

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND ACCOUNTS 2001 — PREFACE

A preface to the Accounts is submitted herewith.

This takes the form of a memorandum Central Income and Expenditure Account and a graphical illustration in relation to this Income and Expenditure.

This Income and Expenditure does not form part of the Audited Accounts of the Church.

2000 Column is period to 31 December 2000.

2001 Column is year to 31 December 2001.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME

| | Grand Total | | Contributions from Congregations | | Congregational Assessments | | United Appeal | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| | General Board | 61 | 80 | 4 | 4 | — | — | 22 |
| Business Board | 11 | 13 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Communications Board | 386 | 457 | — | — | — | — | 150 | 170 |
| Inter-Church Relations | 448 | 434 | 439 | 421 | — | — | — | — |
| Overseas Board — Designated | 482 | 655 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Overseas Board — Others | 1,465 | 1,272 | 16 | 16 | — | — | 900 | 820 |
| Home Board | 849 | 725 | 30 | 43 | 8 | 8 | 200 | 475 |
| Social Witness Board | 4,829 | 4,856 | 11 | 12 | — | — | 300 | 192 |
| Evangelism & Christian Training | 668 | 545 | 7 | 14 | — | — | 369 | 295 |
| Youth Board | 592 | 562 | — | — | — | — | 241 | 223 |
| Education Board | 357 | 323 | — | — | — | — | 235 | 190 |
| Board of Studies | 855 | 836 | 68 | 73 | — | — | 275 | 279 |
| Finance & Administration | 1,066 | 989 | — | — | 502 | 439 | — | — |
| United Appeal | 442 | 337 | 107 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Ministry & Pensions | 4,621 | 4,388 | — | — | 3,204 | 3,153 | — | — |
| Presbyterian Women's Association | 1,087 | 1,050 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Sundry Other | 806 | 331 | 725 | 272 | — | — | — | — |
| Grand Total | 19,025 | 17,853 | 1,407 | 855 | 3,714 | 3,600 | 2,692 | 2,666 |

EXPENDITURE

| | Grand Total | | Employee and Ministry Costs | | Printing Stationery, etc | | Administration | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------|
| | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| | General Board | 60 | 75 | 52 | 70 | — | — | 2 |
| Business Board | 12 | 13 | — | — | 11 | 12 | 1 | 1 |
| Communications Board | 435 | 409 | 108 | 108 | 286 | 257 | 40 | 43 |
| Inter-Church Relations | 461 | 430 | — | — | 9 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Overseas Board — Designated | 361 | 693 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Overseas Board — Others | 1,737 | 1,594 | 167 | 143 | 81 | 49 | 77 | 84 |
| Home Board | 726 | 486 | 81 | 88 | 5 | 11 | 91 | 94 |
| Social Witness Board | 5,159 | 4,438 | 2,862 | 2,725 | 607 | 492 | 44 | 46 |
| Evangelism & Christian Training | 726 | 680 | 319 | 321 | 77 | 82 | 20 | 23 |
| Youth Board | 590 | 509 | 179 | 151 | 94 | 87 | 32 | 38 |
| Education Board | 370 | 311 | 162 | 158 | 33 | 30 | 14 | 16 |
| Board of Studies | 1,011 | 857 | 408 | 393 | 148 | 194 | 10 | 14 |
| Finance & Administration | 763 | 845 | 130 | 132 | 135 | 186 | 139 | 140 |
| United Appeal | 29 | 33 | — | — | 29 | 33 | — | — |
| Ministry & Pensions | 3,794 | 3,852 | 3,339 | 3,349 | 107 | 25 | 179 | 201 |
| Presbyterian Women's Association | 714 | 678 | 498 | 505 | 58 | 59 | 45 | 48 |
| Sundry Other | 143 | 319 | — | — | — | — | 1 | 1 |
| Grand Total | 17,091 | 16,222 | 8,305 | 8,143 | 1,680 | 1,526 | 696 | 752 |

— MEMORANDUM CENTRAL INCOME

2001 *Per Board* £000's

| Trust, Investment Income and Bank Interest | | Rental Income (net) | | Donations and Bequests | | Loan Repayments | | Sales: Periodicals & Property | | Grants and Fees | |
|--|--------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| 1 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 34 | 53 |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 11 | 13 |
| -6 | -12 | — | — | — | — | — | — | 241 | 299 | 1 | — |
| 7 | 9 | — | — | 2 | 4 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 16 | 20 | — | — | 466 | 635 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 189 | 166 | — | — | 360 | 270 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 134 | 133 | 3 | 12 | 351 | 41 | 21 | 13 | 102 | — | — | — |
| 127 | 133 | 3,194 | 3,106 | 754 | 197 | — | — | 90 | 847 | 353 | 369 |
| 16 | 12 | 4 | — | 174 | 125 | — | — | 98 | 99 | — | — |
| 5 | 5 | 61 | 74 | 195 | 202 | — | — | — | — | 90 | 58 |
| 9 | 8 | — | — | 87 | 94 | — | — | -9 | -2 | 35 | 33 |
| 286 | 284 | 19 | 6 | 20 | 35 | — | — | — | — | 187 | 159 |
| 31 | 17 | 369 | 376 | 62 | 50 | — | — | 13 | 13 | 89 | 94 |
| 331 | 326 | — | — | 4 | 11 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 1,071 | 930 | 16 | 17 | 66 | 88 | 163 | 183 | 101 | 17 | — | — |
| 97 | 98 | — | — | 943 | 889 | — | — | 47 | 63 | — | — |
| 40 | 15 | — | — | — | — | 31 | 34 | — | — | 10 | 10 |
| <u>2,354</u> | <u>2,145</u> | <u>3,666</u> | <u>3,591</u> | <u>3,484</u> | <u>2,641</u> | <u>215</u> | <u>230</u> | <u>683</u> | <u>1,336</u> | <u>810</u> | <u>789</u> |

| Travel Expenses etc | | Building Costs | | Upkeep of Property | | Loans Issued | | Home and Over- seas Projects and Grants | | Missionaries Field Costs | |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 6 | 3 | — | — |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 1 | 1 | — | — |
| 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 450 | 420 | — | — |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 361 | 693 | — | — |
| 9 | 10 | 31 | 25 | — | — | — | — | 285 | 254 | 1,087 | 1,029 |
| — | — | 19 | 18 | 64 | 16 | 80 | 12 | 386 | 247 | — | — |
| 22 | 28 | 753 | 764 | 850 | 367 | — | — | 21 | 16 | — | — |
| 82 | 69 | 15 | 14 | 146 | 102 | — | — | 16 | 15 | 51 | 54 |
| — | — | 52 | 46 | 27 | 10 | — | — | 206 | 177 | — | — |
| 7 | 10 | 16 | 28 | — | — | — | — | 138 | 69 | — | — |
| 1 | 2 | 121 | 111 | 138 | — | — | — | 185 | 143 | — | — |
| 23 | 27 | 217 | 227 | — | — | — | — | 119 | 133 | — | — |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 49 | 56 | 24 | 23 | — | 76 | 95 | 120 | 1 | 2 | — | — |
| 21 | 24 | 5 | 6 | — | — | — | — | 87 | 36 | — | — |
| — | — | — | — | — | — | 27 | 28 | 115 | 290 | — | — |
| <u>215</u> | <u>226</u> | <u>1,253</u> | <u>1,262</u> | <u>1,225</u> | <u>571</u> | <u>202</u> | <u>160</u> | <u>2,377</u> | <u>2,499</u> | <u>1,138</u> | <u>1,083</u> |

REPORTS: JUNE, 2002

BELFAST

GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. Since it was established in 1966 the General Board has gradually been developing an important role in co-ordinating the central work of the Church. While the annual General Assembly exercises final authority on all matters within its jurisdiction, it is neither necessary nor advisable for all discussion and decision making to be postponed to one week in June.

2. Specialist Boards and Commissions, such as those concerned with Education, Youth or Social Witness, deal during the year with matters within their particular remit, but it falls to the General Board, not only to supervise the seven Assembly Committees under its care, but to take a general overview of the Church's centrally organised activities.

3. As the largest of the Boards, including in its membership conveners and full-time secretaries of all Boards and Commissions, as well as Clerks of all Presbyteries and Synods, and being the body next in status to the Assembly, the General Board is well placed to undertake this task.

4. The recent innovation by which ad hoc committees of the Assembly make interim reports to the Board is proving to be a helpful way of disseminating information, and obtaining an initial reaction to proposals before resolutions are prepared for the General Assembly.

5. During the year some ad hoc committees have been considering the way ahead for our Church. The reports on Priorities and on the 2003 Assembly Conference (now likely to be deferred to 2004) are printed later in this Blue Book, as is the report of the committee that dealt with the Tyrone Memorial, which met to deal with some residual matters.

6. Panels appointed by the Board, such as those on the Overview of Funding, Visitations of Presbytery and the Review of Boards and Committees have also been helping the work of co-ordinating and planning.

7. It is inevitable that some matters will arise unexpectedly between meetings of the Assembly that need prompt attention, and it falls to the General Board to speak or act. In many instances it is the Church and Government Committee which drafts the statements that are ultimately issued in the name of the Board. We are deeply indebted to that Committee for the enormous amount of work that it does on behalf of the Church.

8. In February Mr Norman Chambers, Secretary of the Board of Social Witness, announced his intention to retire. The Board, on behalf of the Assembly, accepted his notice of retirement with effect from 31 August and

instructed the Nomination Board to commence the procedures for finding a successor. A tribute to the outstanding contribution that Mr Chambers has made to the Social Witness of the Church appears elsewhere in this Blue Book, but the General Board would wish to record its own good wishes to him and his wife for the years to come, which we hope will be long and happy.

9. The Moderator, on behalf of the Church, sent messages of sympathy to the Royal family on the deaths of Princess Margaret and Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

10. As authorised by the General Assembly in 2001, the General Board, at its meeting on 11 October, 2001, approved the following proposed increases in assessments and contributions to the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) from 1 January, 2002:

Congregational Assessment – from 16.25p in £ of stipend to 18.75p
 Minister's Contribution – from 4.4% of Scheme Salary to 5.0%

Barrier Act

The overtures anent elders as Clerks of Presbytery, which were sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, were approved. The voting was as follows:

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----|--------------|-----|-------|
| Overture anent Par 65(2) | For: | 20 | Presbyteries | 540 | votes |
| | Against: | 1 | Presbytery | 49 | votes |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----|--------------|-----|-------|
| Overture anent Par 97(h) | For: | 20 | Presbyteries | 555 | votes |
| | Against: | 1 | Presbytery | 36 | votes |

Nomination Board

The General Board decided to add specialists to the Nomination Board for forthcoming appointments as follows:

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Board of Social Witness | 3 persons |
| Board of Finance & Administration | 1 person |

DEPUTY CLERK

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Board of Mission in Ireland | 2 persons |
| Board of Finance & Administration | 1 person |
| General Board | 1 person |

The General Board further decided that in the case of the Social Witness appointment the Alternative procedure should be used, ie interview by a ten member Panel appointed by the Nomination Board to submit one agreed name. (See Reports 2001 p 115; Mins 2001 p 30).

Rev Dr R F S Poots

1. It falls to the General Board to submit to the General Assembly a suitable appreciation of the services of Rev Dr R F S Poots as Deputy Clerk of

Assembly and Assistant General Secretary 1990 – 2002, and that the Board does with pleasure.

2. Mr Poots was born in Lurgan in 1937 and grew up in connection with First Lurgan congregation. He studied at Queen's University, where he obtained his BA degree, and went on to the Presbyterian College, Belfast, obtaining the degrees of BD and MA from Trinity College, Dublin.

3. After assistantships in West Church, Ballymena and Trinity, Bangor, he was installed in Trinity, Ballymoney in 1964, where he exercised a most fruitful ministry at a time of steady growth in that town. His passion for evangelism was reflected in a number of imaginative and effective evangelistic efforts, which drew people to Christ and built up a strong and enthusiastic congregation.

4. His gifts as a preacher and leader of worship made him much in demand, not least in leading a number of congregational missions. Within the Route Presbytery he continues to play a key role. He also served as Convener of the Evangelism Committee of the General Assembly 1982-89, and of the Evangelism Board 1987-91.

5. From the early years of his ministry he served on the North Eastern Education and Library Board, demonstrating considerable personal courage at a time of abstentionism by political representatives, and acting for a lengthy period as its chairman. There he acquired a keen grasp of educational issues, which made him eminently qualified for his later appointment in Church House, education being one of the Deputy Clerk's main responsibilities.

6. His leadership of the Church's Board of Education was wise, careful and often crucial. His experience of Education bodies outside the Church added greatly to the comprehensiveness of his knowledge. He handled a vast number of intricate duties with an easy and helpful style, and in true Christian example was a friend and counsellor to many. Not least of his tasks was his membership of the panel that undertook the provision of the R E curriculum, and he is now on the panel that is reviewing that curriculum.

7. As the title of his post implies, another of his duties was to assist and deputise for the Clerk of Assembly, and that he did with steadfast loyalty and great competence, not least in preparing for and guiding the General Assemblies of 1997 and 1998, when the Clerk was out of the office serving the Church in another capacity. The duties of a Deputy Clerk are too many to list in detail, but they include acting as recording secretary at the Assembly, serving on numerous Boards and Committees, and dealing with an endless stream of enquirers, from within the Church or beyond it, seeking information or advice by letter, telephone or in person. His knowledge of Church law and procedure, and his practical common sense made him an invaluable member of the staff team in the General Secretary's office. Many who called there are grateful for the wise guidance he was able to give them.

8. The Home Mission also claimed his attention and afforded him opportunity to use his interpersonal skills, his pastoral gifts, his ability to work with different conveners, ministers, congregations and members, as well as other Church agencies, and his knowledge of law and property matters in dealing with complex issues. Articulate in his promotion of the Mission's work, tireless in zeal, a forthright herald of the faith of Christ, he travelled literally thousands of

miles, not only to conduct services north, south, east and west, but to bring hope and encouragement to small and scattered congregations and to their ministers.

9. However, small and scattered congregations were not his only concern. The inner-city areas of Belfast deeply moved him. He was enthusiastic in his support of Nightlight, and he helped to establish the Urban Mission Fund, which pioneered new and imaginative schemes by congregations to show love to people, especially young people outside the Church with their desperate need of Christ. He also helped to disseminate the report on “Re-connecting with a Missing Generation”, researched and compiled by Rev Norman Hamilton, one of the most challenging pieces of work on Urban Mission produced in our context and a similar study of the greater Dublin area undertaken by the Rev Keith McCrory.

10. Behind all his work was a deeply committed spirit; he was a faithful servant of Christ and his Church, enthusiastic, a man of ideas, warm and with a keen sense of humour, someone who could speak his mind when necessary, but extremely capable, energetic, loyal, caring and passionate in his advocacy of Ireland for Christ.

11. Rev Derek Poots served the Church well in this many-sided post, and his worth was duly recognised, both within the Church and beyond it, as is demonstrated by the awards of both the OBE and the DD (PTFI). His wife, Mildred, fully supported him in all his undertakings and travels, not least in the sphere of Education, where she served as a teacher, a vice-principal and a member of some important Boards and Committees. We now wish Dr and Mrs Poots a long, happy, busy and fruitful retirement, in which they will doubtless find many ways of continuing to serve the Church they both love.

Church House Staff

Very Rev Dr D H Allen reports:

The Board’s Committee on Church House Staff met on a number of occasions and prepared a Job Description for the next Deputy Clerk of Assembly, which is now submitted for consideration. The Education Board responsibilities, which previous Deputy Clerks covered, have been discontinued, and the Education Board will in future make its own separate provision for the discharge of those duties.

DEPUTY CLERK OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

INTRODUCTION

“The Presbyterian Church in Ireland,
as a Reformed Church within the wider body of Christ
is grounded in the Scriptures,
and exists to love and honour God
through faith in His Son and by the power of His Spirit,
and to enable her members to play their part
in fulfilling God’s mission to our world.

God calls us to mission as witnesses to Christ through both evangelism and social witness challenging the values of the world in which we live with the values of God's kingdom and winning men and women to faith and discipleship. This mission is to be pursued amongst all the people of Ireland and the peoples of the European Community and the whole world: those with whom we feel comfortable, those from whom we feel alienated and those who are in any way distant from us in culture and faith."

(For the full text of the Church's Mission Statement see Reports 1992 pp 89-90)

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland ("the Church") has an unchanging message but is operating in a rapidly changing and increasingly secular world with its membership numbers currently falling. It aims to present its message in a way that will be transparent, understandable and challenging to everyone.

It operates throughout Ireland with 557 congregations and has an extensive international involvement through its own personnel and through partnerships with churches and agencies overseas.

In Church House, Belfast 65 staff are employed to provide management and executive support for the Church's work. Over 500 staff work with various boards and agencies.

The stated officers of the Assembly are the Moderator (an annual appointment) and the Clerk, who also acts as General Secretary.

INITIAL JOB DESCRIPTION

In view of the widespread and accelerating changes taking place in both Church and society the duties required of the next Deputy Clerk may change significantly during his/her tenure of office. The following requirements can only be an initial job description. The appointee should therefore be able and willing to adapt to changing circumstances.

- 1 (a) The Deputy Clerk and Assistant General Secretary is a Senior Full-time Officer of the General Assembly, appointed by the Assembly and continuing in office at its pleasure.

Normal retirement date is 31 August following attainment of 65 years of age.

The Deputy Clerk is accountable to the Clerk and the Convener of the Board of Mission in Ireland for the performance of the duties of the office. Note should also be taken of "the personnel management function" of the Board of Finance & Administration (Code Par 286).

- (b) As an officer of the General Assembly, the Deputy Clerk is expected to defend the constitution of the Church and to support its decisions, actions and programmes.
- (c) The Deputy Clerk will keep in contact with the Church at large through visits to Presbyteries, congregations, etc, and by deputation duties.

The Deputy Clerk will assist the Clerk as required in the performance of his duties, eg

- Helping to proof and index Assembly Reports
- Preparing draft Minutes of Assembly
- Acting as Recording Secretary during the Assembly
- Proofing and Indexing Assembly Minutes
- Minuting the Business Board
- Act as Secretary and first point of contact within Church House for the Conciliation Panel
- Sundry tasks the Clerk may delegate, eg follow-up work on re-assigning students whose first assignment failed
- Acting up for the Clerk during holidays, illness and other absences
- Attending committees which the Clerk cannot attend (because of timetable clashes) or which for procedural reasons he should not attend (eg Conciliation or the Board of Studies and Christian Training Residential Interview)
- Acting in place of the Clerk under Par 269(2)(a)(ii) of the Code.

3. In addition to the duties of Deputy Clerk, the person appointed will act as Secretary to the Board of Mission in Ireland. Currently this role is shared with the Superintendent of the Irish Mission and the Executive Secretary of the Presbyterian Women's Association.

In relation to the Board of Mission in Ireland, the appointee will be expected to:

- act as Home Mission Secretary
- regularly visit, support, encourage and guide Home Mission congregations, the ministers and their families and respond with flexibility to immediate situations
- advise and assist in the management of Home Mission congregational properties, including their maintenance
- share in the planning and support of innovative schemes to support the development of ministries in urban and inner-city areas
- liaise regularly with his/her counterparts in sister Churches and be available for wider ecumenical relationships as appropriate
- publicise and enthuse the Church, covering the work of the Board of Mission in Ireland and the ministries of Home Mission.

The appointee will play a full part in the work of the Alternating Ministries Committee and of the Inter-Church Consultative Committee to which he/she may be appointed secretary.

The appointee may be called upon to act as Secretary to the

- Home Mission Interviewing Committee
- Joint Standing Committee
- Church Extension Committee
- Church Extension Interviewing Committee
- Allocation Committee
- Nightlight Executive Committee

The post will involve membership of the Union Commission and the PWA/Home Mission Personnel Committee, which will require close liaison

with the PWA in the selection, training, appointment and general oversight of deaconesses and the home ministry of the PWA.

The appointee will be expected to make a major contribution to the work of the Home Mission Committee and the Board of Mission in Ireland as follows:

- to make full reports to the Committee
 - to prepare, present and monitor budgets
 - to prepare reports to the Board of Mission in Ireland, in consultation with the conveners of the committees
 - to guide and assist the business at meetings of the Board
 - to communicate and share in the implementation of Board decisions.
4. Where appropriate the Deputy Clerk may be asked to become involved in any areas of Christian work in which he/she has a special interest or expertise, eg Youth Work or bodies outside the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.
 5. Such other duties as may be required.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The Deputy Clerk is expected to be an exemplar of the spiritual values of the Church and to assist the Clerk in providing the Church with

- leadership, vision, and management
- technical and doctrinal skills and advice
- sound judgement

in a discreet, conciliatory, encouraging and thoroughly spiritual manner.

At the present time of significant change and challenge the Deputy Clerk will be expected to contribute to policy formation and be an encourager, enabler and communicator of change in the structure and processes of the Church to ensure that God's mission can effectively be fulfilled in a God-honouring and scriptural way.

The Deputy Clerk will be expected to have a clear vision for the role of the Church in Ireland and in the wider world. The person appointed will have a deep personal faith in Christ, patience, adaptability, resilience and a sense of humour.

The Deputy Clerk will be a person who commands respect for the services he/she has already rendered to the Kingdom of God.

The qualities and skills sought for the post-holder will include:

- Christian commitment
- a vision and passion for mission in Ireland
- energy and enthusiasm
- wide experience and proven ability in ministry
- leadership qualities, as an enabler with vision and realism
- theological competence
- ability to work collaboratively
- facilitation of change
- effective decision taking
- strategy development
- ability as a speaker and preacher
- management and administration skills, including the ability to handle a heavy workload
- pastoral and listening skills
- an approachable personality

- ability to deal with people in a gracious and where necessary firm way
- ability to maintain confidentiality
- good interpersonal skills
- ability to manage people and situations
- ability to communicate effectively outwith the Church
- skills in writing, both analytically and inspirationally
- experience in handling conflict and change creatively
- understanding of and respect for the diversity of the Church
- social and political awareness
- ability to work under pressure
- the confidence of the Church at large
- an aptitude for business affairs, ability to consult with professional advisors, political leaders and government officials
- willingness to work unsocial hours and to travel extensively, including weekends.

The background of the person appointed should have provided

- ▶ a thorough knowledge of the history and polity of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
- ▶ an ability to interpret the constitution of the Church
- ▶ a working knowledge of the organisation and operations of the General Assembly and other governing bodies in the Church
- ▶ a broad awareness and understanding of current problems and needs within and outside the Church.

Ideally the person appointed will have awareness and experience in the following areas, or will be willing and able to develop them:

- inter-church relations
- relations with and work in the media
- secular legal issues affecting the Church
- information communications technology.

Other Information

The position is open to any minister or elder of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Job Description is subject to periodic review and modification. There is likely to be a major review in 2005.

