the Assembly some sense of the kind of document which is being proposed. The chapters are by no means finalised and in reality cannot be finalised until the whole document is complete and any inconsistencies or omissions have been identified. They are presented to allow initial comment on the direction and progress of the work so far. The panel is not yet satisfied that some wording may not be further simplified, while maintaining the clarity that the Code demands.
14. Some paragraphs, or words, in the draft document, e.g. Par 106, are highlighted with a line to the left hand side. This signifies that it is a topic to which the panel wishes to give further thought in the light of advice from the General Assembly's solicitor. The paragraph numbers, and capitalisation, will also be reviewed at the end of the process.
15. The panel has tried so far as is possible to fulfil its remit by not changing the meaning or substance of the present Code, but in 2017 the General Assembly recognised that there will be occasions where it is right to bring to the Assembly some substantive changes for its consideration. These may be because of inconsistencies in the present Code or "because the assumptions that lie behind the Code's provisions both in society or in the life of the denomination have changed." The changes in the first two chapters which the panel considers would require specific Assembly approval if they are to be implemented are outlined below with a brief rationale for each of them.
- (a) New Par 30.3; Code Par 176(2)(a)(1). The option of reading the draft voters' list to the congregation on two successive Sundays has been dropped as the least effective way of checking the list and an unnecessary intrusion into a time of worship.
  - (b) New Par 37; Code Par 33(4). An elder who resigns in these circumstances shall be deemed an elder emeritus of the congregation, not the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The status remains so long as the person remains a member of the congregation.
  - (c) New Par 48; Code Par 40(1) The phrase 'admit to Communicant Membership of the Congregation' is suggested in place of 'admit to the Lord's Supper' as more accurately reflecting what the kirk session does.
  - (d) New Par 71; Code Par 185. The first possible method of election to the Congregational Committee in the present Code is simply at a meeting of voting members. There is little detail as to how

this meeting is to be conducted. It seems unreasonable to expect someone to immediately respond to being nominated, but there is no provision to allow time for consideration. It is also unclear if someone may be nominated in absentia. In practice this method was most often used for an annual election, or re-election, to the committee. The panel is now suggesting that an election to the congregational committee should not be annual but normally take place once every three years (New Par 69) and conducted under one of two methods specified in New Pars 71.1 and 71.2.

- (e) New Par 74; Code Par 186. The addition of Para 74.2 allows the committee, if the kirk session agrees, to co-opt when there is not a vacancy on the committee but it is desirable for the better discharge of its duties.
  - (f) New Par 87. The transmission of the minutes of a congregational committee meeting to the kirk session is a necessary new requirement, consequent on the kirk session being responsible for all decisions under charities legislation.
16. Code Par 181. The panel would like to test the mind of the Assembly on the need for a provision to co-opt ruling elders and others. A number of kirk sessions have decided in principle not to use this power but prefer to have an election where a new member who happens to have been an elder elsewhere may be elected alongside other members of the congregation. The present Code does not specify how long an elder may have been without charge but the panel would suggest that if co-option is necessary the period should be tied in to the three years in which he or she can remain on a presbytery list of elders without charge. There is a similar question as to whether it should be possible to co-opt a ministerial member of a congregation. A resolution is appended to seek the guidance of the Assembly.

DONALD WATTS, Convener

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the General Assembly accept the recommendations for changes, relating to the republishing of the Code, contained in paragraph 15 of the Commission's report.
2. That the General Assembly agree to the recommendation that the republished Code need not provide for the co-option to the kirk session of a ruling elder or ministerial member of a congregation.
3. That the report of the Judicial Commission be received.



# **SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

Convener: Rev Dr D.J. McKELVEY

Secretary: THE CLERK

It was not necessary for the Special Commission to meet.

## **RESOLUTION**

1. That the report of the Special Judicial Commission be received.

# **COMMISSION ON APPLICATIONS**

THE CLERK, Convener

It was not necessary for the Commission on Applications to meet.