SALARY Scale 6 (£30,093 - £36,840 in 2002)

PENSION Contributory Pension and Life Assurance Scheme
(Employee's contribution 3.75%)

ANNUAL LEAVE 5 weeks plus statutory days

* * * * *

Marriage Law Reform

1. As reported to the Assembly two years ago (Reports 2000 pp 62-67), major changes are being proposed in the procedures for marriages in Northern Ireland. At the time of writing the necessary Bill is being drafted for submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

2. Once the Bill is enacted, a number of detailed regulations will be drawn up and it is envisaged that the new system will come into operation sometime in the New Year.

3. It is vitally important that all ministers are aware of these changes, and operate the new system as soon as it comes into force.

Boards and Committees

1. The Panel on Boards and Committees was consulted during the year by the ad hoc Committee on Priorities. It is possible that, when the Priorities of the Church have been determined by the General Assembly, there could be implications for the future structure of Boards and Committees. Developments are awaited. (See Report of ad hoc Committee on Priorities)

2. An overture is submitted to bring the wording of Code Par 193(1)(c) up to date.

3. However, the main work of the Panel during the last year was to advise the General Board on the remit on Synods, and a report on that matter is appended below.

Synods

1. The General Assembly (2001) granted the Prayer of the Memorial of the Synod of Armagh and Down, that the General Board examine the issue of the role and functions of the Synods in the 21st Century and report in 2001. Such a review was also encouraged by the Report of the Panel on Boards and Committees (2001, p 12). Attendance at most Synod meetings seems to be declining.

2. Of the present Synods, three are formed by a general grouping of adjoining Presbyteries, while two have a more closely defined significance. The Synod of Dublin contains most, but not all, congregations in the Republic, and may well have a continuing role in considering issues which are specific to them. The Synod of Belfast may also have a particular role in formulating policy for the Church's mission in the city. In any case the Education Board of the Synod of Belfast would need to be continued, although both needs could also be met by one Belfast Presbytery.

3. The other three Synods have all tried in recent years to find a realistic purpose and there has been useful creative thinking. However, it may be better to accept that there is no longer a significant role for these Synods and so release for the present-day mission of the Church the time and energy used in running them. Synods are no longer appellate courts but there are two functions presently carried out by Synods which would need to be continued. One is to nominate members to certain General Assembly Boards and Commissions, though in practice the Synod is often simply processing Presbytery nominations. The second function is to check Presbytery Minute Books, transmit Presbytery

reports, returns, Memorials, etc., to the Assembly, and to make recommendations about parish or Presbytery bounds. As a way forward in the immediate future it would be possible for those Synods who wish to meet briefly during the Assembly and appoint a small Commission on the pattern of the “historic” Synods to deal with these matters. It may be that as procedures evolve other ways would be found to fulfil these functions. Code Par 95(d) which deals with “references for advice or adjudication” is already out of date and should be removed.

4. The Report of the Panel on Boards and Committees also raised the position of the “historic” Synods, ie the General Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod, pointing out that in the terms of the “Act of Union” (1840) they have the right to meet but not the duty to do so.

5. In the period 1840-1870 they did meet to deal with “temporalities”, ie Regium Donum payments, but that function has long since ceased. It is difficult now to see any useful purpose in their annual meetings, so while they would continue to exist on paper it is recommended that meetings be discontinued.

6. Comments were invited from Synod Business Committees, though any comments subsequently received from the stated meetings of Synods in March were also taken into account.

7. There was general support for the proposals contained in the Paper, as some quotations from the responses will show.

8. *“The majority, particularly the ministers, feel that while Synod has played a useful role in the past it has now largely outlived its usefulness, and in the words of one, “it deserves a decent burial.” Much of the business of Synod is routine and a simpler, more efficient system could be found to transact the essential business (including checking minute books, nominations to boards etc). The most common alternative suggestion was to put in place a Synod Standing Commission, whose role would be to deal with essential business and when necessary exercise a representative role in matters of widespread concern.*

9. *A number of the elders who responded expressed the desire to see Synod continue, because of the opportunities provided for representatives of small scattered congregations to gather together as part of something bigger, with opportunities for fellowship, the exchange of information and the development of awareness of what is happening in other parts of the country.*

10. *Common to many of those who see Synod, in its present form, as outmoded and those who see continuing value, was the suggestion that there might well be value in some residential conference style gathering. Such a conference might meet biennially, with the emphasis on fellowship and prayer and the opportunity to address issues of vision, living and witness in the Republic.....”*

(Dublin)

11. *“There were mixed feelings. While we accepted the Synods no longer have a significant role in today’s Church, it does seem strange that, as they only meet for about four and a half hours in a year, we cannot find time to do so. Some were not sure how much time and energy would be so released by the*

cancelling of them! However over all, the accepted feeling was that there would be little sadness if the Synod meetings were cancelled.

In light of what happened during the Foot and Mouth epidemic, where the Business Committee handled the necessary matters, we feel that a strengthened, defined Business Committee would be able to process all the necessary forms etc for the Assembly.”

(Derry & Omagh)

12. The other responses were similar in tone. Appropriate resolutions are therefore appended.

Overview of Funding

1. Following the Assembly’s decision to withdraw from the Church Hymnary Trust it is expected that our Church will receive around £100,000 in settlement. Developments are awaited.

2. Five Year Business Plans from the following agencies were considered: Board of Communications, Union Theological College, Shankill Road Mission, Church Extension, Irish Mission, Evangelism and Divine Healing.

3. The Board of Communications overdraft is around £100,000 (£40,000 Presbyterian Herald, £60,000 general). It was agreed that this department could not realistically hope to clear its overdraft by eg increasing the price of the Presbyterian Herald or by pursuing outstanding payments due, so some injection of funds will probably be needed. It was suggested that, where appropriate, costs should be charge proportionately to those agencies benefiting from future outlay.

4. The Panel considered a New Post Proposal for a College Development Officer at Union Theological College and a letter from the Convener of the College and Magee Management Committee stating that the income for College refurbishment is likely to be less than originally expected due to a drop in the value of General Investment units and the lower valuation of properties to be sold. The New Post Proposal for a College Development Officer was approved, subject to two conditions:

- (i) that, if the post is not self-financing after one year, it should be terminated; and
- (ii) that fund-raising should focus on money that has to be spent rather than completely new projects.

It was further agreed that the post should be funded by way of an overdraft, with costs (about £25,000) to be included in the budget for 2003.

5. Applications from the Presbyterian Residential Trust for a part-time Clerical Officer at Ard Cluan House (8 hours per week) and for a temporary part-time Finance Officer were approved, as was the appointment of an additional Executive Officer in the Overseas Office. A new post proposal from the Committee on Peace and Peacemaking for a Programme Officer to be funded through the Community Relations Council was approved on condition that the funding arrangements are adhered to and the post ceases when the funding ceases.

6. The Panel agreed to support a proposal from the ad hoc Committee on Priorities that there should be a moratorium on new posts other than those that would be self-financing or funded from external sources.

7. The reserves of the Shankill Road Mission are projected to decline by around £250,000 over the next five years.

8. The Board of Mission in Ireland is considering prioritising the work of the Irish Mission, Home Mission, Church Extension etc.

9. The Board of Social Witness reported that agreement has now been reached with Oaklee Housing Association that any capital deficit on the learning disabled project in Coleraine will be recouped over 15 years.

10. Advice was given to the United Appeal Board on grants requested by Agencies for 2003.

11. Requests from the Home Mission for a grant from United Appeal towards the renovation of Adelaide Road Church, Dublin and for funding for a new church building in Waterford were considered. It was recommended that the Waterford project be funded by Church Extension, and that Church Extension be encouraged to refund to the United Appeal any capital grants made in earlier years that are not being used.

12. The Panel considered papers submitted on the review of the post of Director of Ministerial Students. It was agreed that the post should continue, but it was suggested that the job description be further considered with a view to moving towards the inclusion of additional responsibility.

CONCILIATION PANEL

Rev Dr D J Watts reports:

1. The Conciliation Panel has continued to offer support when requested through its group of trained conciliators. In the past year they have not been called into many situations, but they are available and have proved valuable when asked to help. The panel is grateful to those who are prepared to spend time seeking a way forward through situations of potential conflict in the Church. The Conciliators have also been involved in on-going training for their conciliation role. The work is co-ordinated by Miss Daphne Gilmour, who deserves thanks for her time and interest.

2. The Panel is now keen to move ahead with the second phase of its work, which is to provide training so that genuine differences of opinion may be handled creatively in the Church. Material has been prepared through Mediation Network and people are being trained in its use. In this way it is hoped to encourage a culture of conciliation throughout the Church. The Rev James Clarke has been helpful in contacting Presbyteries to raise awareness of conciliation resources.

INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE ON NORTHERN IRELAND

1. The Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland met in Belfast on 31 October and 1 November.

2. The speaker at the first session was General John de Chastelain, who spoke on the work of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning.

3. Subsequent sessions dealt with:

- (i) the churches' response to the September 11 terrorist attacks;
- (ii) the churches' assessment of the current situation in Northern Ireland;
- (iii) the role and responsibility of the churches in Northern Ireland;
- (iv) the role and responsibility of the churches in the USA.

4. Another "Summer Institute" (Study Tour) for members of the USA is being planned for the summer of 2002.

5. The Business Education Initiative, which enables students from Northern Ireland and the border counties to spend a year at church-related colleges in the USA, has had another successful year. Members of the Committee were invited to attend the graduation ceremony on 2 November.

6. The Committee agreed to meet again next year.

VISITATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

The programme of training events has continued and over 300 people have now received training in the process. Final alterations to the various documents have been completed. They will be made available to Clerks of Presbytery through the General Secretary's Office. This concludes the sub-committee's work.

GENERAL BOARD STATEMENTS

During the year the Board issued statements as follows:

General Board Resolutions 11 October 2001

1. That the General Board regrets that the Government of the Republic of Ireland has planned the reburial of ten IRA men executed in 1921 as a State occasion without taking into account its possible impact on Northern Ireland.

2. The General Board condemns without reservation the terrorist attacks on the United States of America and conveys its sympathy to the bereaved and injured of many countries, to the people of the United States and prays for wisdom and courage, appropriate to the complexity and seriousness of the challenge, to be given to political leaders.

3. The General Board, aware of the dangers of international terrorism, encourages the Irish and British Governments to pursue policies which will both restrain and overcome national and international terrorism, while being aware of the dangers of encouraging support for the very things they seek to remove.

4. The General Board does not believe that rioting, verbal abuse, attacks on the police and intimidation are legitimate forms of protest and believes that the protest at Holy Cross Primary School should stop, and calls for an end to the violence and harassment which is such a feature of life in interface areas in Belfast.

5. The General Board commends all those who are seeking a resolution to the disputes across the interfaces in Belfast and commends them to the prayers of the Presbyterian Church.

6. Believing that the work of journalists is of singular importance in a free society the General Board condemns the murder of Martin O'Hagan and conveys its sympathy to his family and to the National Union of Journalists.

7. The General Board records again its repudiation of the violent activities of loyalist paramilitaries and especially condemns the attempt to car bomb Ballycastle during the Oul' Lamma Fair, which could have been an atrocity on the scale of the Omagh bomb.

8. The General Board agrees that the Church and Government Committee should forward its response to the NI Human Rights Commission's discussion document on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

General Board Resolution 28 February 2002

1. In the matter of the abortion referendum in the Republic of Ireland, the General Board encourage those of its members who are entitled to vote to acquaint themselves with the issues involved and to vote in accordance with their own judgement.

General Board Resolutions 11 April 2002

1. That the General Board pays tribute to the life of faithful service and devotion to duty displayed by her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, and conveys its sympathy to Her Majesty the Queen.

2. That the General Board congratulates Mr Pat Cox on being elected as President of the European Parliament.

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

During the year the Doctrine Committee:

1. Prepared and forwarded comments to the appropriate convener on the sections relating to the sacraments in the experimental folder on Public Worship (cf General Assembly Minutes 2001 p 60, Resolution 1).

2. Prepared and forward comments to the appropriate convener on the Report concerning the Status of Deaconesses (Minutes 2001 p 48, Resolution 8).

3. Completed the paper on Ministry. While the committee felt it was not yet ready to make definitive statements concerning some of the more complex theological issues arising out of the report, such as our understanding of ordination, it felt that its paper reiterating the need for all member ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland should be presented to the Assembly with the hope that it will raise awareness in the Church at large.

J C McCULLOUGH, Convener

APPENDIX

REPORT ON MINISTRY

Ministry in the New Testament

1. In the New Testament the term which is translated 'ministry' is usually diakonia, a word which has the basic meaning of 'service'. It is used in a variety of contexts in the New Testament. It can refer to hospitality (Luke 10:40 and Acts 6:1), to the giving of financial aid (Acts 11:29; 12:25; Romans 15:3; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:1; 9:12 & 13; 11:8), to general spiritual service (Acts 1:17 & 25; 21:19; Romans 11:13; 1 Corinthians 12:5; 2 Corinthians 4:1; 2 Corinthians 6:3; Ephesians 4:12; Colossians 4:17; 1 Timothy 12:2; 2 Timothy 4:5; 4:11), to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4; 20:24). Its meaning, therefore, is rather wide but its core refers to the service Christians render to God for the encouragement and building up of His church, or as 1 Corinthians 12:7 puts it, 'for the common good'. This 'ministry', therefore, is not limited to particular and rather special Christians. All are called to serve. We are all the people of God and the ministers of God.

2. In order to carry out this ministry, God, through the Holy Spirit, equips his people with gifts, carismata, (a term used to refer not necessarily to the abnormality of the gifts but to the fact that they come from God, as a caris, grace or favour) as he wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). Lists of these gifts are given in passages such as 1 Corinthians 12:4ff; Romans 12:4ff; Ephesians 4:11ff. though these lists are not meant to be exhaustive but illustrative. Like the call to service or ministry, they are not limited to certain people but are given as God wills to **all** his people. (Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:7; 12:11; Romans 12:6 etc.). Equally one would not normally expect every gift to be given to one person or group of people. God is sovereign and distributes gifts as he wills for the building up of the body.

3. Since the purpose of the gifts is for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11) it would be natural that some of them would involve what we would call nowadays gifts of leadership and this is what we in fact find in the passage quoted above in Ephesians and in 1 Corinthians 12-28ff. However, there is no thought that such leaders are more important or more essential than the other members of the body. The emphasis is on the importance of the body, not of individuals within it.

4. There has been much discussion in the past century about the development of leadership in the New Testament. Some scholars have argued that for Paul, the church organisation should be 'charismatic' rather than 'hierarchical' or legal eg Van Campenhausen: 'Paul had a vision of the structure of the community as one of free fellowship, developing through the living interplay of spiritual gifts and ministries, without the benefit of official authority or responsible elders.' (*Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, English Translation, London, 1969). Other scholars have argued that that picture is too simplistic and idealistic, that the reality was more complex, influenced by the social conditions of the time.

5. Without entering the important 'charismatic' versus 'institutional' debate several things can be said about leadership in the early church and how it developed.

- (i) There were people in the very early church who exercised a ministry of leadership and who deserved respect because of it. They (under different names such as overseer (bishop), deacon, elder, teacher, prophet, administrator) were seen as a distinct group or groups within churches (Philippians 1:1;) and they were to be respected as those who 'labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you' (1 Thessalonians 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 16:15f).
- (ii) All are appointed by God (1 Corinthians 12:28) and together with all other members of the body of Christ derive their authority and power from the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:6-16; 12:3ff; Rom 8:9; cf too 1 John 2:27; 4:6).
- (iii) The particular roles and responsibilities of these early leaders are not defined precisely (hence, for example, elders and overseers seem to be interchangeable in Titus 1:5 and Titus 1:7). This is because everybody knew who they were and what they were doing and in his letters Paul was not writing a new Code for the church or drawing up Terms and Conditions of Employment but dealing with immediate issues and problems that had arisen in individual churches. However, the following can probably be said:
 - (a) In the beginning the apostles and their envoys exercised a leadership role in the churches which they founded. Paul, for example, writes to his converts as a father writes to his children (1 Corinthians 4:15; 2 Corinthians 12:14; Galatians 4:19; Philemon 10). While his letters are full of expressions of his love for his 'children' (2 Corinthians 2:4; 5:14; 6:11-13; Philippians 1:7; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 17) and while he refuses to lord it over his children (Philemon 8-9) it is clear that, as a father, he has the right to exhort and admonish them (1 Thessalonians 2:11) and that when he is absent his delegates act with his authority (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 1:3; 5:22).
 - (b) Since the 'basic cell' of the early Christian church was the house church, it is very probable that leadership in those churches was normally provided by the traditional household structure. 'The leadership role of the householder was not something that had to be invented from scratch. It was already well established, sanctioned by custom and understood by those who exercised it and those who benefited from it'. (Campbell, *The Elders*, Edinburgh, 1994 p. 153)
 - (c) Some churches may also have followed the model of synagogue leadership, where officials were taken from the community at large (not only the heads of the households where churches met).
 - (d) At some stage, and probably earlier rather than later, serious thought had to be given to the qualities required of those who exercised leadership, to the process of appointing and, if need be, disciplining them and even to the remuneration they should receive. The role of human beings in the 'appointment' of leaders is mentioned in Titus 1:5; and Acts 14:23. Qualities required of leaders are discussed in 1

Timothy 3:1-7 (overseers); 3:8-13 (deacons); 5:17ff; Titus 1:6ff (elders); Titus 1:7ff (Overseers). Remuneration is discussed in 1 Timothy 5:17f; Titus 1:9 and perhaps in Galatians 6:6; disciplinary rules are given in 1 Timothy 5: 19ff; Titus 1:9-11ff. Clearly at some stage in the development of church structures in the New Testament period some form of church order was being developed. Lack of evidence does not allow us to say for sure how quickly this developed but it is unlikely that it developed at the same pace throughout the whole church.

6. There is much that we would like to know about the organisation of the early church, and many questions remain eg what was the relationship between the apostles and local church leaders? Was there a distinction between 'charismatic' leaders and institutional leaders or is that distinction anachronistic? What is the relationship between 'God's call of appointment' (1 Corinthians 12:28 and Paul's testimony about his own call in Galatians 1) and appointment through human beings (Titus 1:5)? Does the term 'elder' refer to a person's status in society or was it an 'office' in the church? Scholars have tried to fill in such frustrating gaps in our knowledge by very stimulating speculation. But the incompleteness of our knowledge of the way first century Christian churches were organised (and the fact that what we do know about the first century would seem to suggest a rather different church structure, based on households rather than large congregations in at least the initial stages of the development of the church) would preclude us from applying the New Testament model of church ministry directly to our situation. Rather we must discern some of the Biblical principles upon which the early New Testament church built its structures and examine our own structures in the light of those principles.

Early and Medieval Church

7. As there are divided opinions on the evidence of the New Testament on the subject of Christian Ministry, so there are different views about the development of ministry in the early church. The main difference is between those who believe in what is called the apostolic succession, that the authority and leadership of the apostles were handed on to monarchical bishops as their successors, with Roman Catholics believing that a supreme authority has been provided in the Papacy, divinely instituted by Jesus in his commission to Peter, and those who take a more pragmatic view of the development of ministry to meet historical circumstances and needs, understanding apostolic succession as continuing the teaching of the apostles, maintaining the apostolic testimony to the risen Christ and carrying on the apostolic ministry educating and edifying the faithful and evangelising those outside the church.

8. Historical evidence suggests that it was not until the second century that the threefold order of bishop, presbyters and deacons emerged and even then diversity persisted. We do not possess all the pieces of the jigsaw which might trace this development but there are some clues indicating transition along the way.

9. The Didache or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, an early Christian document which may be as early as the first century, appears to reflect the

transition from the early itinerant ministry of apostles, prophets and teachers to an elected local leadership of presbyter/bishops and deacons who were to be respected, 'for they also minister to you the ministry of prophets and teachers'. In the earliest Christian literature, eg The First Letter of Clement to the Corinthians (c 95 AD), as in the New Testament, presbyters and bishops appear to be interchangeable terms and in the second century Polycarp of Smyrna is called bishop by Ignatius of Antioch and presbyter by his disciple Irenaeus.

10. Ignatius (d 117), third bishop of Syrian Antioch, according to the Christian historian Eusebius, is the earliest known apologist for monepiscopacy. For him no eucharist (Lord's Supper) is valid unless authorized by the bishop. Monepiscopacy may well have been a natural development with one presbyter becoming the leader of the group, someone to take responsibility for correspondence, like Clement in Rome whose letter to the Corinthians makes no mention of monepiscopacy, the church's finances and copies of the scriptures. The challenge of Gnostic and other heretics may have encouraged the emergence of a single leader as the focus of the church's unity and orthodoxy. The Anglican scholar, J B Lightfoot, considered that 'the episcopate was formed out of the presbyterate by elevation, not from the apostolate by localization'.

11. Our earliest account of ordination is found in the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (d 236) describing rites and practices in Rome at the beginning of the third century. The central figure is the bishop but presbyters join with him in the ordination of presbyters by the laying on of hands. The bishop alone lays hands on the deacons, for they are ordained 'for the service of the bishop'. The bishop himself is ordained by other bishops but T W Manson argued strongly that the Hippolytean bishop, like the Ignatian bishop, sounds more like the moderator of presbytery! This may be contradicted by the picture we are given of the church in Rome in the middle of the third century, when Cornelius was bishop (c 251-53): 1 bishop, 46 presbyters, 7 deacons, 42 acolytes, 52 exorcists, readers and door keepers, 1,500 widows. Clearly as the Church expanded congregations outgrew their house-church origins and ministerial offices multiplied. Before the end of the third century there were in existence fine church buildings like the cathedral at Nicomedia within sight of the Imperial palace. It was destroyed in the great persecution of 303, one aspect of which was the destruction of church buildings.

12. Another significant development was the increasingly sacerdotal understanding of the Christian ministry. Cyprian in Carthage in the middle of the third century found a model for Christian priesthood in the Levitical priest and interpreted the eucharist as the sacrifice the Christian priest offers. The logic of the Levitical tradition, and a growing suspicion of sex united to promote the celibacy of the clergy, emphasising their distinction from the laity. The clericalisation of the Church was advancing.

13. First Clement, at the end of the first century, had rebuked the Corinthian church for having deposed their presbyters, their God-given leaders, and he used the term *laikoi*, meaning the uninstructed mass, for the ordinary church members, a term which does not appear in the New Testament. Origen (c 185-254), used the term *kleros*, our clergy, for the church's office-bearers, and his bishop, Demetrius, condemned Palestinian bishops who had allowed Origen to teach in church although he had not been ordained.

14. The development and elaboration of the church's liturgy further enhanced the role of those who led worship and as basilica church buildings replaced house churches the distinction between clergy and laity increased, with the apse at one end of the basilica reserved for the officiating clergy. These developments, accelerated after the conversion of Constantine, gave the church Imperial favour, transforming the position of Christians. Soon conforming Christianity replaced conforming paganism. The clergy were favoured and privileged and relieved of municipal duties and taxes. Their number swelled as pagans flooded into the church. Bishops multiplied and became influential in political as well as religious life, Eusebius of Caesarea becoming an adviser and later the biographer of Constantine. Church ministries became full-time and being a bishop or presbyter became a profession. Yet Ambrose of Milan, an Imperial civil servant turned bishop, became a courageous champion of the authority and independence of the church and his biblical preaching helped to convert Augustine.

15. The clericalisation of the Church was completed in what we call the medieval period. The Church emerged from the collapse of the Roman Empire to exercise enormous influence in the making of Europe's Christian civilization. 'The Papacy', observed the philosopher Hobbes, 'is not other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned on the grave thereof'.

16. The massive edifice of the medieval church was raised to mediate God's grace to mankind. Its sacramental system provided for life from cradle to grave – baptism, confirmation, eucharist, marriage, penance, ordination and extreme unction. The sacraments were not merely signs and symbols, the sign had become what it signified, conferring grace simply by being performed and the one who could administer the sacraments was the ordained priest. 'The priest', Eamon Duffy has written, 'had access to mysteries forbidden to others, only he might utter the words which transformed bread and wine into the flesh and blood of God's incarnate'. (*The Stripping of the Altars*, p 110). In the mass, which was central to medieval religion, Christ's redemption of mankind was renewed and made effective for all who partook. There could be no mass without the priest and masses benefited not only the living but the dead, the priest had power to say mass on behalf of loved ones in purgatory. Few but the priests understood Latin, the sacred language of the liturgy and the clergy's education and control of education gave them power and privilege. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 which affirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation also reaffirmed and reinforced clerical celibacy. Laymen and women were firmly excluded from any significant role in the life of the Church, they were forbidden even to touch the sacred chalice. Understandably they often figured prominently in Christian movements of protest and dissent, like the twelfth-century Waldensians in France and the later Lollards in England.

The Reformation and the Ministry

17. At the Reformation, a decisive step was taken in breaking with the Medieval Catholic conceptions of priesthood and Church and in the direction of reclaiming a more biblical understanding of ministry.

18. It is tempting to launch into this by noting the celebrated doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. There is certainly some justification for this.

Soteriology lay at the heart of the Reformers' concerns and the priesthood of believers is the expression of the conviction that God establishes an immediate relation between the individual and himself through the death of Christ and the regenerating work of the Spirit. The corporate priesthood is enabled by the access which the individual has to God.

19. Yet if we started there, we should fail to note how a potential or actual tension arises in the Reformers' view of ministry. The Reformation was a reformation of the Church under the Word. The Word is the proper authority in the Church. But this gives to the ministry of the Word in particular (essentially preaching) a key role in the Church. And herein lies the element of tension. The minister of the Word has a particularly significant ministry and it is easy to see how the authorities of the Word and its minister could merge on such a basis so that a doctrine of the priesthood of all believers could mean a less radical break with Roman Catholic notions of priesthood than might have been expected ie, *personal* authority remains strong on account of *office*.

20. Luther and Calvin had somewhat different emphases in relation to the priesthood of believers, though there is room for debate on the extent to which these are profoundly theological or the product of practical and situational considerations. It may be difficult to make Luther absolutely consistent in this regard, but he maintained that in principle any believer might preach or administer the sacraments. Calvin does not seem to concede this. Luther was struck by the logic of the priesthood of believers, as constituted under the Gospel, though he admits the need and biblical provision for a government with a ministerial order. Calvin was struck by the biblical justification for conceiving of roles distinctly and precisely, while admitting that God could have ordered things quite differently, if he had chosen to.

21. Because Calvin is of special interest to us, let us note the following features of his exposition in the Institutes (IV.3ff):

- (a) Ministry is not constitutive of the Church: it is a gift to the Church.
- (b) Of the Pauline list of ministries in Ephesians 4, only pastors and teachers hold permanent offices: apostles, prophets and evangelists were for an earlier dispensation, though they may occasionally return *ad hoc*. Pastors differ from teachers in having a wider function, which includes discipline and administration of sacraments.
- (c) Of the supplementary Pauline list of ministries in Romans 12, only that of government and care for the poor are permanent: gifts of healing and interpretation were for an earlier dispensation. These permanent offices are exercised respectively by elders and deacons, leading to the fourfold structure of ministerial leadership set out in the Genevan Ecclesiastical Ordinances –
 - Pastors (Ministers of Word and Sacrament)
 - Doctors (Teachers of Sound Doctrine),
 - Elders (largely responsible for Church discipline) and
 - Deacons (to care for the poor and sick).

Of these the two which became universally characteristic of Reformed or Presbyterian churches were pastors and elders.

The Ministry in Irish Presbyterianism

22. The first Presbyterian ministers in Ireland were ministers of the Church of Scotland and their names appear in the Scottish Fasti. There were no Presbyterian church courts in Ireland until 1642 and the original presbytery was the Scottish Army presbytery and ministers ordained and installed in Ireland were still ministers of the Church of Scotland eg Patrick Adair. It was not until 1672 that a committee of what were then five presbyteries or meetings of presbytery in Ulster agreed regulations for entrants to the ministry.

23. The background of their understanding of the ministry was therefore that of the Church of Scotland. The First Book of Discipline of the reformed Church of Scotland had decreed that ‘in a kirk reformed ... none ought to presume either to preach either yet to minister the sacraments till that orderly they be called to the same,’ and the Second Book of Discipline (1578) declared that ‘unto the pastors onlie appertaineth the administration of the sacraments.’ Calvin, on the basis of 1 Tim v.17, had distinguished between two kinds of presbyters, those who taught and those ‘who ruled honourably and well but did not hold the office of teaching’, leading to the distinction between Teaching Elders, ministers of word and sacrament and Ruling Elders, who share in the spiritual oversight of the church.

24. This may be described as the classic Reformed position and it does not seem that Irish Presbyterianism has ever seriously discussed let alone contemplated any departure from this position. It ought to be added that in the Reformed tradition it has always been emphasised that all Christian ministry is the ministry of Christ to enable the Church to proclaim the gospel and feed the flock.

25. In Ulster the original Army Presbytery followed the Church of Scotland in 1647 in accepting the formularies of the Westminster Assembly, including the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, which stated that the ordinary and perpetual officers of the Church were pastors, teachers and other governors and deacons. Pastors were to preach the word, catechise, ‘dispense other divine mysteries’, administer the sacraments, take care of the poor and exercise ‘a ruling power over the flock as pastor.’ ‘To join with the minister in the government of the Church’ were some ‘with gifts for government and with commission to execute the same, when called thereunto, who are to join with the minister in the government of the Church. Which officers Reformed Churches commonly call Elders.’ ‘Every minister of the word is to be ordained by the imposition of hands, and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong.’ Finally, ordination is to be the act of a presbytery. There is no provision in the Form of Government for the ordination of governors or ruling elders. The Westminster Confession followed the 1560 Scottish Confession in recognising only two sacraments, neither of which may be dispensed by any but a minister of the word lawfully ordained.

26. The First Book of Discipline prescribed that ruling elders be elected annually but they could be, and were, re-elected. They were not ordained by a presbytery but by the minister of the congregation without laying on of hands. Indeed the term ordination was not always used but other terms such as admission. This appears to have been the practice in Irish Presbyterianism until 1841 when ordination by presbytery was introduced.

27. The Ulster presbyteries guarded jealously the special prerogatives of the ordained ministry. At the earliest meeting of the Laggan presbytery of which we have record, a petition was received from Sligo requesting that one William Paterson who was preaching and baptising there 'might be ordained and continued among them'. The presbytery's reply was to condemn 'the sinfulness and danger of William Paterson's practices in usurping the ministerial calling without trial of his gifts and ordination' and warned the people of Sligo 'to avoid him as an intruder.' This was endorsed later by the Synod of Ulster and a minister who persistently allowed anyone who was not a minister to preach faced suspension. There was also a tradition of irregular Covenanting preaching in the seventeenth century and, much later, the 1859 Revival brought a new tradition of 'lay' preaching and alternative evangelical institutions like mission halls.

28. It is not clear when ministers were first called 'Reverend' but it appears before the end of the seventeenth century eg the Reverend Joseph Boyse of Wood Street in Dublin. This became increasingly common in the eighteenth century and we have Steel Dickson's famous remark about ministers in the Volunteers, first formed in 1778, 'the rusty black was exchanged for the glowing scarlet and the title of reverend for that of captain', clear evidence of ministerial dress and title.

29. There does not appear to have been any significant difference between the Seceders and the Synod of Ulster on the question of ministerial office, and when they united in 1840 it was on the basis of their common adherence to the standards and discipline of the Church of Scotland. The resulting Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepted the Westminster Confession 'as approved by the Church of Scotland in her act of 1647' which included specific reference to the Form of Church Government.

30. In theory at least Irish Presbyterianism, in keeping with its Reformed tradition, has rejected the clergy/laity division which emerged in the Church in the third century, but in practice may not have completely escaped all forms of clericalism. As John Milton alleged, 'New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.' Certainly Irish, like Scottish Presbyterianism, has always distinguished the role of the minister, even if called teaching elder, from that of the ruling elder. A church court, kirk session or presbytery is only valid if presided over by a minister. In session minutes we have records of sessions not being able to conduct business because no minister was present. In 1944 the Armagh presbytery elected a ruling elder as Moderator of presbytery but when a minister was ordained and installed in Benburb on 31 January 1945 a minister acted as Moderator to secure the legality of the ordination. As regards the administration of the sacraments an exception has been made in the case of Foreign Missionaries. In 1900 the General Assembly authorised presbyteries to ordain medical missionaries and Jungle Tribes Missionaries (who were not ordained ministers) as 'men (sic!) labouring in the word and doctrine to be missionary elders with authority to administer the sacraments in the foreign field' (MGA 1900 p1013).

31. As in Scotland there has been a debate within Irish Presbyterianism however, over the presbyterate. Are both ministers and ruling elders equally presbyters, differing only in function, or is the ruling elder a representative of

the members of the Church, assisting the ministers in the government of the Church? Irish Presbyterianism does not seem to have considered this question officially or pronounced on it. According to the contemporary Code of the Church its permanent officers are Presbyters who in Apostolic times were called Bishops. In each Apostolic church there was a plurality of Presbyters all of whom ruled but some laboured in word and doctrine, hence the title, Teaching and Ruling Elders. The Teaching Elder, who is also called preacher, evangelist, teacher, pastor or minister, in addition to the oversight of the church which he exercises in conjunction with the Ruling Elders, is commissioned to preach God's Word, to administer the sacraments of the gospel and to instruct the people, and is set for the defence of the gospel. The Ruling Elder is appointed to watch for souls and to exercise government and discipline in conjunction with the Teaching Elder.

32. Thomas Witherow argued that there was no distinction in Scripture between teaching and ruling elders, both of whom were Apostolical bishops, but in practice there was a difference to-day because of the teaching elders' training. D C Lachman, in *The Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (1993), considers that this might be the view of many Presbyterians to-day. One difference in the Ordination services for Teaching and Ruling Elders in the current Irish Presbyterian Code is that while ministers are ordained to the 'Holy Ministry of the Church Universal', Ruling Elders are ordained to the office of the Ruling Eldership and installed to oversight 'in this congregation.'

Ministry To-day

33. The traditional pattern of ministry in Irish Presbyterianism - a teaching elder, the minister of word and sacrament, and a kirk session of ruling elders in each local congregation, has remained the same in spite of enormous and accelerating changes in the society in which the Church ministers. In some congregations there may be multi-staff ministry teams and some full-time church workers but the traditional pattern is the norm. A loyal band of Sunday School teachers and leaders of church organizations give indispensable service but ministry is still regarded as the prerogative of 'the minister'. Meanwhile society at large has changed radically. Europe, the wider context in which we live, which has been for centuries the heartland of institutional Christianity, has become increasingly secular and, with large-scale immigration, multi-cultural. The historic Christian churches, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox, have been marginalised and Christianity challenged by other faiths, particularly Islam. Secularism and materialism pose the greatest challenge and Sunday morning shopping has replaced church-going for many Europeans.

34. Ireland may have been the last European country to be affected by these developments but now secularism and consumerism are advancing rapidly and immigrants are presenting new challenges to our churches, which still play a prominent part in Irish society and maintain a conspicuous presence on occasions of civic religion. This conceals the fact that increasing numbers, particularly among the under 40s, live without significant reference to institutional Christianity. The traditional role of the churches in many areas, in education for example, is being questioned and social workers and community groups are taking over responsibilities once borne by churches and ministers.

35. Changes in society are reflected within our church communities, particularly among the young. Increasing numbers of couples seeking church weddings are already cohabiting and family breakdown and divorce affect church families. Like other churches our Irish Presbyterian Church has suffered considerable membership loss, particularly among men in the 30 to 50 age group (See N Hamilton and D Welch, *Reconnecting with a Missing Generation*, Belfast, PCI 2000). Sunday School attendance since 1967 has dropped by more than half.

36. Thirty years of civil unrest have caused major demographic changes. In the greater Belfast area there has been a 'polo-mint' effect with Presbyterians moving out from city-centre and 'mixed' areas to the suburban circumference and to the satellite towns encircling Belfast - Bangor, Holywood, Comber, Carryduff, Lisburn, Moira, Dromore, Templepatrick, Ballyclare and Carrickfergus. In 1967 the three Belfast presbyteries registered 50,344 families, and in 2001, 15,081, a drop of 70%. In the same period the number of families in the 'polo-mint' presbyteries, Ards, Down, Dromore, Templepatrick and Carrickfergus, increased from 32,683 to 38,342 families, an increase of 17%. But where did the other 30,000 go? Within Northern Ireland there has been a movement of population from west to east and from such 'green' areas as South Down and South Armagh. Political changes have undermined Protestant self-confidence, with Protestant population decline, and this has affected church life. Many Presbyterian young people who have pursued tertiary education in Britain have not returned. Among the challenges facing our Church is how to help shrinking congregations west of the Bann and in Belfast, while encouraging others that are growing.

37. Estimates of the effect of the Charismatic Movement in the PCI vary but it is fair to say that many of our numerically 'successful' congregations are open to the movement and most of our local churches, whether they acknowledge it or not, have been influenced by the changes in praise and worship which it stimulated. Some of those influenced by the renewal movement have become frustrated by the lack of change within institutional churches and have left to join 'new churches', while others have resented the changes which have occurred.

38. Not all is gloom and doom, however. Some congregations are flourishing and growing, particularly in the Presbyterian heartlands of counties Antrim and Down, while in the Republic of Ireland, generations of decline are being reversed. Certain features, which characterised the New Testament Church, are discernible in congregations defying contemporary downward spirals. They include:

- Confidence in God and in the Gospel.

The history of the Church has been one of ebb and flow, of advance and decline. The cause is God's and His purposes cannot fail. We need to be attuned to His will, serving Him and our neighbour, responding to the Holy Spirit's leading.

- Every Member Ministry.

Christ calls the whole church to ministry, to witness and service. Church leadership must encourage, facilitate and guide the ministry of

all church members. Ministry is not the exclusive responsibility of the 'minister' alone.

- Worship that is real and relevant.
As in the medieval church some Irish Presbyterian worship is performed **for** and **to** rather than **by** God's people. Spectators must become participants. The riches of Reformed worship need a contemporary focus. Not everyone can lead public worship but those who have the necessary gifts must be encouraged to lead.
- Sense of Community.
Church members need to recognise their interdependence in the body of Christ and their commitment to one another.
- Effective Evangelism and Community Involvement.
Time-worn methods of evangelism and community involvement must be evaluated as we move from maintenance to mission in action and not only in words.
- Openness to Change.
The Church's leadership must be open to change and sensitive to those who fear it.

39. What are the implications for the Church's ministry today?

From the interaction of Scripture, our tradition and our contemporary context we must find forms of ministry appropriate for today.

40. We are convinced that the corporate leadership of minister and elders remains a viable form of leadership within which ministry of word and sacrament is important but must not be magnified at the expense of other God-given forms of ministry. Ministers of word and sacrament need to be liberated from personal insecurity, clericalism and inappropriate congregational expectations. Personal insecurity comes from uncertainty about the ministerial role while a stifling clericalism, including pre-occupation with ministerial titles and dress, can separate ministers from their people and diminish the importance of other ministries in the Church.

Recommendations

41. Ministers and elders at Kirk Session, Presbytery and General Assembly level must ask themselves whether they are doing all they can to

- Encourage and facilitate the various ministries of all the members of our churches
- Remove, as far as possible, the hindrances to the exercise of such ministries
- Lessen the negative features of clericalism
- Grant greater flexibility in church structures and administration
- Educate, train and show examples of every member ministry
- Support and encourage one another as we seek the changes necessary to move forward with God.

42. The General Assembly may wish to appoint a group to provide assistance to those who wish to take practical steps forward.

Concluding Comments

43. This present report builds upon the report presented to the 2000 Assembly. It seeks to provide the additional material which that report sought by discussing the development of forms of ministry from NT times to the present day, and it makes special reference to the Reformation and the history and traditions of the PCI.

44. In our treatment of the contemporary situation in Ireland we have focused upon the need to assist the development of all member ministries. This now leaves us free to address the other issue raised in the 2000 Report, namely the question of ordination and the authorization of ministries in the church. With the Assembly's permission we hope to pursue this matter in the coming year and present a complete and final report (DV) in June 2003.

FORCES COMMITTEE

1. The aims and objectives of the Forces' Committee may be summed up as follows: i. To provide a point of contact for members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland serving with the Armed Forces; and ii. Keeping the work of our chaplains in the mind of our church. In every meaningful sense of the word our chaplains are called to be missionaries in an environment that is profoundly secular in its orientation. They may serve at home or in settings far from these shores, but at all times their calling is to know Christ and make him known to those among whom they minister.

2. Our Church has five full time commissioned chaplains serving with the Regular Forces. At a time of considerable change within the Armed Forces it is satisfying to note that there is a continuing necessity for chaplains to meet the spiritual needs of the men and women who serve in the Forces. There are currently vacancies for chaplains to the Army, while the Royal Navy have recently indicated that there are vacancies for one and possibly two new chaplains within their ranks. The Convener would be glad to hear from any minister, preferably under the age of 40, who might be interested in finding out more about this type of ministry. It is possible to arrange visits to military units where opportunities exist to see chaplains in action and to ask questions in an informal setting about this work before proceeding with a formal application.

3. The Rev Terry Maze continues to be our only Naval chaplain. He serves as the Principal Church of Scotland and Free Churches Chaplain [Naval] in Portsmouth and gives valued service in what for him has been a fascinating and hectic year. He writes: "Teaching remains an important part of the Naval Chaplain's remit. All trainees have periods with a chaplain during their initial and career training courses and the Spiritual and Personal Development syllabus has been developed specially for these classes. The syllabus continues to be developed and now covers new entry officers, ratings and marines. Several chaplains have reported an increased interest in issues like the ethics of war and the cultural and religious issues that have arisen as a consequence of the terrorist attacks on the USA."

4. In the Army we are served by the Rev Norman McDowell, who continues in his posting with the 1st Battalion The Black Watch in Germany and has completed a six month posting with them in Kosovo. During the last twelve months he has transferred from a Short Service Commission to a Regular Commission which means that he will now be able to serve until the age of 55 if he so desires. We offer him our warmest congratulations on achieving this milestone and assure him of our continuing prayers for his ministry. The Rev Philip Patterson continues as Chaplain to the 1st Battalion The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders at Palace Barracks, Holywood. This has proved to be a very busy time for him. His Battalion have frequently deployed on to the streets of North Belfast in recent times to keep communities in conflict separate from one another.

5. The Rev David Edgar continues to serve with the RAF in Cyprus. Though often perceived as a “sunshine posting” it is in fact a very busy location. During the Gulf War Cyprus was an important staging post for the military build up in the liberation of Kuwait. With our forces once again taking part, this time in the war against international terrorism, the strategic importance of Cyprus has once again become evident. The Rev Jonathan Wylie continues to find his work in the RAF rewarding.

6. We continue to have a full complement of TA chaplains serving with various units here in Northern Ireland. Their work is greatly appreciated not only by their Commanding Officers but all those among whom they work so faithfully, in addition quite often to their own busy church schedules. Territorial Army chaplains have the opportunity to make an impact upon the lives of men and women in their units, many of whom are remote from Christ and his Church and so it is right that we honour their hard work and commitment.

7. The Forces Committee seeks to encourage all our chaplains in their work and it also commends those organisations which frequently supplement their work and provide additional support during hard and difficult times. The work of the Sandes Homes, the Officers’ Christian Union, the Soldiers’ & Airmen’s Scripture Readers Association, the Naval, Military & Air Force Bible Society all deserve our prayerful and practical support. Representatives from these organisations are available in Northern Ireland to speak at midweek meetings. Their insight into the challenges and problems of military life will enable people in our congregations to pray more intelligently for our servicemen and women.

8. Each year the Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force “Wings Appeal” and the Royal Irish/UDR Benevolent Fund seek our support. We bring these worthy causes before the General Assembly once again in our resolutions. Our congregations have in the past supported these funds with great generosity and the Committee hopes that this support will continue.

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

1. The Chaplains Committee has met on four occasions during the past year.
2. The responsibility of the Committee continues to be the oversight and support of the Church's Hospital and Prison Chaplains.
3. As is regular, a number of changes have taken place – in both the Hospital and Prison services – through the retirement of ministers or their transfer to other charges. The Committee would express the Church's indebtedness to all of those who have ceased to be Chaplains for their commitment, their witness and their specialist ministries. We trust that their successors will find the same fulfilment as they take up their new appointments. To them, and all those who are continuing in post, we offer our sincere thanks and appreciation and pledge our prayerful engagement with them in their work.
4. These sentiments we would also extend to the deaconesses who have brought their distinctive, complementary and enriching contribution to Hospital Chaplaincy.
5. The Committee would also wish to record its gratitude to all those in the public services who help to resource and facilitate the endeavours of our Chaplains.
6. The Prison Service has now completed its review of chaplaincy arrangements mentioned at last year's General Assembly. With the other churches we have welcomed the consultation process in which we were invited to participate, as a result of which we were able to modify some of the original proposals.
7. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has recently begun a review of the terms and conditions under which Hospital Chaplains are employed. The Committee is concerned that the Church should be fully and formally involved in the work of the review group and has sought to have discussions with the Department on this and related matters.