## **RESOLUTION**

1. That the report of the Commission on Applications be received.

# TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Chairman: Rev WILFRED ORR

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 Assembly Buildings, Belfast, on 19 March 2019.
2. Moved by Rev Dr David Clarke, seconded by Mr D Crowe and agreed that Rev Dr D Watts and Mrs A Heenan be re-appointed for a further term of five years.
3. Moved by Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, seconded by Sir Bruce Robinson, and agreed that Rev W Orr be appointed Chairman until the 2020 General Assembly.
4. The Statements of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018 of the following were laid before the Trustees:
  - (a) The General Investment Fund
  - (b) The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
(Incorporating The Commutation Fund, The Non-Participating Trusts Fund, The Magee Fund, The Tops Wilson Trust Fund, The Fire Insurance Trust Fund, The Fortune Mission Bequest, The Lindsay Memorial Fund, The McClure Trust Fund, The Local Bible Fund and various other Trust Funds).
5. Moved by Mr S Johnston, seconded by Mrs M Guiler and unanimously agreed that the Report and the Statements of Account be adopted, and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statements of Account were signed and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.
6. The Trustees also received and examined the Accounts for 2018 of the John Getty Trust and accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly.
7. The Trustees nominated Mr D Crowe and Mr B Scott as members to attend the General Assembly according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

## **Trust Funds**

8. A summary Account of the various Trust Funds is included in the Book of Accounts 2018. The following Trust Funds are distributed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Trustees.

As in 2018, 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 2018 available for distribution is £6,882.30. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£6,882.30
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Sir Wm V McCleery Estate: The total income for 2018 available for distribution is £35,932.68. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

Estate of Miss Irene Scott: The total income for 2018 available for distribution is £7,444.98. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£7,444.98
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Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown: The total income for 2018 available for distribution is £4,777.92. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£4,777.92
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Estate of Mr Victor Morrow: The total income for 2018 available for distribution is £1,557.36. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

United Appeal	£1,557.36
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## **THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH INVESTMENT FUND** (commonly known as The General Investment Fund)

9. 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.
10. 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.

11. Further details about the General Investment Fund, the investment performance and investment holdings, is available in a booklet available from the Financial Secretary's Department.
12. The Trustees have prepared the accounts of the General Investment Fund for the year ended 31 December 2018 in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Financial Statement of Authorised Funds (May 2014). These are included in the Book of Accounts presented to the General Assembly. These accounts provide detailed information regarding the Fund and in particular its performance, investment allocation, level of income and distributions during the year.
13. Declaration of Dividend
- |  |           |            |
|--|-----------|------------|
|  | 30.03.18  | 30.09.18   |
| Number of shares qualifying  | 5,827,770 | 6,198,297  |
| Income from investment for distribution and Tax recoverable less Administrative Charge and Investment Advisers' Fees | £599,254  | £1,061,427 |
| Dividend per share   | 11.00p    | 16.00p     |
14. During 2018, £27,897 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve, in accordance with the Scheme Rules, and the balance on the Reserve at 31 December, 2018 is £619,825.
15. The combined annual Dividend of 27.00p per share for 2018 is to be compared with 27.00p for 2017, 26.00p for 2016, 26.00p for 2015, 26.00p for 2014, 26.00p for 2013, 26.00p for 2012, 25.00p for 2011, 26.00p for 2010; 28.00p for 2009; 33.00p for 2008;
- |                               |             |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Valuation                     | 31.03.19    | 31.03.18    |
|                               | £           | £           |
| Valuation of Investments      | 66,581,385  | 62,839,392  |
| Cash Balance / on Deposit     | (84,702)    | 161,499     |
| Dividend Equalisation Reserve | 619,825     | 550,126     |
|                               | £67,116,508 | £63,551,017 |
| No of Shares Issued           | 6,220,325   | 6,195,804   |
| Share Value                   | £10.7899    | £10.2571    |
- The shares in the Fund have from 28 February 2017 been valued on a monthly basis. The monthly share prices are included in the audited accounts. The share value at the end of the last financial year, 31 December 2018 was £10.1764 per share (2017, £10.7557).
16. The Trustees meet with Investment Managers, Newton Investment Management Limited, three times a year to review investment performance. During 2018, there was a negative return of 6.94% compared to a benchmark negative return of 6.77%. Newton Investment Management Limited was appointed Investment Adviser to the Trustees Funds in June 2006 and from then to 31 December 2018, the General Investment Fund returned 6.72% per annum compared to the benchmark of 6.18%.