ROBERT J RODGERS, Convener

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Moderator's Advisory Committee did not have occasion to meet during the year.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

1. In March the Committee reviewed the position of Ministers and Licentiates without Charge.

The Committee's recommendations are as follows:-

| <i>Presbytery</i> | <i>Name</i> | <i>Recommendation</i> |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|
| Ards | Rev C D Mawhinney | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev Mark Spratt | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev David McKee | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| Armagh | Rev W A Shaw | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| North Belfast | Rev W M Smyth | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev C R J Brown | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| | Rev C I McKnight | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev J S Carson | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev David Stanfield | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Rev F W Vincent | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| | Mr N Patrick | To be retained as Licentiate for a further year. |
| Belfast East | Rev R A Crooks | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| | Rev Dr Eliz Jamison | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| | Rev Rex Pedlow | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| | Rev W J Harshaw | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| Carrickfergus | Rev D R Byers | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| Coleraine | Rev Wm Morrison | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| | Rev J D Mark | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| Derry/Strabane | Rev J C Teeney | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| Down | Rev R N Stewart | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| Dublin & Munster | Rev Ruth Gregg | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |
| Iveagh | Rev E G McAuley | To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired). |
| Route | Rev Dr Victor Dobbin | To be retained as Minister without Charge. |

2. The Committee would draw attention to Code Par 219(3)(a), which provides that a licentiate or minister without charge who accepts a full-time appointment which is not under the jurisdiction of the Assembly shall be deemed to have resigned from his position in the Church, except in certain specified circumstances.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

PEACE AND PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE

1. The Peace and Peacemaking Committee is deeply concerned by both the range and level of violence experienced during this past year in our own society and worldwide. The Committee believes that such acts highlight the need for churches to become even more actively engaged in exercising the biblical mandate of peacemaking.

2. The Convener forwarded copies of the Irish Church Leaders joint statement on the September 11 attacks on the United States to several hundred congregations in the US. Many grateful replies were received. Copies of several statements by US Church leaders and others reflecting on the significance of, and appropriate responses to, the events of September 11 were also circulated by e-mail to ministers in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Once again, many appreciative replies were received.

3. While believing the attacks on the US on the 11th of September to be totally unjustified, the Committee is concerned that the response of the United States, the United Kingdom and other western nations embarked on a “War on Terror” does not unfold in ways that may make our world less and not more secure. The Church’s Peace Vocation reminds us that “we must grasp more clearly the distinctive teaching of our Lord which challenges the general practice of our world, and breaks the vicious cycle of matching injury with injury, hate with hate, ignorance with ignorance.” The Committee, therefore, commends those congregations that have sought to open up dialogue with local representatives of Islam in the wake of September 11.

4. The Committee produces Peace and Peacemaking News three times per year, as a vehicle for sharing ideas and information on events and resources. Peace Agents are encouraged to submit reports on initiatives taken by their congregations so that the Committee can share them with others.

5. “When Push Comes to Shove...Can Peace Work?” was the title for a day conference in November for Peace Agents and others. The Committee is encouraged both by the participation of over one hundred and fifty participants from nineteen presbyteries and the fact that quite a number of congregations were represented for the first time.

6. The Committee prepared a submission to the Healing Through Remembering Project. Remembering events connected with conflict can be dangerous and divisive. Such remembering does not automatically contribute to healing. The emphasis on remembering should seek to learn from past mistakes of violence and sectarianism. We should long remember the plight of all the innocent victims together with the cost to society in general. True reconciliation

can only be achieved by absolutely genuine understanding of the hurt suffered by society. Remembering should create an awareness of the need for an ongoing new beginning in Northern Ireland and on the island as a whole. The stress should therefore be on the challenge of peace and reconciliation. It would emphasise citizenship – seeking the good of all.

7. The Committee welcomes the development of the Preparing Youth For Peace programme of the Youth Board and valued the input of Mr David Smith, Programme Officer, at our Autumn Conference. The Committee encourages all boards and agencies of the church to explore ways to contribute to peacemaking through their own programmes and with their particular constituencies.

8. The Committee once again urges presbyteries to support the work of congregational Peace Agents. Route Presbytery recently held an evening to resource Peace Agents and others in their congregations. Several Presbyteries have included time at one of their stated meeting to hear reports from Congregational Peace Agents about their activities. A few have formed peacemaking committees.

9. The Committee once again offers thanks to all those at Congregational and Presbytery level who have accepted responsibility for peace-building and so “reassert the Church’s own proper calling to seek peace and the things that make for peace in our own day” (Peace Vocation). The Committee also urges congregations which have still not appointed a Peace Agent to do so, and those with Peace Agents to consider forming a Peacemaking Committee or Group to work with them.

D R BAKER, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Deputy Clerk

2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of Rev Dr RFS Poots from the position of Deputy Clerk and Assistant General Secretary with effect from 31 August, 2002.

3. That Rev Dr R F S Poots be thanked for his services as Deputy Clerk of Assembly and Assistant General Secretary 1990-2002.

4. That the Job Description for the next Deputy Clerk and Assistant General Secretary be approved.

5. That during the year 2002 – 2003 the duties of Deputy Clerk be undertaken by Rev Dr Donald Watts.

Synods

6. That the two historic Synods be advised that it is no longer necessary to continue their formal annual meetings.

7. That those regular Synods that wish be permitted to hold their annual stated meetings during the General Assembly.

8. That, with effect from 2003, the Assembly's Order of Business be altered to allow reasonable time for Synod meetings.

Doctrine Committee

9. That the General Assembly encourage discussion throughout the Church of the issues raised by the Doctrine Committee Report on "Ministry", and welcome comments to the Convener by 31 December, 2002.

10. That the Doctrine Committee continue its work on "Ministry Today", including a study of Ordination.

Forces Committee

11. That the General Assembly recommend the customary observance of Battle of Britain Sunday and Remembrance Sunday in our congregations, and that the appropriate offerings taken up on those days be given to the Royal Air Force "Wings Appeal" and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

12. That the General Assembly recommend that congregations continue to support the work of the UDR/Royal Irish Regiment Benevolent Fund by taking up an offering on the last Sunday in April or some other appropriate Sunday.

Peace and Peacemaking Committee

13. That the General Assembly encourage the work of Peace Agents in Presbyteries and Congregations.

14. That a grant of up to £ 2,500 be made available from the Incidental Fund to the Peace and Peacemaking Committee.

Conciliation

15. That a grant of up to £3,000 be made available from the Incidental Fund to the Conciliation Panel.

Recognised Ministries Committee

16. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Recognised Ministries Committee on Ministers and Licentiatees without Charge.

Visitations

17. That the sub-committee on Visitations be thanked and discharged.

18. That the General Board initiate a review process in about three years time, after which overtures to amend the Code should be prepared.

General

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

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**Anent Par 65 (2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 65(2) of the Code the words “from among its members” be deleted.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

LICENSED AMENDMENT

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 65(2) of the Code the words “from among its members” be deleted, and that the words “from among the ministers or ruling elders under its jurisdiction” be substituted in their place.

DONALD WATTS

Anent Par 97(h) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that a new sub-paragraph (iii) be inserted in Par 97(h) of the Code as follows: “(iii) ministers without charge or ruling elders who may be appointed as Clerks of Presbytery or Synod;”

And that the present sub-paragraph (iii) renumbered as (iv).

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 90(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 90 (1) of the Code the words “to take place in the month of March, at such place within its bounds as it may appoint” be deleted.

Anent Par 95 (d) of the Code *(as re-numbered in 1999)*

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that sub-paragraph 95(d) of the Code be deleted and that sub-paragraph (e) be re-numbered as (d).

Anent Par 193 (1) (c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 193 (1) (c) of the Code the words “Board of Studies” be deleted.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on the 10th Day of June, 2002.

The Memorial of the Templepatrick Presbytery Respectfully Showeth:

That Presbytery express their pastoral concern for the well being of members of the farming community.

That Presbytery view with unease the decline of the agricultural industry in Northern Ireland, with low income for farmers, falling morale among farming families, the drift of young people from the land, and a collapse of confidence in the rural economy. Presbytery support the Ulster Farmers Union Recovery Plan for Northern Ireland Agriculture.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to urge the Northern Ireland Assembly to review the legislation governing the Food Standards Agency with regard to food labelling in shops and supermarkets; to encourage the food retail industry to stock and promote Northern Ireland produce; and to call upon all people to support local agriculture and industry.

And Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Adopted by the Templepatrick Presbytery at its meeting in Kilbride on the 5th day of March, 2002, and transmitted to the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine.

P E DICKINSON, Moderator
W D WEIR, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine at its meeting in Connor on 12th March, 2002, with the strong recommendation that its prayer be granted.

GEORGE PRESTON, Moderator
W J LAMONT, Clerk

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, to meet in Belfast, on the 10th Day of June, 2002.

The Memorial of the Presbytery of Dublin & Munster Respectfully Showeth:

That there is increasing religious diversity in the whole island of Ireland and increasing concern about how to relate appropriately to non-Christian religious communities, particularly when joint worship is proposed.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to request the Doctrine Committee, in consultation with other Boards and Committees as appropriate, to present guidelines on these matters for the approval of the General Assembly.

And Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Adopted at its meeting of 5th March, 2002 in Dublin and transmitted to the Synod of Dublin.

SAMUEL ANKETELL, Moderator
JOHN FARIS, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Synod of Dublin meeting in Ramelton on 11th March, 2002.

G ALAN MITCHELL, Moderator
MERVYN BURNSIDE, Clerk

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

1. By the time the General Assembly meets the Church and Government Committee will have met on ten occasions. Our report includes the appendices and a possible supplementary report in the Daily Minutes. Some of the resolutions passed by the General Board during the past year (pages 17-18) also refer to the business of the Church and Government Committee.

THOUGHTFUL ENGAGEMENT AS FOUNDATIONS ARE SHAKEN

2. Pride of man and earthly glory,
Sword and crown betray his trust;
What with care and toil he buildeth,
Tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power,
Hour by hour,
Is my temple and my tower. (Hymn 405 vr 2)

3. Terrorism reached new depths on the 11th September 2001 when Islamic-fundamentalist terrorists used the simple and astonishing tactic of hijacking civilian aircraft and flying two of them into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and another into the Pentagon in Washington. Thus were the proud symbols of world trade and mammon, as well as the people on the aircraft and those who worked in the Twin Towers, reduced to dust in the twinkling of an eye.

4. No one knows for certain the destination of the fourth hi-jacked aircraft which, following a struggle on board, crashed in Pennsylvania. Speculation is that it may have been headed for the White House or for the Capitol building in Washington.

5. The attacks had immediate worldwide economic consequences and precipitated a war against Afghanistan to remove the Taliban authorities. It is ironic that not long ago some of those powers now seeking to remove the Taliban had previously armed and supported them as part of a struggle against the USSR.

6. Given the transient nature of political alliances we do well to remember that God alone calls our hearts to be his own, and all other allegiances should be treated with an appropriate degree of commitment, suspicion and caution. Jesus alone is the One by whom and for whom all things came to be and in union with whom all things have their proper place. (Colossians 1.17)

7. Having said all that, we nevertheless affirm that the earth is the Lord's, that we are people made in the image of God as well as being made of the dust of the earth. The business of governments in ordering our shared life is important business, an arena worthy of service and of careful and prayerful

attention. We commend those people whose God-given gifts are deployed in these arenas of political and public life.

8. Other foundations were shaken when the American global energy company Enron collapsed due to the discovery of its illegal business practices, which in turn threatened the existence of Arthur Andersen, one of the world's great accounting firms employing 85,000 people world-wide, which had failed to high-light the hidden practices of Enron. Righteousness exalts a nation and sin is a reproach to any people. Integrity is essential to the operation of the affairs of any nation and its absence is corrupting.

9. When this church was faced with the weekly, and often daily, catalogue of murder and bombings, the leadership of condemnation was important, and while it was accompanied by distress, it was straightforward. It is a lot more complex to move from a dislocated society full of suspicion and hurt to one which is learning to co-operate in the absence of adequate social capital of trust and understanding. We, with other people, are walking on that road on God's earth seeking a future which is better than the past.

10. In an imperfect world, the difficult decisions, which often have to be made by political leaders, ought not to lead us to detached cynicism but to thoughtful engagement. We recognise that we are so interwoven into an imperfect world that we are a part of the problem. Nevertheless we have to bear witness to the Kingdom of God. It is with these things in mind that the Committee has done its work through another year.

JUSTICE AND PEACE WALK HAND IN HAND

11. "We want justice" can be a call to take the past seriously or it can be used as a weapon with which to beat people we do not like. "If we acknowledge the God of the Bible, we are committed to struggle for justice in society. Justice means giving to each his due. Our problem (as seen in the light of the gospel) is that each of us over estimates what is due to him as compared with what is due to his neighbour.... If I do not acknowledge a justice which judges the justice for which I fight, I am an agent, not of justice but of lawless tyranny" (Lesslie Newbigin).

12. "We want peace" can be a legitimate yearning to leave a troubled past and a difficult present behind, or it may be little more than a desire to be left alone with privilege or guilt.

13. "Justice alone" can be one of the most divisive influences, as "peace alone" can be the peace of the graveyard, full of decay and dead men's bones. Justice and peace should walk together down a long road in the service of reconciliation. In God's way, justice is linked with mercy; justice not for its own sake but for the peace of the world and the restoration of relationships, sundered by sin.

14. "... reconciliation, as a central theological concept, has an inalienable social dimension.... One needs to explicate in social terms the relationship between grace and justice that lies at the heart of reconciliation. As a result, justice would become a subordinate rather than a primary category around which social engagement is organised; or rather, the struggle for justice would be understood as a dimension of the pursuit of reconciliation whose ultimate goal is a community of love" (Miroslav Volf).

15. The important issues of Equality and Human Rights cannot be severed from the relationships between individuals and between groups of people. As Equality cannot discount distinctiveness neither can Human Rights disregard responsibilities. Either, or both, can be so relentlessly pursued that relationships may be left in disarray. On the other hand, patience and forbearance may lead us to a degree of empathy for one another where insight, confession and generosity might be more readily forthcoming. Patient forbearance may be the means of opening space for building relationships, which will facilitate both justice and peace.

THE PAST, THE TRUTH AND THE FUTURE

16. The weight of the past lies heavy on this society. Would a Truth Commission be any use? The Committee believes it may be useful some time in the future, but not right now, where it would probably be used for the purposes of blaming and shaming and not for healing.

17. If some books are currently being closed while others are kept open, ought they not all to be closed for the present, rather than keeping those with powerful connections open, while those of the lonely and the powerless are largely forgotten? In addition, the Government's commitments given at the Weston Park talks (9-14 July 2001), about which we commented in our report to the October General Board, in which it was proposed that a de facto amnesty be granted to suspected terrorists whom the police wish to question about serious crimes, while accusations against the security forces are pursued, is demonstrably unbalanced.

18. Do we want to remember the past in order to be imbedded in it or to experience some kind of closure, to be set free for the future? One gets the sense that much of this remembering is about keeping wounds open, about looking for someone to pay for the awful things that were done and perhaps even, for some, it is about revenge.

19. While someone being punished may help people to feel that the crime against their loved one has not been overlooked, it is also true to say that putting someone in prison does not take away the grief and loneliness and hurt that comes with losing a loved one.

20. It is all too much, too heavy a weight to bear and the natural call is for a line to be drawn under the past and a new start made. That line, will not of course, make the past go away. With the writer of Ecclesiastes we can say, "What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted".

21. What has the church and the gospel to offer here? What culture exists within the church to counter the culture of the day, the remembering which keeps wounds open in the false hope that when someone pays things will be different? What has the church to offer as a Christian counterculture to the culture in which we live?

22. In our tradition we have importantly majored on sin and forgiveness at a personal level, as we have known the forgiveness of God for ourselves. But we have less understood the effects that sin has on our relationships with one another and the radical lifestyle to which we are called in forgiving one another.

There is a social dimension to sin and an inherent social meaning to reconciliation, which means that the wider social world, riven by strife, ought not to be left to its own devices.

23. We have been strong in understanding the responsibility for sin, but weak in understanding the tragedy of sin. Consider the Garden of Eden; that moment when Adam was weak and took the apple from the woman and when the woman was weak and ate with him. They knew nothing of the consequences of what they were doing but as the Lord walked with them in the garden they began to feel the responsibility of sin. But even then they could not foresee the tragedy – they could not foresee the events between Cain and Abel and the chaos of Babel or all the other ensuing events up to the present time. Cain and Abel were not responsible for their parent's sin, but they were tragically affected by that sin.

24. In the same way, we may be able to identify who is responsible for sinning against us but we cannot so easily identify the tragedy that in the moment when we are sinned against we too are caught in the awful consequences of sin and tragically are caught up in the sinfulness. Sin infects our relationships. We only know it some time later when we hear our reactions, hear words coming from our mouths that we have no control over, see ourselves behaving in ways that we would not have intended to behave. We are not always responsible for sin but the spreading tragic dimensions of sin affect us all.

25. While we may be able to identify who has sinned against us, we are less able to discern the ways in which we have sinned against other people and may therefore be unable to appreciate how we have contributed to the fracturing of relationships in the community or to understand our failure to take advantage of opportunities to contribute to mending the subtle ties that bind people together.

26. Even when we try to draw a line under the past and turn ourselves to the future the past remains intact for us – the crooked paths remain crooked, the empty places remain empty and cannot be counted as full. Yet, as the people of God, we have experienced redemption, the forgiveness of sins and this comes to us from God as the way of changing the future for us. Redemption is that moment in which we look at the past, see what it has been and how it has corrupted our relationships, and knowing the forgiveness of sins we can turn ourselves to a future no longer ruled by the crooked paths and the empty places.

27. But we cannot offer it to our cultural setting unless we have first known it for ourselves. So in a situation where blame is readily apportioned we come to God and to each other as people who realize that things are not always that simple. We come knowing that clearing up who is responsible does not always clear up the mess, for those who are sinned against can become part of the mess too. So whether we experience ourselves to be sinning or sinned against we share in common the effects of sin and stand in need of redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

28. We are asking a lot of society to publicly say these things, particularly so if we have not ourselves lived this kind of life within the Christian community. So it is that Gregory Jones, theologian and pastor from Duke University, calls for the churches to develop the practice of forgiveness as a habit of holiness. He writes, "Christian life is learned and lived through the

cultivation of specific habits and practices of forgiveness in the service of holiness that enable us simultaneously to unlearn our habits of sinfulness". As people redeemed by the grace of God we are called to embrace the practice of forgiveness as a vocation.

29. This specific habit of holiness, and the celebration and practice of forgiveness, formed in the little things of church community life, will become a counter-cultural mechanism that we offer to a society that seems to know no clear way forward. It begins with us in the practice of forgiveness based in John 20.23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

30. When Joseph's brothers in Genesis 50 asked to be forgiven, Joseph replied that he was not in the place of God, who had already turned evil into good, so regardless of what they had done, they had nothing to fear from him, as he intended to look after them and their children.

31. At 2020 Vision, way back in 1997, Michael Cassidy constantly challenged us with his assertion that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland had the key to unlock a different future in this country. Have we failed to use it because we are in this matter more conformed to the mores of our society than to the gospel?

EVENTS AND TRENDS

A. Religious Fundamentalism and Social Conflict

32. The committee continues to relate to the Overseas Board with regard to the Sudan, Indonesia, India and the Middle East. The influence of religious fundamentalism allied to political power and the recourse to violence continue to give rise to serious concern, not least as they cause serious difficulties for Christian minorities. The Overseas Board report contains details of these situations.

B. The Growing Importance of Europe

33. During the year several opportunities arose for further contacts with the European Institutions. In December the Clerk was generously invited to participate in a Council of Europe Seminar on Church-State Relations in Strasbourg, where Rev Dr Donald Watts was also in attendance with a visiting English Free Church delegation.

34. In February the Irish government sponsored an inter-church delegation to Brussels, our representatives being the Moderator, Rev Dr Donald Watts and Dr Mary Carson (Dublin). A full programme included meetings with Mr Pat Cox, the President of the European Parliament, other Irish MEPs and various officials and representatives based in Brussels. Among the many topical issues discussed were Asylum Seekers, Rural Development and the Future of Europe.

35. On another occasion the Clerk joined a group from the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee for intensive consultations in Brussels following the EU Summit at Laeken (Belgium). The EU is about to expand, bringing in more than 10 new member states, mainly in central and eastern

Europe, thereby closing one of the darkest chapters in European history and creating a Europe that is free, united, stable and at peace. As a continent of humane values, where membership of the Union is open only to those countries that uphold certain basic values (e.g. human rights and concern for the environment) Europe has a leading role to play in a fast changing, globalised world, especially after the events of September 11.

36. It was recognised, however, that the Institutions need to be brought closer to the people. The EU Common Agricultural Policy is being reformed to abolish butter mountains etc, and to encourage people to stay on the land, not necessarily as farmers, but in other capacities, eg providers of tourist accommodation, wardens of parks, etc.

37. A Convention on the Future of Europe was convened for March 2002 and is scheduled to last a year. A Forum will also be opened for organisations representing civil society, whose views will be fed into the main debate. The Church and Government Committee is considering an input into that debate, either alone or in consultation with others.

38. In a massive European bureaucracy, with reams of information circulating, it is essential to filter material and follow developments, and this our Church can only hope to do effectively in partnership with other bodies, such as the Brussels-based Church and Society Commission, the Scottish Church and Nation Committee, the Irish Council of Churches, the EU office in Belfast, etc, and the Committee will give its attention to these matters in the coming year. Developments in European legislation and litigation are also being monitored where these may affect the vital interests of the Church.

C. Northern Ireland

39. Northern Ireland, in many places, has become normal, free and prosperous but in other places it is deeply troubled, especially where alienated communities interface with one another and paramilitary influence is strong. It is estimated that almost 700 people were ordered out of their homes and communities last year. Some have been exiled from the country. If the Government is determined to offer an amnesty for suspected terrorists who are wanted by the police, ought there not to be some reciprocation forthcoming from these organisations which have been responsible for banishing people?

40. Much has been made of Northern Ireland becoming a cold house for unionists. For people of a unionist tradition their Britishness is part of their identity, as Irishness is for people of a nationalist tradition. It is important that Ireland becomes a place where people of many traditions can feel at home, so there is warmth for everyone and refrigeration for none.

41. Northern Ireland continues to be marked by a steady and worrying drift into separate communities, across all social classes. Northern Ireland Housing Executive estates are seldom mixed or integrated. When parts of our community are characterised by one majority or another, it is easy for that part of the community which finds itself as a minority to feel that it neither belongs nor matters. The chill factor can be significant. In some places the demographic shifts of population are due to normal social mobility, in others an understandable response to intimidation, but elsewhere it may be something else. Some towns and parts of cities have become almost exclusively nationalist

or unionist. Catholics appear to be more willing to buy homes in what are Protestant areas than vice versa. When Catholics move into some areas, Protestants seem to cease to buy houses in those areas. If we are not prepared to be enriched by proximity to and interaction with our Catholic neighbours, have we any future here other than in diminished and frozen isolation? Do we know what we are doing in walking away and leaving Presbyterian churches and schools bereft of people?

42. The rioting in North Belfast is evidence of the pain and bitterness which exist on the many interfaces in that part of the city. Here there is no space and the two parts of the community grind against one another, to their own disadvantage and mutual pain and fear. Many people believe that the loyalist/unionist community in these areas is facing breakdown in its fractured individualism and absence of hope and self esteem.

43. While the churches have a long history of sustained work in these communities, that work has largely gone unrecognised. Resourcing the work of the churches will help address community breakdown. While sustained and relevant assistance needs to be focussed on North Belfast, churches generally need to be challenged to open their space, often under-utilised, to share it with the community at large as their contribution to building and sustaining peace across North Belfast.

44. In some areas in Northern Ireland Presbyterians join with others in attempting to defuse situations of conflict and are to be commended. It is important for leadership to be shown and for Presbyterians to shake off the social pressures and the fears which encourage isolationism and non-engagement and follow the way of Christ who loved his neighbours and his enemies.

45. A new era of policing has been introduced with the transition from the Royal Ulster Constabulary to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The new service and the new Police Board deserve our support. The members of the community who served in the Royal Ulster Constabulary, often at the cost of their lives, their health and the well being of their families deserve our sincere thanks. Without their service this community might well have collapsed into anarchy. The retiring Chief Constable, Sir Ronnie Flanagan, showed commendably steady leadership through very difficult times when the trouble was at its height as well as in the transition period following the Government's acceptance of the proposals in the Patten Report.

D. The Republic of Ireland

46. It was on the Thursday of the 2001 General Assembly that the Republic got a sharp shock. A referendum on the Nice Treaty (the future Europe), viewed with complacency by many, produced (on a voter turnout of about one-third) a "NO" result.

47. At the European Summit that weekend our Government could only apologise and try to find some way to avoid delaying European progress and enlargement. It was for the Government an embarrassing result, seen as selfish by some after Ireland has gained so much from EU membership. It may be noteworthy that Sinn Fein championed the "NO" vote.

48. The Government has since established a Forum on Europe to provide a public discussion platform on Europe and European enlargement. Our Church has been formally invited and included as Observers at the Forum with other Churches and other groups. It is expected that the Forum will report and that there will be another Referendum in late 2002.

49. Further jolts were to follow. Economic slowdown was becoming more evident in mid-2001 after the heady years just before.

50. And then came September 11. The Irish Government very quickly supported the USA in its tragedies and a National Day of Mourning was declared for September 14. This was a very sombre time – probably the quietest day of the year – churches were filled with families suddenly brought very much together – with no competing sport, business or other options. The Government later further reinforced support for the US by opening Shannon airport for re-fuelling of aircraft en route to the Middle East.

51. A commitment four years earlier by Government parties to Independent Deputies to hold a Referendum on abortion caused further divisive debate. A cumbersome and confusing proposed constitutional amendment resulted in a narrow “NO” vote. A “YES” vote would have tied down the medical profession while taking no account of the 7000 Irish women who go to England each year for abortions.

52. A feature of the debate was the choreography of the Catholic Church and the Government. The Church was aware ‘indirectly’ of the proposals before they were announced publicly. Then an Agreement was proclaimed between the Government and the Church with respect to liability for abuse to residents of institutions run by Catholic religious orders. This Agreement anticipates the State being liable for approximately three-quarters of any compensation payable to the victims and for Catholic Church immunity after a contribution of 128 million Euro of property, cash and counselling. Following this Agreement the Irish Catholic Hierarchy expressed a view in favour of the abortion proposals. The Agreement on abuse is regarded as a ‘landmark’, but surprisingly it is reported as “not in writing” (Irish Times 01/04/02).

53. With apparent failure to deal with accusations of child abuse by priests causing a bishop to proffer his resignation, a main focus of attention is now on the entire Catholic Church. “Legal advice” is no substitute for leadership, as the Catholic Church is finding out to its cost. Perhaps our Church may find a lesson here also.

54. Public Inquiries into corruption are still with us and these Tribunals are expected to exist beyond the General Election of May this year. In April a Report commissioned by the Rowntree Trust stated that “corruption is a central theme of Irish life ... Ireland is now regarded as one of the more corrupt European States”.

55. The General Election itself may be used to import and apply old practices. The political parties here are making plans to rule out the intimidation and personation to which the Northern Ireland Elections have alerted them. The “little Irelander” mentality will endeavour to win hearts, minds and votes but the Irish elector usually gets it right under the system of Proportional Representation in use.

THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

56. The appendices contain the statements issued and detailed reports presented to the General Board throughout the year.

GEORGE McCULLAGH, JOHN DUNLOP, Co-Conveners

APPENDIX A**STATEMENT ISSUED 6 JULY 2001**

1. We are appalled by the premeditated murder of Ciaran Cummings in Antrim this week and we offer our sympathy to his family and to that part of the community from which he comes.

2. While we welcome the appeals of the Orange Order for people not to be involved in violence, we are deeply concerned by the potential for trouble associated with the unresolved dispute between the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition and the Portadown District of the Orange Order, and by its exploitation by paramilitary groups.

3. We know that efforts have been made to resolve the dispute which have so far proved unsuccessful. We welcome the progress recently made as a result of the initiative of Archbishop Eames. That initiative should be sustained and built upon.

4. Since people from all our backgrounds matter to God, who treats us with generosity which we do not deserve, we owe an obligation to Him to treat each other in a similar way.

5. We call upon people to continue to pray for peace in all parts of our community and for those who are seeking a widespread acceptable resolution to this long-standing dispute.

6. The Parades Commission is the lawfully appointed body charged with responsibility to issue Determinations, which should be obeyed in spirit and letter, whether the disputants agree with them or not. The disputants owe this to the wider community which has suffered untold damage year after year as a result of this local difficulty.

7. We note the Parades Commission Determination that "the return parade shall retrace the outward route ... or alternatively parade participants shall disperse no later than 2.30 from Drumcree Parish Church."

8. It is imperative that people abide by the law. Since in past years protests have got out of control and have resulted in intimidation and death and chaos across much of Northern Ireland, we would encourage people to restrain themselves from indulging in public protests about things that they do not like, when those protests are likely to get out of hand and put unreasonable pressure on the security forces.

APPENDIX B**STATEMENT ISSUED 10 JULY 2001**

1. Believing that God has made peace with us at enormous cost in Jesus Christ and that all the people of this island matter to him, the Church and Government Committee offers the following statement at this critical time.

2. Two possibilities lie before us:

- (a) the prize of a settled but diverse community steadily consolidating the political accommodation of the Belfast Agreement.
- (b) the nightmare of a step by step slide back into anarchy through the unwillingness of people to exercise the politics of generosity.

3. In the current dangerous situation, where so much gain might be lost, it is imperative:

- (a) that leaders encourage all those whom they influence to pursue the goal of a diverse community at peace with itself. We should not use language which deepens division and which may incite people to violence.
- (b) that loyalist and republican paramilitary groups reassure fearful people and instil confidence by decommissioning their weapons. This is a fundamental moral and political imperative in its own right, especially at the present time, and should not be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations about other issues.
- (c) that necessary pragmatism in the service of consolidating political accommodation be honoured.

4. While there is still time, even in our own selfish interests as well as the interests of others, political responsibility for the local governance of Northern Ireland by locally elected politicians should be consolidated and we should relentlessly pursue the prize of a settled but diverse community.

APPENDIX C**STATEMENT ISSUED 6 AUGUST 2001**

1. In the middle of current political difficulties we should not lose sight of the necessity of creating a society in which people from different parts of the community can participate and feel at home.

2. The Committee notes with concern the increasing sense of uncertainty in the community which contrasts sharply with the confidence and hopefulness which followed from the Belfast Agreement.

3. The Committee believes that if the Northern Ireland Assembly ceases to function it will not be to the advantage of the people of Northern Ireland who would be deprived of representation by locally elected people at this level, as well as knowledgeable and accessible locally appointed ministers.

4. The Committee is gratified that the Drumcree/Garvaghy Road dispute, while unresolved, passed with little trouble, as did the celebrations on the 12th July, with the particular exception of Ardoyne in Belfast, which interface has seen trouble on a number of occasions over the summer.

5. Local communities have experienced rioting and attacks at a number of interfaces in Belfast, emanating from both sides and resulting in anxiety, suspicion and anger. Many of these communities feel that their grievances are not being heard and this is helping to fuel the unrest.

6. The Committee condemns the widespread petrol and pipe bomb attacks on Catholic homes carried out by people associated with loyalist paramilitary groups.

7. The killing of Gavin Brett, murdered by loyalists in a gun attack on a group of young people in Glengormley, was an outrageous act.

8. The statement issued today by General de Chastelain saying that he believes the proposal put forward by the IRA will initiate a process that will put their arms completely and verifiably beyond use, is only significant if it leads immediately to action.

9. The paragraph on decommissioning in the proposals of the two governments is brief but it importantly reiterates the governments' belief that it is an indispensable part of implementing the Belfast Agreement. The question remains about what the two governments intend to do if no satisfaction is given to the International Commission on decommissioning. This issue is of concern to people in both parts of Ireland. The Committee reiterates its belief that the decommissioning of weapons by all paramilitary groups is a moral and political necessity.

10. In their statement the two governments state that the supporters of paramilitary organisations, now on ceasefire, against whom there are outstanding prosecutions, and in some cases extradition proceedings, will not be pursued. This contrasts sharply with the proposals that enquiries into alleged misdemeanours by the police are to be extended and intensified. While we fully recognise the pain and loss suffered by the relatives of those who ought never to have been killed, if the books are closed for some, they should be closed for all, so that we can concentrate on shaping a new future.

APPENDIX D

REPORT TO THE GENERAL BOARD 11 OCTOBER 2001

1. The Committee met on 4 July 2001. Statements were prepared and issued on 6 and 10 July. The Committee met again on 6 August 2001 following the paper jointly issued by the Northern Ireland Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs. A statement was issued.

2. Even after the publication of the joint paper, there is understandable dismay and anger over the IRA's unwillingness to move in any significant way on decommissioning their weapons. Given the lack of movement on this issue and the alleged involvement of some of its members with the FARC terrorists in Columbia, do the IRA think that they can forever disregard the urgent calls of everybody including churches, local political parties, the British and Irish Governments and the government of the United States of America? Their inaction threatens the continued existence of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive. The Secretary of State has suspended the Executive on two occasions for 24 hours to give time for the resolution of this problem.

3. There has been serious trouble over the summer involving loyalist paramilitary attacks on Roman Catholic homes, which has placed doubts over the loyalist cease-fires. There has also been violence from both sides across the interfaces in Ardoyne, the Limestone Road and the Whitewell areas in Belfast. The Moderator visited the Ardoyne/ Glenbryn area on a very critical day when a blast bomb was thrown while the protest was going on at Holy Cross Primary School. Important conciliation work has been done by Rev Norman Hamilton and Fr Aidan Troy in that area.

4. Interface tensions in Belfast are partly caused by demographic shifts of population which exacerbate sectarian tensions which lead to attacks on houses, serious rioting, sectarian bitterness and attacks on the police. While the loyalist protests may have their roots in fear and bitterness over what has been happening to their parts of the community, the protest affecting school children was totally unacceptable and internationally self-defeating, as were the attacks on the police, many of whom have been injured. A further deepening of the crisis was occasioned by the murder on 28 September of the journalist Martin O'Hagan, the first journalist to be murdered in Northern Ireland.

5. The 11 September 2001 may be a date chiselled into history. The whole world was shocked by terrorist attacks using hijacked civilian aircraft on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. No-one knows for certain the destination of the fourth plane which crashed in Pennsylvania. In Ireland we know from bitter experience how difficult it is to thwart, contain or defeat terrorists. Given the inter-dependent character of world trade and finance, this new terrorist tactic has already had widespread consequences in almost all parts of the world including both parts of Ireland. Profound political and moral issues are involved in international responses to this threat.

6. In a referendum on 7 June 2001 the citizens of the Republic of Ireland rejected the Nice Treaty on a turnout of approximately one third. The result deepens the debate about the balance of powers within the European Union between the nation states and the centre.

7. The Committee sent representatives to the annual conference of the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee. Representatives of the Committee continued to meet representatives of political parties, including the SDLP, the UUP, the DUP, SF and the PUP.

8. The membership of the new Policing Board has been announced, as have the names of the chairman and vice-chairman. Since the General Assembly called for this Board to be brought into operation without delay and also urged the whole community to support the new arrangements, the Moderator issued a statement on the 29th September 2001 welcoming this development. The Government has issued its Policing Implementation Plan.

9. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has published its 154 page consultation paper on "Making a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland". The Committee will make a response to this paper.

Many other bodies are seeking responses to reports.

10. The Committee is due to meet on 4 October, after the preparation of this report but before the next meeting of the General Board. A supplementary report will be tabled at the Board meeting.

Supplementary Report to the General Board: Thursday 11 October 2001

11. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein.” (Psalm 24). “God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” (Psalm 46)

12. The whole world, as we experience it, is a more fragile and uncertain place than it seemed to be a month ago. Terrorism is a scourge on the face of the earth. International terrorism and its weapons, as used in the shocking attack on the United States, threatens the stability of the world and must be both condemned and opposed.

13. Our outrage when terrorism affects us, must not blind us to the reality that too often terrorism and oppressive regimes have been armed and supported by western powers in the pursuit of their own interests. The condemnation of evil should not be accompanied by inappropriate stances of self-righteousness.

14. If we want to see a more moral and more interconnected world, our christian faith does not permit us to pursue policies rooted in narrow self-interest which overlook the legitimate concerns of people who are adversely affected by those policies. The vision and pursuit of an inter-connected and moral world must not be lost sight of in the intensity of the present crisis.

15. It is understandable that the Irish Government might wish at some time to facilitate the re-burial of the bodies of ten IRA men executed in 1920 and 1921. The Church and Government Committee finds it incomprehensible that this should be done at this sensitive time and in the manner in which it is planned as a State occasion. It appears that the implication of political decisions taken in the Republic of Ireland are not factored in an inclusive way as far as their impact on Northern Ireland is concerned.

16. Throughout the troubles, schools have been comparative oases of tranquillity for children and for this their teachers deserve credit. It is of the greatest concern that schools and their pupils are now being dragged into the conflict and it must not be allowed to continue. The protest involving the children of Holy Cross Primary School is not only wrong in itself, it has brought international disgrace on the whole protestant population.

Consultation on a Victims’ Strategy

17. The Church and Government Committee welcomes the recognition that victims are “*one of the most neglected groupings in society*” and recognises that much good work has been done since the Bloomfield Report. The setting up of a Victims’ Unit, the special responsibilities given to the Junior Ministers in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the integration of concerns for victims in the Programme for Government, are all important steps forward in the recognition of victims’ needs. The Committee commends the Vision Statement of 2.1 as a valuable insight from which strategy can be developed ie “*A society where the suffering of victims is recognised; a community that acknowledges the pain of the past and learns lessons for the future; and an administration that provides, in conjunction with others, support and services in a proactive and sensitive manner to meet the needs of victims.*”

18. The Committee is also aware of considerable funding having been made available by government for victims' support, although this may have been more specifically through the Northern Ireland Office. While grateful that this has been done, there would still be a question in the Consultation Paper about the availability of government funding as opposed to that of voluntary agencies (Annex E). It is to be hoped that the government will continue to be generous, and that the relationship between the Victims' Liaison Unit (Northern Ireland Office) and the Victims' Unit (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) will be such that all government funding is used in the most effective way possible.

19. **The Definition of victim** as "The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict-related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead" is one which causes the Committee concern. Related to this, in outlining the values underpinning the victims' strategy, is the determination that all victims should be treated equally and that "the diversity of victims' experience, culture and lifestyles must be recognised". While the Board appreciates the difficulty inherent in making any distinction between victims, it may be more appropriate to use the word "casualty", rather than "victim".

20. **The five specific actions contained in the Programme for Government**, and the aims set out in chapter 4 are welcomed, especially the recognition of the need for a cross-departmental strategy. However, the emphasis throughout the paper seems to be on working with Victims' groups rather than the individual victims. If this is a correct perception, constant monitoring needs to take place to ensure that the intended help is getting through to the victims themselves. With this in mind the section on research is an important one.

21. **The appointment of a Victims' Commissioner**, while it may have some attractions and would certainly keep the issues to the forefront of government, would need to be justified on the basis of cost and effectiveness.

APPENDIX E

REPORT TO THE GENERAL BOARD 28 FEBRUARY 2002

1. Since the last meeting of the Board, most of the work of the Committee has been taken up with complex and important issues connected with the Equality Commission and the NI Human Rights Commission. By the time the Board meets the Committee will have met with the Chief Commissioners of both bodies, at which meetings they will have been joined by representatives of the Board of Finance and Administration.

2. Having previously made a submission to the NI Human Rights Commission, in which the Committee drew attention to the importance of Human Rights, a response has been submitted to the subsequent discussion document "Making a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland". Copies of the Committee's six-page response will be available at the Board meeting for any member who wishes to have one. Our principal concerns are that the proposals as set forth are maximalist rather than minimalist in their detailed provisions, the

result of which may be the encouragement of a litigious society; go far beyond “the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland”; focus too strongly on rights with the barest of references to responsibilities; fail to follow all the exceptions clauses in the European Employment Directive.

3. Discussion will take place with the Equality Commission concerning the details of the “Position Paper – The Single Equality Bill”. While being supportive of the concept of equality and the entitlement of individuals to protection from discrimination and the importance of handling difference constructively, faith based communities are entitled to maintain their own ethos and identity. This is part of the valuing of diversity in society. The issue is how these differing claims are to be balanced. We would have concerns about the extension of equality legislation to volunteers. Churches have large numbers of volunteers and the extension of legislation in this area could pose huge difficulties.

4. Both Commissions are dealing with matters which are of importance to the Presbyterian Church. The complexity is compounded by the fact that there are Northern Ireland Assembly, Westminster and European Union elements to the issues.

5. The Clerk and the Clerk Designate have visited Brussels and Strasbourg. Since Europe is becoming increasingly important, consideration is being given to the best way in which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland can relate to European institutions.

6. A submission has been made to the Government’s Charity Review body. The Financial Secretary, Clive Knox, is a member of the Churches’ Main Committee in London which is also dealing with this issue.

7. Following representations from the Presbytery of Templepatrick concerning the difficulties faced by farmers the conveners wrote to the relevant ministers in both jurisdictions.

8. The Committee was represented at conferences on Parades and on the North/South Language Body.

9. A response was forwarded concerning the Government’s proposals on the reform of the House of Lords.

10. In the Republic of Ireland the currency transition has been painlessly made from Pounds to Euros.

The citizens of the Republic are once again facing referenda on abortion and the Nice Treaty.

11. The wider political landscape in Northern Ireland has been marked by the reported decommissioning of some weapons by the Provisional IRA, the resignation of the First Minister and his eventual re-instatement. The unrest at the interfaces in North Belfast and the problems facing many communities in that part of Belfast continue to be a problem. It is to be hoped that people, institutions and statutory bodies will co-operate in addressing these issues. A particular challenge faces congregations in some of these areas, given that the influences brought to bear on communities and the structures within them are important in determining the quality of life that is available to citizens.

12. The Board of the Police Service of Northern Ireland has been appointed. It is to be congratulated on its unanimous agreement concerning a new badge and the unanimous way it dealt with the controversy surrounding the

Ombudsman's Report into the police handling of the investigations of the Omagh bomb.

13. Given that the Board is widely based, it would be helpful if the new Board was given the opportunity to deal with the issues before it without outside political interference. The Police Service should be supported and people with evidence about atrocities have a moral obligation to give it to the police.

14. It is unfortunately the case that many guilty people have not been made amenable for the deaths of many hundreds of people killed in the troubles. The burden of consequent loneliness and grief has been heavy and the long journey of adjustment has been difficult and often only partially achieved. The continuing intense focus on Omagh may not be assisting the recovery of the town itself, of those who have been injured or the relatives of those who have been killed.

15. The Committee has met with representatives of "The Healing through Remembering Project" and the Northern Ireland Area Council of the Conservative Party.

16. As the Committee is due to meet again between the preparation of this report and the Board meeting, a supplementary report and additional resolutions may be tabled at the Board meeting.

Supplementary Report of the Church and Government Committee

28 February 2002

1. THE ABORTION REFERENDUM - 6 MARCH 2002

The following question will appear on the ballot paper

Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution as contained in the undermentioned Bill?

Twenty-fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy) Bill 2001

It is intended that a copy of the Bill will be sent to every elector on the Register by the 1st March 2002

2. Interpretation

2.1 The referendum proposes to add two new sub-sections to article 40.3.3 of the Constitution. It acknowledges the equal right to life of the mother and the unborn.

2.2 A new Article 4 0. 3.4 says "In particular, the life of the unborn in the womb shall be protected in accordance with the provisions of the Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy Act, 2002."

2.3 A new Article 40.3.5 proposes that this Act cannot be changed unless it is approved by the people in a new referendum.

2.4 The main provisions of the Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy Bill are:

Abortion will be defined as the intentional destruction by any means of unborn human life after implantation in the womb.

A procedure carried out by a medical practitioner at an approved place – to be laid down by the Minister by regulation after the referendum – to prevent a real and substantial risk of the loss of a woman’s life, other than by self-destruction, will not be regarded as an abortion;

The threat of suicide, based on the X case, will be removed as a ground for abortion.

Anyone aiding or procuring an abortion will be liable for up to 12 years imprisonment.

The right to information and freedom to travel for an abortion are restated in the Bill.

3. Comment

3.1 This is another attempt to deal with the abortion issue by referenda, following a widespread consultation process in which the then Moderator, Dr Trevor Morrow, and Rev Norman Cameron, from the Board of Social Witness, gave evidence to the All Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution.

3.2 The Presbyterian Church has maintained that a complex issue like this ought to be dealt with by legislation and not by referenda. (See appendix). There is widespread confusion about the implications of this proposed constitutional amendment. It is possible to vote “yes” or “no” for a whole variety of conflicting reasons.

3.3 We welcome the recognition that there are circumstances in which the life of the mother should take priority over the life of the unborn when there is a “real and substantial risk of the loss of a woman’s life”.

3.4 The proposed constitutional change is more restrictive than the Supreme Court’s judgement in its interpretation of the constitution following the X case that abortion was lawful where there was a real and substantial risk to the life of the mother, including the risk of suicide. The submission to the Oireachtas Committee from the Board of Social Witness said “while “risk of suicide” raises problems of certification we believe it should be allowable for abortion, although we would like to see tight controls in assessing this risk”.

3.5 See the appendix for General Assembly Resolutions. As a general principle the membership of the Presbyterian Church, upholding the sanctity of human life, would believe that the termination of a pregnancy should only be considered under extreme circumstances. A significant proportion of the membership of the Presbyterian Church would probably say that in exceptional cases medical abortion could be permissible. There would be a divergence of opinion as to what would constitute an exceptional case. For some this would mean pregnancy resulting from rape or incest; for some it would include severe disability detected in the foetus; for others it may include risk of grave injury to the mental health of the mother.

3.6 We recognise the dilemma of legislating for abortion in exceptional circumstances which does not open the floodgates for abortion on demand, which is now the defacto situation in Britain.

3.7 We note that the legislation refers to the definition of abortion as the intentional destruction by any means of unborn human life “after implantation in the womb” rather than “after conception”. It is reported that the Government’s

position is that the morning after pill will have legal protection. Does this also include IUDs? Some bodies believe that the morning after pill and certain forms of IVF may still be open to civil challenge in the courts.