### Trustees Discretionary Fund

17. 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 is to allocate these to the Trustees Discretionary Fund which is invested in the General Investment Fund unless an immediate use is identified. The Trustees will consider requests for financial support through the use of the Funds annual income or capital and in doing so will have regard to any expressions of wish or known interests of the donor. The Trustees received a bequest of £33,975 during 2018. No amounts were distributed by the Fund during 2018. At 31 December 2018 the Fund held 61,021 shares in the General Investment Fund which valued the holding at £620,974.

### Crescent Church Loan Fund

18. 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.
- (a) During 2018 interest was charged on loans at half the total of bank base rate plus 2% (i.e.1.25%) on the average balance outstanding over the term of the loan.
  - (b) The maximum loan normally provided by the Fund is £50,000 and this has to be repaid normally within 3 years, although loans over 5 years can be provided in certain circumstances. Further information about loans from the Fund is available from the Financial Secretary’s Department.
  - (c) During 2018 the Trustees provided loans of £75,000 and the Loans outstanding at 31 December 2018 were £99,583 and at that time, the fund had £274,581 available to meet loan requests.

### Getty Bequest

19. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2018 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	£2,330
Overseas – Jewish	£1,270
Home Mission	£3,070
Belfast City Mission	£2,330
TOTAL	£9,000

### Bequests

20. The Trustees received a report of all bequests notified to the Church during 2018 and wish to record their deep gratitude for those who have decided to support the Church in this way.

**Trustees**

21. At the 2019 Annual General Meeting Mr B Scott completed his second term as a Trustee of the new Trustee body which was established at the 2013 General Assembly. He was originally appointed to the former Board of Trustees in 1982. At the 2019 Annual General Meeting the resignation of Mr L Cubitt was received. Mr Cubitt had served as a Trustee since his appointment to the former Board of Trustees in 2007. The Trustees wish to record their deep appreciation to both gentlemen for their committed service and for their valuable contribution to the work of the Trustees.

**RESOLUTIONS**

1. That in accordance with the Will of the late John Getty the following be constituted as the Committee for the “direction and management of the application” of the income from the Getty Bequest: Very Revs Dr David Clarke, Dr Samuel Hutchinson; Revs Dr D.J. Watts, T.D. Gribben; Sir Bruce Robinson, Norman Bennett, Douglas Crowe, Mrs M. Guiler.
2. That the following recommendations be adopted:
  - (a) regarding the Mrs A.M. Davidson Trust;
  - (b) regarding the Sir Wm. V. McCleery Trust;
  - (c) regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust;
  - (d) regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust;
  - (e) regarding the Victor Morrow Trust.
3. That the report of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland be received.

**APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES**

1. That Mr John Mason (elder, Clare) be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in room of Mr B. Scott, retired, and of the appointment of Mr John Mason as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Clerk of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.
2. That Mr Allen McAdam (elder, Corvally) be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in room of Mr L. Cubitt, resigned, and of the appointment of Mr Allen McAdam as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Clerk of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.

## MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

### **To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on 3 June, 2019.**

The Memorial of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Relief 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 through the minister of the congregation and help is provided through modest quarterly or one-off exceptional needs grants.

At the 2014 General Assembly a Memorial was presented and its prayer was granted. The Memorial recorded that the Directors of the Old Age, Presbyterian Women's and Indigent Ladies Funds having had reviewed the governance arrangements had agreed that it was appropriate to combine the three Funds into one Fund which they planned to name the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund. A new constitution for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund was approved. It was then the intention of the Trustees to seek the approval of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland to register the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund as a charity and thereafter to transfer the funds of the Old Age, Presbyterian Women's and Indigent Ladies Funds into that Fund.