4. Additional matters

4.1 The Committee is concerned about the increasing lawlessness and especially the attacks on older members of our society in their homes, as well as extensive drug dealing and the widespread smuggling of fuel.

4.2 The meeting with representatives of the Equality Commission has been deferred at the Commission's request.

5. Appendix to the supplementary report re: abortion referendum

Resolutions concerning Abortion which indicate the stance of the General Assembly.

1982 (Minutes p61and 77)

19. That the General Assembly declare

- (a) their opposition to abortion on demand for purely social reasons, or as a means of birth control.
- (b) That in exceptional cases, where medical abortion might be necessary, the most stringent safeguards should be provided to prevent abuse.
- (c) That much greater emphasis should be placed on the provision of adequate care by Church and State for those with unwanted pregnancies, and for the infants when they are born.

20. That the General Assembly is firmly opposed to indiscriminate abortion, but does not believe it is wise to insert a clause banning abortion into the Constitution of the Irish Republic. The State's regulation of this and other matters affecting morals should be a matter for legislation by the Dail and Senate, and not for definition in the Constitution.

1983 (Minutes p72)

6A. That the General Assembly affirm their resolution of last year (1982 Minutes p77 Res 20) that they are firmly opposed to indiscriminate abortion, but do not believe it is wise to insert a clause banning abortion into the Constitution of the Irish Republic.

If, however, a Referendum on the subject is held, the Assembly encourage those of its members who are entitled to vote to do so in accordance with their own judgement.

APPENDIX F

REPORT TO THE GENERAL BOARD: 11 APRIL 2002

1. The death took place on Saturday 30 March 2002 of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, at the age of 101 years. Tributes were paid concerning the seriousness with which she took her Christian faith, her devotion

to duty and the service which she gave to the United Kingdom and to the Commonwealth, especially in the years of the Second World War. She was someone who knew nothing of retirement and led a full life after the bereavement occasioned by the death of her husband, King George VI, fifty years ago.

2. The Committee view with the greatest seriousness the break in to the premises of the Police Service of Northern Ireland Special Branch especially as it appears that the most sensitive documentation concerning anti-terrorism is missing.

3. The Committee, along with representatives of the Board of Social Witness and the Department of Finance and Personnel, met with representatives of the Equality Commission. While expressing their support for the work of the Commission, concern was expressed about the need for the European Union's Directive on Employment, which seeks to safeguard the ethos of communities based on faith or belief, to be included in the Equality Legislation which is being proposed for Northern Ireland. This has happened in the Republic of Ireland. Concern was also expressed about the proposal to bring volunteering in charitable organisations under the equality legislation.

4. A reply has been received from the Community Fund concerning our submission that the Presbyterian Church's unwillingness to access Lottery Funding due to the moral principles of the Church, has led to the church suffering discrimination. The reply stated that the Community Fund and the New Opportunities Fund have no other funds to distribute except proceeds from the National Lottery. The Community Fund has asked the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to consider changing the legislation so that they could offer non-lottery grants. This is being considered by the Department and we will be kept informed about developments.

5. Members of the Committee attended two conferences on the Parades issue and a submission has been made to the body reviewing the work of the Parades Commission.

6. Members of the Committee attended a conference organised by the North/South Body language section about how language was being handled on an equality basis.

7. The Presbyterian Church was invited and has participated as an observer at the Republic's "Forum on Europe" which came into being as a result of the "NO" vote in the Republic on the Nice Treaty.

8. The Committee received three papers on European issues. The Committee believes that it is imperative that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has the ability to monitor and liaise with European institutions in co-operation with other bodies such as the Church of Scotland and the Church and Society Commission in Brussels.

9. Mr Pat Cox, MEP has been elected as President of the European Parliament.

10. In the Abortion Referendum in the Republic of Ireland the Government's proposals were rejected by a narrow majority.

11. In the impending General Election in the Republic of Ireland electronic voting will be used in three constituencies for the first time.

12. To mark the Queen's Jubilee two services are planned for Belfast, both organised by the Four Church Leaders at the request of the Northern Ireland Office. The Moderator will preach at an important service in St Anne's Cathedral in mid May. On Jubilee Sunday, 2 June, there are to be regional services in Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland. The service for Northern Ireland will be in Knock Presbyterian Church when the preacher will be Archbishop Eames. Admission to both services will be by ticket only.

13. The Independent Commission on decommissioning reported that they "witnessed an event in which the IRA leadership has put a varied and substantial quantity of ammunition, arms and explosive material beyond use ...".

14. The Committee agreed a statement with respect to the violence in the Middle East which will be forwarded to the Irish and British Governments.

Appendix: Violence in the Middle East: April 2002

1. *For the sake of peace and security in Israel and Palestine, in the Middle East and in the world, the human tragedy experienced by Palestinians and Israelis must be ended. Acts of terror, whether individual or organised, and state violence and military destruction must stop. We do not believe that acts of violence will ultimately create a climate in which Israelis and Palestinians can live together in security.*

2. *Israel has a right to exist as a sovereign state within secure boundaries as have the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state and both peoples have a right to live in peace as neighbours. The Committee calls on the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to take a pro-active, unbiased role in promoting justice and peace in the region.*

3. *We acknowledge that though the land be holy for its historical significance for people of different faiths, it is not sacred for exclusive claims. As a Committee of the Presbyterian Church, we are convinced that the potential for peace, if grounded in justice, is far greater than the divisions perpetuated by conflict, hostility and violence. We are absolutely convinced that "shalom", "salaam", "peace" is God's will for all people. Therefore we pray to Almighty God that the spirit of good counsel and good will prevail for a just and lasting peace in Israel and Palestine.*

APPENDIX G

RESPONSE TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S DOCUMENT: "MAKING A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND"

1. The Church and Government Committee is pleased to be able to comment as part of the consultation on "*Making a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland*". In doing so it recognises the importance of ensuring that the rights of every citizen are adequately and effectively protected. It also recognises with appreciation the amount of thought which has gone into producing the consultation document. It would not be possible for us to comment on every detail of a document of this length.

2. The Commission has rightly recognised that the production of a Bill of Rights only has validity as an element in “*the search for long-term peace and stability in Northern Ireland.*” The Committee is not convinced, however, that the culture of rights being so strongly promoted by the Commission will in fact move our society towards greater inclusiveness and respect. The fractious litigation which may follow may do more to accentuate suspicion of one another, than to move our community forward into the closer relationships on which a new future depends. It would be unfortunate if the proposed Bill of Rights became an instrument of division rather than of healing.

3. **In the Introduction (p6)** there are two important issues raised which the Committee would encourage the Commission to expand on more fully throughout the succeeding chapters.

3a. “The protection of rights often involves a balancing exercise: as well as claiming our own rights we owe a responsibility to allow other people to claim theirs.” Unfortunately there seems little in the rest of the document, or in the way the discussion has been introduced to the public, to encourage a sense of responsibility and balance. While the individual’s duty to others is mentioned in the Preamble, it is not an over-riding theme throughout the document. Individual rights are seen to take precedence over responsibility to the community as a whole, or to groupings within the wider community. In fact little recognition is given to community rights, or group rights. The Committee believes that further work needs to be done to redress this imbalance. Some of the most acute problems our community faces at present are in the area of competing rights, eg the right to parade and the right to protest, yet this issue is not dealt with at all by the Commission.

3b. The Bill “should therefore be drafted in general terms, setting out basic principles for how the Government should operate but allowing a good deal of flexibility for the way in which the principles are implemented. It should also allow for changing interpretation as time passes and circumstances change.”

With this the Committee wholeheartedly agrees, but the principle is not reflected in the rest of the proposed Bill. At times there are detailed suggestions which would be much better left to specific legislation. At other times comment is sparse, eg on rights for the elderly (more recently dealt with in a separate publication). It would be helpful if the Commission were to publish its underlying criteria by which it decided which rights were to be dealt with in great detail and which barely mentioned. At present one cannot escape the suspicion of strong lobbying by particular interest groups.

4. **The Commission’s mandate (p12)** arises out of the Belfast Agreement and here it is recognised that the Commission would like to go beyond the strict terms set down. *Question 1* asks how to interpret the phrase, “*to reflect the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland*”. The Committee takes the minimalist view that the phrase “the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland” should be interpreted as imposing a definite limit on the scope of the proposed Bill. European and United Nations Conventions and Directives are obligations to be fulfilled by the Westminster and Dublin governments and are best left to them. The remit of the Commission was specific to Northern Ireland and additional to the general protection which should be available in both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

5. One of the weaknesses of the proposed Bill is that while the Commission has chosen the maximalist option, the Bill does not deal with some of the specific issues which need to be tackled in Northern Ireland, eg parades, protests, the rights of security force personnel and the rights of citizens to be protected from paramilitary activity. While the Bill should not link the community back into current problems which we are trying to move beyond, there are contentious rights issues which need to be dealt with for the future. By ignoring the specific remit, as defined in the Belfast Agreement, the Commission has not produced a Bill of Rights which is sensitive to this community's needs.

6. **The Preamble (p17)** is rightly seen as an important aspect of the over-all Bill. It is important to have an inspirational opening which sets the context for the whole enterprise (*Questions 4 and 5*). It is also helpful in the Preamble to refer to foundational concepts such as freedom, justice, peace and dignity. One difficulty with the proposed wording is that the word "community" is used in two different ways Presumably in para 2, the "community" to which the individual owes a duty is to the whole Northern Ireland community and not a particular sub-group within it, although that is not clear. Later "community" refers to "*both main communities and all other communities in Northern Ireland*". This needs to be clarified.

7. The assertion in the Preamble that "*The people of Northern Ireland - - have requested the adoption of the following Bill of Rights*", in the opinion of the Committee is unjustified without some form of referendum. The suggestion that the Bill would be adopted by Act of Parliament and entrenched in an international treaty between the UK and the Republic of Ireland may be a sensible option, but does not support the claim that the adoption of this particular Bill of Rights has been requested by the people.

8. **Democratic Rights (p20)**. It is foundational to any community that democratic rights are protected, and the Committee agree that proportional representation in some form is desirable, especially in the fractured nature of our society. It is also important, however, that an election to a particular parliament is on the same basis for every constituency. Until proportional representation pertains in Westminster elections throughout the United Kingdom, it is not appropriate for it to be used in Northern Ireland elections for Westminster. Proportional Representation may or may not be desirable, but we do not think it should be classified as a human right. The setting of a minimum voting age, (*Question 7*) should be a matter for legislation and not a Bill of Rights.

9. **Identity and Communities (p24)**. The Committee found this to be a helpful chapter and would agree with the Commission's approach to the "*parity of esteem issue*" (*Question 9*). However, it is important that adequate attention is given to the rights of a community, whether faith-based or joined by some other common identity, to promote its own principles and ethos, within the law. While this is recognised at 3(b), the balance between individual and community rights has not been properly thought through in the present proposals. The Committee is of the opinion that insufficient attention has been given to community rights and their relationship to the rights of an individual. It is important, *Question 10*, that an individual should have the right not to be treated

as a member of a particular community and the proposed wording seems adequate.

10. On more specific issues raised, the Committee would have reservations on the practical out-working of the “specific provisions to ensure that elected representatives claiming to represent the unionist and nationalist communities will have strictly proportional shares in the structures of government in the Assembly and the Executive.” It would also question the unjustifiable expense presently being incurred in “the promotion and protection of the Irish language and Ulster-Scots.” It is surely a right for every citizen to receive communications in a language which they can understand, not necessarily one of their own choosing. Who decides when there is sufficient demand?

11. **Equality and non-discrimination (p29).** The equality issue is clearly of immense importance in our society if we are to find a secure basis for moving forward. The Committee fully supports the protection of rights and freedoms as set out in Article 14 of the European Convention. However, it must also be recognised that the pursuit of equality as an end in itself, without a vision for the future well-being of the whole community, can become a destructive rather than creative force in society.

12. The extension of clause 4, (*Question 12*), to include just about every conceivable group is not helpful and could pin down the Bill of Rights into the circumstances of today, rather than allowing it to move with the community into the future. The possession of a criminal conviction, eg, could justifiably be relevant to employment.

13. The Committee welcomes the fact that harassment and bullying are included at clause 7. Positive action is a necessity, at least in the short term, but as it should not be the norm, it is best that it is permitted rather than required (*Question 13*).

14. The Exceptions clause 9 is of crucial importance to faith communities in the field of employment. This is another example of the Commission’s failure to recognise that communities have rights which should be protected. Clause 9 is, with the exception of one word, a direct quotation from the EU Employment Directive (2000), Article4(1), although this is not acknowledged in the text.

“The purpose of this Directive is to lay down a general framework for combating discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as regards employment and occupation, with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment.” (Article1).

15. Article 4 then outlines circumstances in which, “Member States may provide that a difference of treatment which is based on a characteristic related to any of the grounds referred to in Article 1 shall not constitute discrimination- - -.” It is highly surprising and unacceptable to the Committee, that the proposed Bill then completes the quotation from Article 4(1), but chooses to ignore Article 4(2). It is surely very unusual for a European Directive to be treated in this way and the Committee would like to know why this is being done.

16. While the UK government has yet to legislate on this directive, it has the responsibility to bring forward legislation which will put into effect the

whole of the Directive and not selected parts. Our legal advice from several sources is clear, namely that the UK legislation effecting the EU Directive will take precedence in law over the NI Bill of Rights, but surely it would be much more sensible for the two to be consistent. Inconsistency can only result in confusion and uncertainty as to the extent of rights and obligations. The Commission has been keen to incorporate existing EU Conventions etc into the proposed Bill of Rights at other points, but has clearly failed to do so in this case.

17. **Women's Rights (p35)**. It is important for society to recognise that women do not yet have the opportunities to participate in all aspects of life on an equal basis with men, but a Bill of Rights should surely be promoting gender equality rather than endorsing particular rights for women. For example, while women have particular issues surrounding reproductive health care, everyone *"has the right to have equal and free access to ... health care and to information and education relating to health care matters at all levels, free of coercion, discrimination and violence"*. This is a particular issue for elderly people. There seems to be increasing evidence of violence against men, so while not wishing to deny in any way the protection which should be offered to women and children, surely everyone needs equal protection. The Committee would therefore suggest in answer to *Question 14*, that if there are to be specific rights for women they should be allocated to the relevant sections of the Bill and not given a special chapter. (We would argue that the Bill should not be long enough to have chapters!)

18. **Rights to life etc (p40)**. The Committee broadly agrees with this chapter, largely based on existing conventions and protocols (while maintaining that the proposed Bill should not be about restating protections which are already in place.) The rewording of Article 2 is sufficient without the suggested addition (*Question 15*). In response to *Question 16*, the Committee believes that in creating a Bill specific to Northern Ireland it is important that the right to live free from threat and intimidation, particularly by paramilitaries or their successors, should be incorporated.

19. **Criminal and Administrative Justice (p44)** The Committee does not feel competent to comment on many of the detailed legal issues in this chapter, but is of the view that most of the recommendations would more appropriately be left to legislation, eg length of time in custody, jury trials. The Bill of Rights should be stating more general principles, eg the right to a fair trial. It would seem to the Committee that inferences may be drawn from silence. Additionally, in a society which has struggled with explicit threats and murderous activity from highly trained paramilitary organisations, why should questioning a suspect never be used to gather intelligence information?

20. Trial by a judge sitting with a jury is desirable, but in the exceptional circumstances which have obtained in Northern Ireland over the last number of decades, what was desirable was not always appropriate. It is not possible to provide juries with the degree of protection which has been afforded to judges. Those days may or may not be gone forever.

21. **In the section on Emergencies (p97)**, the Committee is concerned that the proposals are too restrictive and inflexible. While it is to be hoped that the Bill of Rights will be an element in a more stable society, the potential threat of terrorism must still be acknowledged.

22. **Victims' Rights (p55).** The rights of victims are clearly an important issue to be dealt with if our community is to move forward. However there is a distinction to be drawn between the victims of "the Troubles" whose needs should be met straightaway by legislation and future victims of violent crimes. The view of the Committee is that the protection of the Bill of Rights should be for future victims of violent crime, (*Questions 20, 21*).

23. **Family and Private Life (p59).** The Committee would have liked to see the rights of children more intimately connected with the rights to family life. It would wish to uphold the traditional view of the family as a place where children may grow in stability and love, ideally with two parents. The right to divorce is acknowledged as necessary, but not to be encouraged. Other situations should properly be dealt with by legislation, not by the Bill of Rights. The Commission should also pay attention to the conservative ethos of Northern Ireland society.

24. **Children's Rights (p62).** The chapter on the rights of children strongly emphasises the child's right to participation. "The State shall ensure to every child the right to express his or her views freely in all matters concerning him or her. - - - Every child has the right to participate effectively, either directly or indirectly through an independent representative, in all proceedings affecting him or her- - " A child's right to participate at an appropriate level should not be questioned, but if it is enshrined in a Bill of rights without more specific clarification this may open up the possibility for all kinds of legal challenges in the education field. For example, does a child have the right to express his or her views at every staff meeting, or in what way must their views be heard?

25. The Committee would also strongly hold the view that the rights of the child must be balanced by the rights of parents to provide a safe and secure environment in which the child may mature. The formulation that "*Every child has the right to grow up in a stable and safe family environment and to this end the State shall provide adequate support and assistance to parents and other primary carers*" is welcomed (*Question 26*). Once again much of the content in this chapter is extremely detailed and would be best left to legislation, eg age of criminal responsibility, school exclusions. The Bill of Rights should be concerned with principle rather than detail.

26. **Education (p72).** The statement that, "Everyone has the right to an effective education which is to the greatest extent possible directed towards the full development of the person, including his or her talents, mental and physical abilities and sense of dignity and which enables all persons to participate effectively in the life of the community" is a valuable one.

27. The Committee agrees that the State should "ensure that admission criteria to educational establishments are such as to ensure access to effective and appropriate education for all."(*Question 29*). The State should also ensure the right of every child to be educated free from disruption and intimidation, which is not explicitly stated. However, it is clear that much of the chapter is directed towards the elimination of the transfer test. This issue is rightly being dealt with elsewhere and should not be included in a Bill of Rights.

28. The other major issue is the proposal to remove the current exclusion of teachers from the fair employment legislation and the specific exemption for teachers from the recent EU Directive on employment equality. The point is

made that the general exemption, allowing discrimination if there is a genuine occupational requirement for the job should be sufficient. The Committee would not argue against the underlying principle of this proposal. However the Church would need to be sure that the ethos of schools as places for spiritual development is adequately maintained; see previous comments on equality and non-discrimination (*Question 30*). Care also needs to be taken to ensure genuine equality in the appointment of teachers across the various sectors.

29. **Freedom of thought, expression, information and association (p77).** The Committee would not suggest that Article 10 needs to be supplemented at this point (*Question 31*) but the Bill of Rights needs to recognise somewhere that freedom of religion is not an individualistic right but a corporate right to practise one's faith in the company of others. It has already been suggested that the proposed Bill concentrates almost exclusively on the rights of the individual, without adequate recognition of the rights of a community, eg a faith community.

30. **Language (p79).** The views of the Committee have already been expressed (para 10 above).

31. **Social, economic and environmental (p 84).** The proposed general clause seems adequate, *Question 34*, however the Committee would again question whether existing provisions of European and United Nations Conventions etc need to be restated. In Northern Ireland it may be necessary to affirm a person's right to work productively, without any fear of intimidation.

32. **In this response** the Committee has restricted its comments to the content of the proposed Bill of Rights, rather than its implementation. In general, it must be recognised that many of the problems of implementation would not arise if the Commission had accepted its own advice, ie that the Bill should be drafted in general terms, setting out basic principles and allowing flexibility in implementation. Hopefully in further drafting the centrality of this principle will be more fully recognised and endorsed.

(28 November 2001)

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly convey their congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen on the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of her accession to the throne and give thanks to God for the service given by her to the United Kingdom and to the Commonwealth.
3. That the General Assembly, conscious of the enormous cost paid since 1922 in the murders of 336 officers and the injuries sustained by thousands of others, pay tribute to the service given to the community by members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
4. That the General Assembly convey their good wishes to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and urge all members of the community to give it their warm hearted support and co-operation.
5. That the General Assembly view with concern the partisan way in which the allegations concerning members of the security forces are being investigated and the calls for associated enquiries, while a blind eye is

apparently turned to the activities of people who have been or still are associated with terrorist organisations. The General Assembly do not believe that such one sided activity serves the building of trust, nor do they believe that the time is right for a South African style Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

6. That the General Assembly, understanding that we are called to do all that we can to live peaceably with everyone, urge Presbyterians to do all in their power to resolve community tensions at a local level, whether they be caused by interface violence or by disputes associated with parades and protests.

7. That the General Assembly, believing that public life offers an important arena for Christian service, urge members of the Church to consider service to the community as community leaders, local councillors, Dail Deputies, Members of the Legislative Assembly or of Parliament at Westminster.

8. That the General Assembly, aware of the chill factor felt by many minorities, but believing that normal social interaction and engagement among people from different religious, social and political backgrounds serves the well being of the wider community, encourage Presbyterians to reverse the trend to leave mixed areas of housing, which tends to create homogeneous communities of prejudice.

9. That the General Assembly, affirming that everyone is made in the image of God and the consequent importance of respect for human rights as well as our duties to God and to one another, call upon the Human Rights Commissions in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to give equal weight to Human Rights and our duties to one another.

10. That the General Assembly, affirming that everyone is made in the image of God and that the worth of every human being derives from this fact, welcome the increasing awareness of the importance of equality but asks the Equality Commission to have regard to the importance of diversity and the distinctive contribution which faith communities make to society.

11. That the General Assembly encourage the Church and Government Committee to continue to relate to the bodies associated with the European Union.

12. That a grant of up to £4,000 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church and Government Committee.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Judicial Commission held one meeting during the year. It examined a special arrangement proposed for a minister under Par. 226(b) of Code and found it to be in order. the Commission also examined overtures being submitted to the Assembly, and after re-drafting some of the wording, approved them.

2. The Commission has received with regret notice of retirement of one of its most senior members. Mr Victor Arnold, after many years of distinguished service, and would express appreciation of his valued contribution to its proceedings.

Resolutions

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of Mr Victor Arnold from the Judicial Commission.

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev W J ORR
Secretary: Rev S A MATTHEWS

INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 2001 to February 2002.
2. 37 Vacant congregations were given Leave to Call. 2 congregations were given Leave to Call under the Home Mission Scheme. 6 congregations were given leave to Call an Associate minister, including the Westbourne Scheme. 3 congregations were given leave to extend the period of their Associate ministry. In one case the Leave to Call an Associate minister was renewed. Details of the terms agreed with congregations are set out in the report along with information about other aspects of the Commission's work.

Rev James Gordon

3. The Rev James Gordon resigned as convener of the Commission's Manses Committee and the Rev P T Dalzell was appointed in his place. Thanks are expressed to Mr Gordon for the wise advice he has given and the meticulous way in which he has supervised this area of the Commission's work.

Rev W J Orr

Rev T J Stothers writes:

4. The Union Commission records its appreciation of the work of Rev W J Orr, who has served as Convener for the past five years.
5. Already highly regarded throughout the Church on his appointment, he has further earned the respect and gratitude of all who have been members of the Union Commission or who have made representation to it during his time in office. Invariably courteous and seeking to understand different points of view presented to him, he has brought grace and a care and concern for individual congregations, their ministers, and the whole church, to his work.
6. Apart from ensuring that the routine business of the Commission has taken place, under his Convenership the Associate Ministry Scheme has bedded in, and adjustments have been made to enable it to work to its full potential; imaginative arrangements have been made to supply ministry in difficult areas; the Reviewable Tenure Ministry has been introduced; a Vacancy Procedures Handbook has been produced; and the Commission has moved from the familiar fraction system to granting Leave to Call to congregations under the new scheme of payment to ministers which came into force at the start of this year.

The whole Church is in his debt.

MATTERS OF POLICY

7. The Commission, as a matter of policy, when examining augmented congregations at vacancy, will look at and take into account all disposable

income of such congregations when issuing leave to call. This is to recognise that provision for the minister is a primary responsibility of a congregation, and that other congregations should not be supplementing such charges through CMF unreasonably, when they have additional local sources of income.

8. In dealing with vacant congregations in the City of Belfast, the Commission is conscious that the Church is currently acting on a case by case basis. Support is expressed for the appointment of a small ad hoc committee or 'think tank' tasked to draw up a strategy for more effective witness within the City. Matters for consideration would include training of personnel for ministry in this environment, types of evangelism best suited, the number, disposition and pattern of congregations. Membership would be drawn from the Board of Mission in Ireland, Union Commission and Board of Studies and Christian Training.

LEAVE TO CALL MINISTERS

| Congregation | Stipend | Expenses | Fraction |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Note: Expenses are initial expenses to be kept under review; they do not include telephone expenses. | | | |
| Cregagh | £26,000 | £7,000 | 30.0% |
| First Moneymore | £11,325 | £3,420 | 37.5% |
| Second Moneymore | £8,275 | £2,580 | 37.5% |
| Scarva St (Banbridge) | £27,500 | £6,000 | 27.5% |
| Corboy | IR£1,200 | IR£170 | 33⅓% |
| Mullingar | IR£800 | IR£170 | 33⅓% |
| Rathcoole | £20,000 | £5,500 | 33⅓% |
| Clones | IR£2,500 | IR£800 | 33⅓% |
| Stonebridge | IR£1,000 | IR£500 | 33⅓% |
| Ballyhobridge | IR£1,000 | IR£400 | 33⅓% |
| Newbliss | IR£3,000 | IR£1,250 | 33⅓% |
| Ryans | £7,250 | £3,500 | 37.5% |
| Brookvale | £7,000 | £1,750 | 37.5% |
| Cairncastle | £17,500 | £5,600 | 37.5% |

The Tyrone Memorial legislation means that there is no fraction in the terms of Leave to Call for the following congregations

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|
| Ballygowan | £28,250 (2001) | £6,000 |
| First Rathfriland | £18,000 (2001) | £5,780 |
| Urney | £3,600 (2001) | £1,600 |
| Sion Mills | £10,250 (2001) | £3,700 |
| | £11,000 (2002) | |
| | £12,000 (2003) | |
| | £13,000 (2004) | |
| Magheramorne | £12,500 (2001) | £5,300 |
| Randalstown O.C. | £25,000 (2001) | £6,000 |
| Ballygawley | £9,350 (2001) | £3,200 |
| Ballyreagh | £6,250 (2001) | £2,080 |
| Downshire Rd(Newry) | £18,000 (2001) | £6,000 |
| Castlereagh | £24,000 (2001) | £6,000 |

| | | |
|---|----------------|--------|
| Redrock | £14,000 (2001) | £3,600 |
| Drumminis | £9,200 (2001) | £2,000 |
| Raloo | £18,000 (2001) | £6,000 |
| Newtownstewart | £11,000 (2001) | £3,700 |
| | £12,000 (2002) | |
| | £13,000 (2003) | |
| Gortin | £4,000 (2001) | £1,600 |
| First Lisburn | £28,000 (2001) | £6,000 |
| Review following 2 full years of ministry | | |
| Drumreagh | £23,000 (2002) | £6,000 |
| Dromore | £3,000 (2002) | £750 |
| Castlewellan | £10,500 (2002) | £3,750 |
| Leitrim | £4,000 (2002) | £1,700 |
| Ballyholme | £26,000 (2001) | £6,250 |
| West Kirk | £20,000 (2002) | £6,000 |
| Second Newtownards | £22,000 (2002) | £6,000 |

LEAVE TO CALL UNDER HOME MISSION DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

| Congregation | Stipend | Expenses |
|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| Donegal | IR£4,200 (2001) | IR£2,100 |
| Ballyshannon | IR£1,200 (2001) | IR£1,000 |

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

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

| Congregation | Salary | Expenses |
|----------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| Belmont | Appropriate Ministerial Minimum | £4,820 |
| First Antrim | £16,620 | £3,750 |
| Fisherwick | £19,000 | £5,000 |
| First Holywood | £16,620 | £3,750 |
| Malone | Appropriate Ministerial Minimum | £4,000 |

Leave to Call an Associate Minister to the Westbourne Scheme was given to the Home Mission.

| | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|--------|
| Westbourne | Appropriate Ministerial Minimum | £3,500 |
|------------|------------------------------------|--------|

Gilnahirk's Leave to Call an Associate Minister was renewed.

The Associate Ministry in the following congregations was extended:

Knock, Bloomfield and Newtownbreda.

LEAVE TO CALL UNDER REVIEWABLE TENURE

Clogherney

- (a) Stipend: £14,000 (2001), Expenses £6,000
- (b) the appointment to be reviewed and/or terminated:
 - (i) Five years from the date of installation OR
 - (ii) In such circumstances as the Union Commission and Presbytery plan an alternative pattern of distribution of ministry for the congregation or local congregations.

Sinclair Seamen's

- (a) Stipend: £17,800 (2001), Expenses £5,100
- (b) the appointment to be reviewed and/or terminated:
 - (i) Five years from the date of installation OR
 - (ii) In such circumstances as the Union Commission and Presbytery plan an alternative pattern of distribution of ministry for the congregation or local congregations.

DISSOLUTION OF A UNION

Toberdoney and Croaghmore:

The Union was dissolved from 19 February, 2002.

STATED SUPPLY

The Commission made nominations for stated supply arrangements in Ballinderry and Corlea. Adjustments were made to the stated supply arrangements in Strathfoyle.

REVIEWS

The financial arrangements in many congregations continue to be kept under review by the Commission. This may be part of the terms of Leave to Call or because of the requirement to review after seven years of ministry, or because of special circumstances that have arisen, or because of the need to review a Leave to Call where a congregation has been slow to call a Minister. This growing volume of work is co-ordinated by the recently established Review Sub-Committee, under its Conveners Mr W Alexander and Rev T J McCormick. There follows a summary of the main reviews agreed by the Commission:

First Antrim: Fraction raised to 25% with minimum stipend for 2001 £28,000.

Ballyclare: Stipend £28,405 (2001); Expenses £6,180.

Gilford: Further review when 2002 figures are available.

Glengormley: Stipend £26,000 (2001).

Greenisland: Stipend £22,600 (2001).

Kells, Ballymena: Stipend £24,000 (2001).

Kilbride: Stipend £26,000 (2001).

Lowe Memorial, Finaghy: Fraction set at 21% providing the stipend is not less than £30,500.

Magheragall: Further review when 2001 figures are available.

Magheramason: Stipend £19,500 (2001).

2nd Castlederg: Further review.

Alt: Further review.

Cloughey: No review until 2004.

Portavogie: No review until 2004.

Abbey Dublin: Stipend £8,400 (2001).

Ballygrainey: Fraction set at 31% providing the stipend is not less than £17,500.

Ballyhenry: No further review providing the fraction (33.3%) yields stipend of not less than £23,000.

Ist Ballymoney: Fraction remains suspended, Stipend £23,250 (2001) £24,000 (2002).

Bangor West Associate: Stipend in Leave to Call changed to £16,620.

Belmont: Fraction suspended; Stipend, £28,500 (2001); £29,350 (2002); £30,250.(2003).

2nd Broughshane: Fraction suspended, Stipend £25,250 (2001).

First Comber: Fraction remains suspended. Further review.

New Row, Coleraine: Stipend £28,250 (2001).

Dungannon: Fraction remains suspended. Stipend £28,800 (2001).

Burnside, Portstewart: Stipend (2001) £16,750.

Hill Street, Lurgan: Reduce fraction to 29% for 2001 and the resulting stipend be used as the basis for calculation under the Tyrone Memorial from 1st January 2002.

2nd Broughshane: Stipend for 2002 £26,000: this used as the basis for calculation under the Tyrone Memorial from 1st January 2003.

Bloomfield: 2001 Stipend £27,500 under form of Stewardship. Stipend for 2002, and thereafter, be calculated under Tyrone Memorial.

Fitzroy: Present basis of calculation to be continued until the end of 2003.

2nd Killyleagh: Stipend for 2002, £19,000-to be used to calculate stipend under Tyrone Memorial in ensuing years.

Ist Newtownards: Stipend for 2002, £26,250: this be used to calculate stipend under Tyrone Memorial in ensuing years.

Tullyallen: Stipend in Leave to Call now £7,350 (2001); Expenses £2,475.

Mountnorris: Stipend in Leave to Call now £7,350 (2001); Expenses £2,475.

Carnmoney: Stipend in Leave to Call now £33,600 (2001); Expenses £5,650.

Ballywillan: Stipend in Leave to Call now £26,750 (2001); Expenses £5,650.

Carlisle Rd: Stipend in Leave to Call now £15,500 (2001); Expenses £5,000.

Crossroads: Stipend in Leave to Call now IR£2,750 (2001); Expenses IR£700.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Where financial support of ministers was necessary because of sickness, redundancy, resignation or other special circumstances, special arrangements were made. To assist in the caring but responsible management of situations where a minister has a period of extended illness, guidelines were formulated. When a minister, whose congregation has applied to the Sick Supply Fund, has been unfit for work for a period of eight weeks, the Clerk of the Minister's Presbytery will be notified.

RESTRICTED LIST

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

- A. The name of a minister shall be removed from the list of eligible ministers (Code Par 193 (1) (e)) after two years, unless the minister concerned applies for and is granted an extension by the Union Commission.
- B. When the Union Commission is not meeting on a monthly basis:
 - (a) The Convener may grant an extension of up to two months, in consultation with the Clerk of Assembly.
 - (b) The Allocation Committee may place a new applicant on the restricted list.

The name of Rev N M Williamson was placed on the Restricted List in May 2001.

PORTING

Wellington Street, Ballymena: The Commission gave permission for the Congregation to port.

MANSES

1. Various permissions granted by the Commission are given on the understanding that other permissions required by the law of the Church must be sought and that relevant guidelines are applied.

2. Permission was granted to Balteagh to demolish its manse and to rebuild on the existing site.

3. The following congregations were given permission to let their manses: Ballinderry, Castlewellan, 1st Donegore, Kells (Co Meath) and the Commission was involved in consultations about adherence to the General Assembly guidelines.

4. During the period covered by this report the Commission was consulted about the possibility of selling Westbourne Manse. Permission was granted to Ballyronney to rent accommodation for the Minister while the Manse is being repaired or replaced. Permission was granted to allow the new Minister of Cregagh to continue to live in the Castlereagh Manse for a period.

5. Permission was granted to Seskinore to sell a Manse field, and permission was granted to Carryduff to sell a small strip of ground. The Commission is anxious to co-operate with Presbyteries in ensuring that where there is doubt about the future of the Manse, the Congregation is clear about the way ahead before a Minister is called. The Commission is dependent on the reliability of information presented to it about the state of the Manse in granting Leave to Call.

PROTRACTED ILLNESS GUIDELINES

1. The Commission revised and up-dated the Protracted Illness Guidelines for Ministers which were presented to the Assembly in 1992 and included a section relating to Licentiatees and Ordained Assistant.

2. The following are the revised Guidelines:

- (a) As a result of protracted illness, a minister, associate minister, ordained assistant or licentiate (hereafter referred to as 'ministers') shall be paid in respect of the first twelve months an amount equivalent to the full salary due to them.
- (b) Each case of protracted illness shall be reviewed so that a decision can be made at the end of twelve months absence from duties provided that (a) absence has been continuous, or (b) absence or absences have been of significant duration or recurring over the twelve-month period, as interpreted by the Union Commission, after consultation with Presbytery.
- (c) In the case of continuous absence the Convener of the Commission shall, in consultation with Presbytery, have the authority to initiate review procedures previous to the end of the twelve month period.
- (d) Persons under review may be required to attend for medical examination by independent medical practitioners appointed by the Commission.
- (e) The Commission, in consultation with Presbytery and the Board of Ministry and Pensions, shall have the authority to advise Presbytery to loose from his/her charge, any minister on the grounds of medical incapacity, after consultation with the Kirk Session and Congregational Committee.
- (f) Application may be made for a grant to meet the cost of pulpit supplies in accordance with the rules for the time being of the Sick Supply Fund.
- (g) Medical evidence must be supplied to the Financial Secretary in all cases of illness as follows:- A self Certificate (obtainable from local D.S.S. or Doctor's Surgery) for the first 7 days. More than 7 days absence requires Doctor's Certificate(s). Failure to submit such evidence could mean loss in benefit.
- (h) Any invalidity or other state benefit reclaimed by a minister should be paid over to the Financial Secretary to be forwarded to the congregation to be applied towards meeting expenses of period of illness.
A minister serving more than one congregation will be asked to nominate the treasurer to whom payment is to be made.
- (i) Presbytery may make arrangements for reasonable deductions in ministerial expenses during the period of illness to assist with pulpit supplies or other additional expenditure occasioned by a minister's incapacity; the amount of the reduction to be determined by Presbytery with the approval of the Union Commission.

During medically certified illness

- (j) Licentiates and Ordained Assistants shall be entitled to the full appropriate salary due to them for at least 12 months.
- (k) The costs shall be met as follows:
 - 1-3 months: no change in the arrangements in place
 - 4-12 months: salary, full housing allowance and employer's national insurance contributions to be paid by

C.M.F. Expenses, paid by C.M.F., may be reduced by the Union Commission.

- (l) Each case of absence from work shall be reviewed at the end of 12 months, or at the date of eligibility for Call, in consultation with the Board of Studies and Christian Training, as appropriate, provided that:
 - (i) absence from work has been continuous;
 - (ii) absence or absences have been of significant duration, or recurring, as interpreted by the Commission.
- (m) In cases of significant absence from work the Convener of the Commission shall have authority to institute consultation, and may require a medical examination by a practitioner appointed by the Commission before the end of 12 months or before the date of eligibility for Call.
- (n) The Commission shall have authority to recommend the termination of licentiates in accordance with the terms of the Guidelines (2001) relating to ministers.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES — 2002**

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

| | <i>Fully Constituted</i> | <i>Families (†)</i> | <i>Assess 2002 £</i> | <i>Spec. Sources £</i> | <i>Income £</i> |
|-------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Tullycarnet | 1990 | 214 (149) | 224 | 34,802 | 58,613 |
| Downshire | 1993 | 250 (179) | 269 | 45,566 | 67,458 |
| Lisnabreen | 1993 | 260 (151) | 227 | 38,984 | 67,834 |
| Scrabo | 1994 | 258 (154) | 231 | 40,720 | 62,450 |
| Burnside | 1995 | 177 (152) | 228 | 53,561 | 82,773 |
| Movilla | 2001 | 201 (166) | 249 | 37,016 | 54,170 |

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 2002

| <i>Church</i> | <i>Spec.</i> | | | | | | <i>Total £</i> |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | <i>Building £</i> | <i>Srs. £</i> | <i>Stip. £</i> | <i>C.M.F. £</i> | <i>Ch. Ext £</i> | <i>H.M. £</i> | |
| New Mossley* | 2,171 | 15,223 | 3,806 | 1,827 | 1,218 | 761 | 7,612 |
| Ballysally* | 6,035 | 24,213 | 6,053 | 2,906 | 1,937 | 1,211 | 12,107 |
| Strathfoyle* | — | 3,050 | 366 | 183 | 122 | 73 | 744 |
| Taughmonagh | — | 17,222 | 5,167 | 2,583 | 1,722 | 1,033 | 10,505 |

* Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 2002

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £12,780 from 1st January, 2002 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

FIRST YEAR — From 1st January, 2002

| <i>Congregation</i> | <i>Assistant</i> | <i>Date of Licensing</i> | <i>Ministers Stipend</i> | <i>Congregations Contribution</i> | <i>C.M.F.</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| McQuiston Memorial | A. Stewart* | 10.06.01 | 24,600 (30%) | 7,881 | 5,901 |
| 1st Portadown | W. J. M. Parker* | 03.06.01 | 31,492 (30%) | 9,949 | 3,833 |
| Wellington Street | C. Grant* | 03.06.01 | 29,499 (30%) | 9,351 | 4,431 |
| Harmony Hill | C Ebbinghaus* | 24.06.01 | 29,904 (30%) | 9,472 | 4,310 |
| Newcastle | D. Murphy† | 12.06.98 | 28,089 (s/a) | 5,000 | 7,780 |

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance (s/a Special Arrangement)

LICENTIATES — 2002

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £12,780 from 1st January, 2002 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

SECOND YEAR — From 1st January, 2002

| <i>Congregation</i> | <i>Assistant</i> | <i>Date of Licensing</i> | <i>Ministers</i> | | <i>Congregations Contribution</i> | <i>C.M.F.</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| | | | <i>Stipend</i> | <i>Contribution</i> | | |
| Dundonald | L. H. Eagleson† | 15.06.00 | 35,568 | 11,021 | 2,461 | |
| 2nd Comber | S. D. Finlay* | 18.06.00 | 33,846 | 10,655 | 3,127 | |
| Malone | Dr. M. Jones† | 18.06.00 | 29,705 | 9,263 | 4,219 | |
| Mourne | C. W. A. Martin* | 16.06.00 | 42,750 | 13,281 | 501 | |
| Joymount | C. K. McDowell* | 18.06.00 | 27,382 | 8,716 | 5,066 | |
| 1st Bangor | D. J. Steele‡ | 28.05.00 | 31,101 | 9,330 | 3,450 | |
| Hillsborough | S. Richmond* | 02.07.00 | 32,906 | 10,373 | 3,409 | |

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance ‡ No House Allowance

LICENTIATES — 2002

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £12,780 from 1st January, 2002 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

THIRD YEAR — From 1st January, 2002

| <i>Congregation</i> | <i>Assistant</i> | <i>Date of Licensing</i> | <i>Ministers Stipend</i> | <i>Congregations Contribution</i> | <i>C.M.F.</i> |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Carryduff | A. Kerr* | 10.09.99 | 26,529 | 8,460 | 5,322 |
| Ebrington | S. J. Lockington | 04.06.99 | 25,861 | 8,259 | 5,523 |
| Railway Street, Lisburn | Cheryl A. Reid† | 20.06.99 | 27,425 | 8,579 | 4,903 |

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 2002

From 1st January, 2002

| <i>Assistant</i> | <i>Congregation</i> | <i>Date of Ord.</i> | <i>Ministers Stipend</i> £ | <i>% Min.</i> | <i>Salary</i> £ | <i>House Allow.</i> £ | <i>Total</i> £ | <i>Cong. Cont.</i> £ | <i>C.M.F.</i> £ |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Marlene Taylor | Cooke Centenary | 11.01.85 | 21,000 | 100 | 17,040 | 1,002 | 18,042 | 9,426 | 8,616 |
| Christina Bradley | Rosemary | 23.02.86 | 26,901 | 95 | 16,188 | 1,002 | 17,190 | 11,261 | 5,929 |
| C. S. Calder | Hamilton Road | 26.06.01 | 34,505 | 95 | 16,188 | 1,002 | 17,190 | 14,303 | 2,887 |
| D. Kiarie | 2nd Ballyeaston | | 26,132 | 100 | 17,040 | — | 17,040 | 11,106 | 5,934 |
| J. M. Casement | Knock | 13.05.01 | 45,437 | 100 | 17,040 | 1,002 | 18,042 s/a | 2,000 | 16,042 |

(s/a Special Arrangement)

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS 2002

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Congregation</i> | <i>Salary</i> | | <i>Recovery</i> £ | <i>House Allowance Paid</i> £ | <i>Annual Assessment Recovery</i> £ |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| | | <i>Paid</i> £ | <i>Recovery</i> £ | | | |
| G. Kennedy from 8.03.01 | First Bangor | 17,040 | 12,440.40 | 1,500.00 | 359.97 | |
| Ian Carton from 5.09.01 | West Church, Bangor | 20,000 | 14,560.40 | 1,500.00 | 2,091.57 | |
| S. J. Hanna to 7.02.02 | Ballyholme | 17,040 | 1,135.42 | 153.76 | 36.90 | |
| M. Henderson from 5.01.01 | Shore Street | 17,040 | 11,076.00 | 2,000.00 | 359.97 | |
| C. Burcombe from 23.10.01 | Greenwell Street | 17,040 | 11,199.60 | 1,500.00 | 359.97 | |
| P. D. Thompson to 7.02.02 | Whiteabbey | 17,040 | 1,280.20 | 153.76 | 36.90 | |
| D. Montgomery | Knock | 20,000 | 16,697.60 | 0.00 | 2,091.57 | |
| D. N. Gray from 21.10.01 | Belmont | 18,282 | 12,642.00 | 2,000.00 | 1,086.54 | |
| H. E. Lewis | Bloomfield | 17,040 | 11,076.00 | 1,500.00 | 359.97 | |
| J. Peacock | Newtownbreda | 17,040 | 11,076.00 | 2,500.00 | 359.97 | |
| C. Glover | Stormont | 17,620 | 14,100.40 | — | 699.27 | |
| D. J. McCarthy | Orangefield | 20,000 | 14,036.00 | 2,000.00 | 2,091.57 | |
| M. Gibson from 5.09.01 | Westbourne | 17,040 | 7,224.00 (sa) | 2,000.00 | 359.97 | |
| B. D. Colvin | Ballyclare | 17,511 | 11,832.60 | 1,500.00 | 635.505 | |
| R. J. Montgomery | 1st Carrickfergus | 18,747 | 16,764.60 | 1,500.00 | 1,358.565 | |
| M. N. Davidson from 23.09.01 | First Antrim | 17,040 | 11,518.80 | 1,500.00 | 359.97 | |

PERSONNEL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

EXTRA-PAROCHIAL WORK

1. Four ministers, having obtained prior Presbytery approval, were given permission for extra-parochial work of no more than six hours per week. To assist ministers and Presbyteries with compliance of Par 73 (d) a pro-forma was issued last year. This form, which may be obtained from Presbytery Clerks, should be returned **annually** to the Committee Convener and prior to commencement of such work.