An application to register the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund has been submitted to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland but before agreeing to register it as a charity the Commission require an alteration to the Constitution so that it states "no amendment may be made to the Constitution that would have the effect of causing the charity to cease to be a charity at law."

Clause 11.1 Constitution of the Charity is to be deleted and replaced with the following:

"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. For the avoidance of doubt, no amendment may be made to the Constitution that would have the effect of causing the charity to cease to be a charity at law."



The present Constitution states that it “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 an Annual Meeting of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Relief Fund on 11 December 2018 the amendment to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Relief Fund was approved.

Memorialists, therefore, pray your Venerable Assembly consider approving the change to Clause 11.1 of the constitution.

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

Adopted by the Trustees at their Annual Meeting on 2 April 2019

Rev J. Seawright  
(President)

Rev P. Erskine  
(Honorary Secretary)

Resolution: That the Memorial be received and its prayer granted.

Proposed by: Rev John Seawright

Seconded by: Rev Paul Erskine

**FOR INFORMATION**

The following body is not under the control of the General Assembly. The report is included for information only.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S SOCIETY**

*Dr Paul Gray (Executive Secretary) reports:*

1. The Presbyterian Children's Society exists to support children in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. It works mainly through ministers to alleviate poverty and financial hardship for these children and their families. This is done mostly through regular and exceptional grants. The Society is currently assisting approximately 810 children in 420 families in over 200 congregations throughout Ireland.
2. The year 2018 proved to be a challenging one for the Society. The workload continued to increase with numbers being helped rising to around 820 children by the end of the year. Exceptional grants, most being paid at the maximum level of £600, were in demand and 147 were paid to Presbyterian families and their children in a variety of demanding, stressful and in some cases harrowing circumstances. Grants in the summer and at Christmas, for families receiving regular help, were paid at a rate of £100 per child. Every family assisted regularly by the Society received between £1,100 and £2,100 depending on family size. The Society paid almost two thirds of a millions pounds in grants during 2018.
3. The range of circumstances of families helped by the Society is extremely wide. Presbyterian children from backgrounds of separation, divorce, bereavement, single parenthood or where a parent is in long term hospital care, prison or is disabled, are all aided by the Society. Increasingly 'in work poverty' situations are reflected in applications to the Society. In all situations the Society's focus is on helping a child or children within a family to fulfil their potential in life regardless of their background.
4. The Society was involved in assisting a number of families in financial need to attend the PCI Family Holiday in Castlewellan. Also this year the Society was able to assist in providing small grants to Presbyterian congregations to help in their ministry to children with additional needs. In both these areas the Society greatly values cooperation with the staff and Council for Congregational Life and Witness. Indeed the Society values the help of all Councils and their staff within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
5. Whilst the Society is not under the control of the General Assembly it works closely with the Church through its ministers. It is also working with relevant General Assembly Councils to ensure mongregations have appropriate resources to equip them in helping families in financial need.

6. The Society's work is independently supported by Presbyterian congregations and the Society gives thanks to all those who support the Society prayerfully, practically and financially throughout the year. The Society also welcomes enquiries about how it might assist children and families in need within any Presbyterian congregation. The coming year 2019 will be a period of transition with the retirement of Dr Paul Gray after 31 years as Executive Secretary and the appointment of his successor, Mr Jason Nicholson, on 1 May 2019. The Society commends its work for the continued prayerful and financial support of the Church.

**FOR INFORMATION**

The following body is not under the control of the General Assembly. The report is included for information only.

**PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF IRELAND**

*Very Rev Dr John Lockington writes:*

The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland reports that throughout 2018 it has continued to promote the study of the historic Churches of the Presbyterian order in Ireland, and the contributions they have made to Irish Society and the wider world.

We have sought to achieve this through our programme of talks, lectures, visits and through our publications and website

1. We have continued to operate in line with the requirements of the Charity Commission, both in how we present our accounts and also as we seek to meet other requirements as they are notified to us. We have tried to do this with great care and we believe we have been able to operate as a responsible charity.
2. For the past two years we have had to live with uncertainty regarding our future accommodation. This year, events have moved rapidly. The relocation of the Society from College Green to Assembly Buildings was the major factor affecting our finances during 2018. Expenditure of some £16,700 was incurred in the move – this covered the physical relocation of all items, transfer and re-erection of the mobile shelving, installation of a water detection system and the purchase of minor furniture items. Against this, we are indebted to the Ulster Scots Agency who contributed some £13,400 towards the relocation, leaving a cost of about £3,400 to be met by the Society. The disruption of the relocation had a slight knock-on impact on income because of the necessary closure during the move. The annual grant from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland remains the main source of income for the Society, augmented by donations from the other Churches of the Presbyterian order. Most of the expenditure items were of the same order as in the previous year, the major area being the cost of leasing and servicing the Society's premises. Expenditure continues to be carefully controlled and all areas are examined regularly for economies, so that the best value for money is obtained.
3. We have not been able to do everything we would have liked to do, and we will still need to seek additional sources of funding in order to build upon what we have been given, and to achieve things which we cannot as yet afford, and especially the provision of additional rolling shelving for our growing archive material. The new location at the main entrance to the Assembly Buildings will, we believe, increase our contact with the members of the Presbyterian Church who come to the

Church offices or the Assembly Hall, as well as to those who use the excellent Conference Centre, to students living in residences, and to the thousands of visitors to Belfast who stay in the increasing number of local hotels.

4. In spite of our major preoccupation with relocation, we have managed to sustain an excellent programme of lectures, and other less formal events. Attendances have been most encouraging, and it has been good to see a number of younger scholars featuring in our events. Our annual field trip focussed this year on the Banbridge area, and proved most enjoyable and informative.
5. During the year, we produced our annual Bulletin, and towards the end of the year Dr W P Addley`s major booklet on Hunter of Knock which we think will attract favourable attention. We have again experienced some frustration that other projected work has taken longer than intended, for several reasons, and not least time-consuming problems in dealing with hard to decipher manuscripts. The revised Publication policy drafted by the Publication Committee has now been accepted by the Council.
6. The move to Assembly Buildings enables us to co-operate with the new visitor exhibition in the reception area, our immediate neighbour. We have worked closely with the task group identifying suitable material for display. We hope you will enjoy the first such display, and look out for what is planned for the future. We are looking forward to sharing in an event shortly when both the visitor exhibition area and our own new premises will be officially opened by the Moderator.
7. The Society welcomes donations of books, pamphlets, congregational histories and suitable artefacts, minute books and old-style communion tokens. These may be deposited with the Society either as a gift or as an indefinite loan. We hold many Synod and Presbytery records, and are delighted that an increasing number of Congregational records are also being entrusted to our care.
8. The society continues to share information with other organisations, agencies and blogs, which help us to raise our profile and publicise our publications. We have 600 followers on Facebook which can be accessed via the blog icon on the home page of our website. This keeps a wider public informed about new books and events.
9. The Society`s website continues to be one of our principal means of communicating with the general public, and this is reflected by the numbers using it, and joining the Society as Associate Members. We work hard to improve the number and range of the articles on our history page, and in the updating and presentation of *A History of Congregations*. Copies of *The Bulletin* up to 2012 can now be viewed on the Website.
10. One of our disappointments this year is that we have not made as much progress in working through our Action Plan as had hoped. We can only plead that the circumstances of this hectic year, and our preoccupation with buildings and relocation have been more than

enough to cope with. This is a suitable point to record our gratitude to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly who have given so much time and thought to our concerns, to the working Committee set up by Council, and to our volunteers, and especially those who worked through the heat of summer to have everything put in place. Most of all we pay tribute to our Librarian and Archivist for her magnificent work on our behalf, and her enormous enthusiasm and vision for the Society

11. We continue to be really grateful to our volunteers who help us out for a few hours each week, filing, classifying library books for our electronic catalogue, indexing and transcribing records, and preparing mailings. We will need more help than ever in the months ahead, and the Librarian would be glad to hear from anyone who might be able to do this for us.

**FOR INFORMATION**

The following body is not under the control of the General Assembly. The report is included for information only.

## **OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND**

1. The directors report that, during the last financial year which ended 31st December 2018, 106 beneficiaries (47 in the Old Age Fund, 36 in the Women's Fund and 23 in the Indigent Ladies' Fund) received grants.
2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

Beneficiaries receiving Quarterly Grant	Presbyterian Old Age Fund	Indigent Women's Fund	Ladies' Fund	TOTAL
At 1 January 2018	41	29	23	93
New Grants provided	5	4	–	9
Deaths	(1)	–	(1)	(2)
Grants no longer required	(2)	(2)	–	(4)
<hr/>				
At 31 December 2018	43	31	22	96
Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	1	3	–	4
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	3	2	1	6
Number of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	47	36	23	106

3. The total distribution of the Funds in grants, donations and gifts was £181,065 (£77,716 from the Old Age Fund, £59,400 from the Women's Fund and £43,949 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).
4. An annual grant of £1,440, paid quarterly, was sent to beneficiaries during the year (2017: £1,440).
5. A 'Special Gift' of £360 (2017: £360) 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.



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Chris Humphries (Global Mission Worker) (117); Rachel Humphries (Global Mission Worker) (117); Meriel Pinkerton (Auxiliary Minister) (117).		R.J. McCullough (119); A.S. Thompson (121).	
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A.T.F. Johnston (119); D.R. Martin (121);  
J.C. Newell (118).

## Installed

G.M. Andrich (123); R.I. Abraham (117);  
N.R.A. Cooper (121); Richard Cronin (121);  
C.H. Deering (123); A.K. Duddy (118);  
N.W. Duddy (119); F.M.A. Forbes (121);  
E.T. Frazer (123); M.L. Gray (119);  
S.N. Hawthorne (117); R.J. Hyndman (120);  
D.J. Irvine (123); B.A. Kee (122);  
D.J. Kelly (120); Stephen Lowry (118);  
G.J. MacLean (119); Alan Marsh (117);  
R.J.A. McClure (122); A.J. McCracken (117);  
W.D.S. McCullagh (122); E.J.B. McKenzie  
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## Received back as Licentiate

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## Released (Ministers Emeriti)

N.E. Dorrans (123); E.L.M. Henning (120);  
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J.K. McCormick (120); F.J. Taylor (122).

## Released on Grounds of Medical

## Incapacity

S.W.K. Glendinning (120); Peter Turton (123).

## Resigned

Stephen Anderson (Global Mission Worker)  
(119); R.I. Abraham (121); Eileen Black  
(Deaconess appointment) (124);  
Karen Campbell (123); T.J. Conway (124);  
N.R.A. Cooper (122); A.K. Duddy (121);  
N.W. Duddy (121); F.M.A. Forbes (119);  
J.M. Gracey (124); R.J. Hyndman (120);  
D.J. Irvine (122); A.T.F. Johnson (120);  
Tracey Johnston (Global Mission Worker)  
(120); R.A. Kane (120); L.M. Keys (123);  
Stephen Lowry (121); G.J. MacLean (123);  
D.R. Martin (121); Pamela McCullagh  
(Global Mission Worker) (119);  
W.D.S. McCullagh (119); E.J.B. McKenzie  
(122); A.W. Moore (122); S.W. Moore (123);  
J.A.M. Scott (as a Minister) (119).

## Retired

Amanda Best (120); A.R. Bill (118);  
T.R. Buick (120); Doreen Draffin (Deaconess)  
(118); W.J. Harshaw (Minister without charge)  
(119); B.R. Hughes (118); R.D. Maxwell  
(119); I.T. McKee (122); I.D. Neish (118);  
Kenneth Nelson (122); D. McIlwaine (118);  
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