LOCOMOTORY EXPENSES

2. The year 2002 recommendations for locomotory allowances were set according to an established formula for a car of 1400cc travelling 13,000 "business" miles. The standing costs attributable to private motoring have been factored in.

N Ireland £4,680 (2001: £4,980) ROI €6,856 (2001: IR£5,664)

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

INADEQUATE EXPENSES GRANT SCHEME

3. Applications for grants towards inadequate expenses in the year 2000 were received from 23 ministers. Payments totalling £37,023.09 were made to 22 applicants (compared with £43,500 to 26 applicants for the year 1999).

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

4. The recommended limits for 2002 claims under this scheme are as follows:

N Ireland £4,900 (2001: £5,100) ROI €7,200 (2001: IR£5,800)

SUPPLY FEES

5. In pursuance of the Assembly's decision (p 91 2000 Reports) amending Par 238 (3) and (4), the supply fee for the year 2002 will be £70 (RI €114), with £47 (RI €76) for a single service supply. This is of course a minimum figure and does not include travelling expenses, which should be paid in "accordance with the rates for travel by car fixed for attendance at Assembly Boards, or be based on second class rail or bus fares." Par 238 (4). Currently this rate is 12p per mile.

Presbyteries should ensure that atypical circumstances do not give rise to unjust anomalies in these matters.

ADDITIONAL PASTORAL PERSONNEL

6. The high number of applications processed has been sustained. Since last year's report the Commission has approved 21 such appointments. This

number does not include congregational placements by Boards, such as Youth Board volunteers.

7. All indications point to an increasing use of Additional Pastoral Personnel across the entire spectrum of congregational activity and pastoral provision. Information gleaned from congregational statistical returns for 2001 will enable the Committee to embark upon the maintenance of an up-to-date register. With this information more incisive planning and advice can be offered.

8. The Committee strongly commends the 1997 Guidelines (Reports 1997 p 57). Particular attention is drawn to the proper sequencing for the approval of the post and the actual appointment of personnel.

“The selection and appointment of personnel shall be by the Kirk Session with the approval of the Minister, and of the Presbytery who shall ensure that the person to be appointed is in sympathy with the doctrines and practices of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.” (Reports 1997 p 57)

VACANCY PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Vacancy Conveners should be issued with this useful handbook. The accompanying questionnaire should be returned to the Rev Trevor J McCormick upon the installation of the new minister.

C D McCLURE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the resignation of the Rev W J Orr as Convener of the Union Commission be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev T J Stothers be appointed for 5 years in his place.
3. That the congregations of First Boardmills, Second Boardmills and Killaney be amalgamated on terms agreed with the Union Commission on 1st July 2002, or other suitable date.
4. That the congregations of First Ray and Second Ray be amalgamated on terms agreed with the Union Commission on 1st July 2002 or other suitable date.

Protracted Illness Guidelines

5. That the Protracted Illness Guidelines be approved and implemented.

Personnel and Planning

6. That the CMF be authorised to pay grants towards expenses incurred by ministers in congregations, up to a limit of £4,900 for ministers residing in Northern Ireland, and €7,200 for ministers residing in the Republic of Ireland, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70 General Assembly Minutes 1988.

General

7. That the Union Commission, with its associated working committee, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 128 of the Code as follows:

REPORTS OF SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES

SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN

The **SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN** report that the Rev William Harold Sanderson, BA, is their Moderator, and that their next stated meeting is appointed to be held at First Newry on Tuesday, 11 March, 2003 at 11.00 am.

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J H Robinson, BSc, BD, MTh, is their Moderator; that Rev D J Watts, BSc, BD, PhD, resigned from Ballyholme on 2 September, 2001 having been appointed as Clerk-Designate of the General Assembly; that Rev G F McKeown, BA, DipTh, resigned as Minister of Second Newtownards on 24 January, 2002, having received a Call to Rathcoole, and was furnished with credentials to the North Belfast Presbytery; that Rev S J Hanna, BSc, BD, Associate Minister of Ballyholme, resigned on 7 February, 2002 having received a Call to Tullyallen and Mountnorris and was furnished with credentials to the Newry Presbytery; that Rev D J Campbell, BA, BD, Minister without Charge under the care of Presbytery, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of the Hunter, Presbyterian Church of Australia; that Rev Robert Stirling, BA, DipEd, having presented credentials from the Derry and Strabane Presbytery, was Installed as Minister of Conlig on 4 May, 2001; that Rev Samuel John Castles, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Foyle Presbytery, was Installed as Minister of Lisnabreen on 11 May, 2001; that Rev N S Harrison, BD, having presented credentials from the Omagh Presbytery, was Installed as Minister of High Street, Holywood on 14 June, 2001; that Rev W J Carlisle, BA, BD, DipEd, having presented credentials from the Newry Presbytery, was Installed as Minister of Movilla, Newtownards on 14 September, 2001; that Mr G J Kennedy, LLB, BD, having presented credentials from the Down Presbytery, was Ordained and Inducted as Associate Minister in First Bangor on 8 March, 2001; that Rev Stephen Charles Calder, BSc, BD, DipMin, was Inducted as Assistant Minister of Hamilton Road, Bangor on 24 June, 2001; that Mr R I Carton, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the North Belfast Presbytery, was Ordained and Inducted as Associate Minister of West Church, Bangor on 5 September, 2001; that Mr Colin Burcombe, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Carrickfergus Presbytery, was Ordained and Inducted as Associate Minister in Greenwell Street, Newtownards on 23 October, 2001; that Mr J M Casement, MA, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having accepted a Call as Assistant Minister in Knock Congregation, was furnished with credentials to the East Belfast

Resigned

Installed

Ordained

Inducted

Licensed Presbytery on 6 March, 2001; that the Mr K W J Hanna, BA, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received a Call to Glenwherry was furnished with credentials on 28 September, 2001 to the Ballymena Presbytery; that Mr Cecil A Grant was licensed on 3 June, 2001 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that Mr Christoph Ebbinghaus was licensed on 24 June, 2001 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore;

Under care that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge Rev D McKee, BD, Rev C D Mawhinney, BD, Rev D M Spratt, ALCM, BEd, DipTh; as Licentiate, D J Steele, BD, MTh; as students, P Jamieson, C W P Kennedy, A Best, B J McCroskery, J W D Rogers; that they have visited the congregations of First Donaghadee, Helen's Bay and Scrabo; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Died The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Stephan W van Os, BA, BD, is their Moderator; and that the Rev J H Lyons, BA, the Senior Minister of Redrock and Druminnis, died on 23 April, 2001;

Resigned that the Rev D H Gilpin, BA, DipTh, resigned as Minister of Redrock and Druminnis on 6 September, 2001, having received a Call from the congregation of Moira and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that the Rev William J A Moody, BEng, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry, was Ordained and Installed as Minister of Moy and Benburb on 5 April, 2001; that they have under their care the Rev W A Shaw, BD, a Minister without Charge; that they have under their care Mr W J M Parker as a Licentiate, and Mr S J Mervyn Lindsay as a student for the ministry; that during the year they visited the congregations of Tassagh, Drumhillery and Second Keady; and that the Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Ordained

Under care

Visited

Retired The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R McM Mackay, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev J Harper, MA, MTh, BPS, PhD, Minister of Ballygowan, retired on the 31 March, 2001; that the Rev W D McBride, BA, Minister of Second Saintfield, retired on the 28 February, 2002; that G J Kennedy, LLB, BD, a Licentiate, having received a Call from First Bangor as an Associate Minister, was furnished with credentials to the Ards Presbytery on the 7 March, 2001; that the Rev D S McIlwrath, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was Installed in First Killyleagh on the 2 May, 2001; that the Rev G R Stockdale, BA, MDiv, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane, was Installed in Edengrove on 15 June, 2001; that the Rev D N Gray, BA, BD, having received a Call from Belmont as an Associate Minister, was furnished with credentials to the Belfast East Presbytery on the 2 October, 2001; that Mr Mervyn Gibson, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received a Call to be Associate Minister in Westbourne, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast East on 20 October, 2001; that they have under their care as a licentiate S D Finlay,

Installed

Under care

LLB, MDiv; that they have under their care as Minister without Charge the Rev R N Stewart, BA, BD; that they have under their care as a student Samuel Newell; that during the year they visited the congregations of First Comber, Ardglass and Strangford; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Visited

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev S W W Neilly, MA, MAR, ThM, PGCE, is their Moderator; that the Rev Dr R J G Gray, BA, BD, DMin, DD, minister of First Lisburn, retired on 31 March, 2001; that the Rev D H Gilpin, BA, DipTh, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh, was installed to the pastoral oversight of the congregation of Moira on 7 September, 2001; that Mr R D McDowell, BSc, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received a Call from the congregation of Bushmills, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that Mr W J M Parker, BSc, was licensed on 3 June, 2001 and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; and that they have under their care as Licentiates Miss C A Reid, LLB, BD, PGDM, Mr Stephen Richmond, MSc, BD, and Mr C Ebbinghaus, BSc; that they have under their care as students for the ministry, Mr Michael McClenaghan, Mr Niall Samuel Robert Lockhart; that during the year they held Consultations with the congregations of First Lisburn and Drumlough; and that Financial Statements are being published separately by each congregation.

Retired

Installed

Licensed

Under care

Consulted

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A Johnston, BEd, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev W A Watson, BA, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Donegal was Installed as Minister of Scarva Street, Banbridge on the 13 September, 2001; that the Rev P D Thompson, BA, BTh, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was Installed as Minister of First Rathfriland on 8 February, 2002; that the Rev M J R Neilly, BA, BD, resigned as minister of First Rathfriland on 19 April, 2001, having received a Call from the congregation of Buckna and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena; that the Rev A S Thompson, MA, BD, resigned as Minister of Castlewellan and Leitrim on 8 November, 2001, having received a Call from the congregations of First and Second Moneymore and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge (retired) the Rev E G McAuley, BA, BD, MSc; that during the year they visited the congregations of Anaghlonge and Magherally; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately, and that voting on Overtures anent Par 65(2) and 97(h) of the Code was in each case 32 for and none against.

Installed

Resigned

Visited

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev E P Gamble, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev W J Carlisle, BA, BD, DipEd, resigned as Minister of Downshire Road on 13 September, 2001, having

Resigned

received a Call from the congregation of Movilla, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev S J Hanna, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards, was Installed as Minister of Tullyallen and Mountnorris on 8 February, 2002; that Mr W J A Moody, BEng, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having accepted a Call from Moy and Benburb, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that they have Under care under their care as a Licentiate Mr C W A Martin, BSc, MDiv, and as Students for the Ministry Mr D S Henry and Mr R C Kerr; that during the year they visited no congregations; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately, and that the voting on Overtures anent Pars 65(2) and 97(h) of the Code was in each case 18 for and none against.

SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

The **SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE** report that the Rev George Alexander Preston, BA, is their Moderator and that the next stated meeting is to be held in Terrace Row Presbyterian Church, Coleraine, on 11 March, 2003, at 10.00 am.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev B McManus, BD, DipSocStud, is their Moderator; that the Rev D G McMeekin, BA, MSc, DipSAdmin, DipPhil, MA (Phil), PhD, minister of First Ahoghill, died on 6 January, 2002; that the Rev J C Simms, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus, was installed as minister of Rasharkin on 2 March, 2001; that the Rev M J R Neilly, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh, was installed as minister of Buckna on 20 April, 2001; that Mr K W J Hanna, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards, was ordained to the Office of the Christian Ministry and installed as Minister of Glenwherry on 28 September, 2001; that Mr C A Grant, MA, LLM, MDiv, PhD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards, was received as a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery on 11 September, 2001; that they have under their care as a Student for the Ministry, Mr J E Sloan, BA; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately; and that voting on Overtures sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act was as follows: Anent Par 65 (2): For: 6, Against: 27, Abstentions: 2; Anent Par 97 (h): For 12, Against: 20, Abstentions: 3.

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev T R Graham, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev R Hill, BSc, BD, Minister of Cairncastle, resigned on 24 March, 2001, having received a Call to the Congregation of Garnerville, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Rev D Murphy, MA, DipTh, DPhil, Minister of Magheramore, resigned on 31 May, 2001

having received a Call to First Ballymacarrett and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Rev R J Beggs, BD, Minister of Raloo, resigned on 6 September, 2001, having received a Call to the Congregation of McQuiston Memorial and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Rev A Tolland, BSc, BD, MTh, PGCE, resigned as Associate Minister of First Larne on 6 December, 2001 having received a Call to the Congregation of Cairncastle, and was installed as Minister of Cairncastle on 7 December, 2001; that on 27 June, 2001 Rev C U Bradley, MTh, MDiv, Minister without Charge under the care of the Presbytery, having received a Call to be Assistant Minister in Rosemary, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that on 2 October, 2001 Mr Colin Burcombe, BSc, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received a Call to be Associate Minister in Greenwell Street, Newtownards, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr C K McDowell, BA, MDiv; that they have under their care as Minister without Charge Rev D R Byers, BA, DipTh; that on 7 June, 2001, Rev C U Bradley, MTh, MDiv, was received as a Minister without Charge and placed under the care of the Presbytery; that they visited the Congregations of Gardenmore and Downshire during the year and that the Financial Statements of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **COLERAINE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev D S Mackay, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that on 30 April, 2001, the Rev R N Gordon, BSc, BD, DipEd, PhD, retired from the duties of the active ministry; that on 14 November, 2001, the Rev Dr J Cheshire, BSc, MDiv, MSocW, resigned as Assistant Minister in Hazelbank Congregation, Coleraine; that on 6 April, 2001 the Rev T D Allen, BSc, BD, was installed as Minister of Ballyrashane Congregation, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Monaghan; that on 29 April, 2001 the Rev Dr James Cheshire, BSc, MDiv, MSocW, was Inducted as Assistant Minister in Hazelbank Congregation, Coleraine; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs W J Morrison, BA, and J D Mark, MA, BD; and as Students for the Ministry Mr D McCorrison and Mr P B Wilson; that the Presbytery has held a consultation with Portrush Congregation; and that the Financial Statements of Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev N McClean, BSc, DipTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev T Luke, MA, Minister of Drumreagh and Dromore, retired on 30 September, 2001; that the Very Rev A W G Brown, BA, BD, PhD, DD, LittD, Minister of Ballycastle, retired on 31 October, 2001; that the Rev G Cunningham, BA, Minister of Armooy and Ramoan, retired on 31 December, 2001; that on 11 May, 2001 Rev R D McDowell, BSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore, was Ordained and Installed at Bushmills; that on 17 August, 2001 the Rev N McClean, BSc, DipTh, having

presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick, was installed at First Kilraughts; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge Rev V Dobbin, CB, MBE, MA, MTh, PhD, DD; and as a student for the ministry Mr G Chestnutt; that during the year they visited St James's and Dromore; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev P E Dickinson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that on 30 September, 2001 Rev J Tolland, MA, Minister of First Donegore, retired from the active duties of the ministry; that on 16 August, 2001, Rev N McClean, BSc, DipTh, Minister of O C Randalstown demitted his Charge, having received and accepted a Call from First Kilraughts, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that on 28 October, 2001, Rev D M Kiarie, BEd, MA, MSc, having received and accepted the Call from the Overseas Board, was Inducted to a Special Ministry in Second Ballyeaston; that on 23 September, 2001, Mr M N Davidson, BA, BD, was ordained and Inducted as Associate Minister of First Antrim; that on 10 June, 2001 Mr A V Stewart, MA, DipMin, was licensed as Probationer for the Christian Ministry and furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that during the year they visited First Randalstown; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

SYNOD OF BELFAST

The **SYNOD OF BELFAST** report that the Rev Robert James Terence McMullan, BA, is their Moderator and that the stated meeting of Synod will be held in Townsend Street Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, 11 March, 2003, at 10.00 am.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev T C Wright, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Kenneth Simpson, BA, BD, MTh, retired from his post as Prison Chaplain on 21 October, 2001; that the Rev D S McIlwrath, BA, BD, Associate Minister in Carnmoney, resigned his Charge on 1 May, 2001, having received a Call from the congregation of First Killyleagh, and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that the Rev T W A Greer, LLB, BD, Minister of Macrory Memorial, Newington and Sinclair Seamen's, resigned his Charge on 27 September, 2001, having received a Call from the Congregation of Molesworth, Cookstown, and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Tyrone; that the Rev F W Vincent, BA, BD, Senior Chaplain to the Northern Ireland Hospice, resigned his post, having been appointed as Programme Director by the Corrymeela Community on 16 November, 2001, and was placed under the Care of Presbytery as a Minister without Charge; that the Rev J R Dickinson, BA, BD, Minister of Seaview, resigned his charge on 31 January, 2002,

having received a Call from the Congregation of Carnmoney; that the Rev P D Thompson, BA, BTh, Associate Minister in Whiteabbey, resigned his Charge on 7 February, 2002, having received a Call from the Congregation of First Rathfriland, and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh; that the Rev C U Bradley, MTh, MDiv, was Inducted as Ordained Assistant Minister in Rosemary on 2 September, 2001, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that the Rev G F McKeown, BA, DipTh, was installed in Rathcoole on 25 January, 2002, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev J R Dickinson, BA, BD, was installed in Carnmoney on 1 February, 2002; that the Rev I Carton, BA, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, on receipt of a Call from West Church, Bangor to be their Associate Minister, was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev Kenneth Henderson, BA, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, on receipt of a Call from Aughnacloy and Ballymagrane was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Omagh; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs C R J Brown, BA, (Retired), J S Carson, BSc, MA, MAR, MTh, C I McKnight, BA, W M Smyth, MP, BA, BD, D Stanfield, BA, BD, and F W Vincent, BA, BD; that they have under their care as Licentiates Mr D Murphy, BSSc, BD, N Patrick, BTh; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs W G Hamilton, W J Hayes and D Laney; and that Congregational Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Installed

Under care

The **BELFAST SOUTH PRESBYTERY** report that Rev T Wilson, BSc, BD, DipSocWit, is their Moderator; that the Rev T C Patterson, BA, DD, Minister retired, died on 1 April, 2001; that the Rev Dr J B Moore, MA, Minister of West Kirk retired from the active ministry on 30 June, 2001; that the Rev N Williamson, BA, BD, MTh, resigned as Chaplain to Queen's University on receipt of a Call from the Board of Education and was Installed as Chaplain to Campbell College on 4 September, 2001; that the Rev Simon Henning, BA, BD, was Ordained and Installed as Assistant and Successor to the Superintendent of the Kinghan Church on 14 September, 2001, having received a Call from the Board of Social Witness and presenting credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr P G McDowell, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, received a Call from the Overseas Board and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast East on 5 May, 2001; that Dr Mark Jones is a Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery; that there are no students for the Ministry under the care of the Presbytery; that they visited the Congregation of Nelson Memorial; that all Congregations are furnishing their own Financial Reports.

Died
Retired

Resigned

Ordained

Under care

Visited

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev H R Quinn, BSc, BD, DipEd, is their Moderator; that the Rev Samuel Scott, BD, ThD, DD, died on 25 July, 2001; that the Rev Samuel Eaton, MA, HCF, Senior Minister of McQuiston Memorial, died on 15 February,

Died

2002; that the Rev Richard Hill, BSc, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus, was installed as Minister of Garnerville on 25 March, 2001; that Rev D Murphy, MA, DipTh, DPhil, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus, was installed as Minister of First Ballymacarrett on 1 June, 2001; that the Rev Robert Beggs, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus, was installed as Minister of McQuiston Memorial on 7 September, 2001; that the Rev J Hastings McIntyre, BSc, BD, DipEd, BA, resigned as Minister of Castlereagh on 18 September, 2001, and was installed as Minister of Cregagh on 19 September, 2001; that on 6 May, 2001 Mr Peter G McDowell, BEng, BD, presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Belfast South and was

Installed

Ordnained

Inducted

Under care

Visited

Resigned

Ordnained and commissioned for Missionary Service with the Overseas Board; that on 13 May, 2001, Mr J M Casement, MA, having presented Credentials as a Licentiate from the Presbytery of Ards, was ordained to the Ministry and Inducted as Assistant in Knock; that on 5 September, 2001, Mr Mervyn Gibson, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Down, was ordained and Inducted as Associate in Westbourne; that on 21 October, 2001, the Rev David N Gray, BA, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Down, was Inducted as Associate Minister in Belmont; that Mr Simon Henning, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, received and accepted a call to be Assistant and Successor to the Superintendent of the Kinghan Church, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast South on 13 September, 2001; that on 5 March, 2002, the Presbytery received and accepted the resignation of the Rev P A J McBride, BSc, BD, MSW, as a Minister without Charge under the Care of the Presbytery; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr Angus V Stewart, and as Ministers without Charge the Revs R A Crooks, MA, W J Harshaw, BEd, BD, E Jamieson, BA, MEd, MTh, PhD, L R Pedlow, MA; that the Congregation of Belvoir was visited during the year; and that the Financial Reports for the Congregations are being printed separately.

SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH

The **SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH** report that the Rev Dr Joseph Fell, MA, is their Moderator and that their next Stated Meeting is appointed to be held in Ebrington on Wednesday, 12 March, 2003, at 2.30 pm.

The **DERRY AND STRABANE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr S D H Williamson, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev R Stirling, BA, DipEd, demitted his Charge as Minister of Urney and Sion on 3 May, 2001, having received and accepted a Call from the Congregation of Conlig, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that the Rev G R Stockdale, BA, MDiv, demitted

his Charge as Minister of Newtownstewart and Gortin on 14 June, 2001, having received and accepted a Call from the Congregation of Edengrove, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that Mr S J Lockington, BA, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, having received and accepted a Call from the Board of Mission in Ireland to the Congregations of Mullingar and Corboy, was furnished with Credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster on 25 January, 2002; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge Rev J C Teeney, BSc, BTh, and as Students for the Ministry Mr R A Campbell, BA, and Mr P E Linkens, BA; that the Congregations of Ardstraw and Douglas were visited during the year; that the voting on the Overture anent Par 97 (h) of the Code was 17 For and 8 Against; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

Under care

Visited

The **FOYLE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Dr W J H McKee, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev J A Noble, BD, BA, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry, was installed at Minister of Balteagh and Bovevagh Congregations on 9 March, 2001; Mr S J Castles, BSc, BD, a Licentiate under the care of Presbytery, on receiving a Call from Lisnabreen Congregation, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that during the year the Congregations of Cumber and Upper Cumber were visited, and the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately; the voting for the overtures sent down to Presbyteries by the General Assembly was as follows: Overture anent Par 62 (2) For 25; Against 0; Overture anent Par 97 (h) For 25, Against 0.

Installed

Visited

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J R Burnett, BA, MPhil, MA, minister of Seskinore and Edenderry, is their Moderator; that the Rev N R McCormick, BA, Minister of Ballygawley and Ballyreagh, retired on 31 August, 2001; that the Rev N S Harrison, BD, Minister of Clogherney, resigned on 13 June, 2001, having received a Call from the Congregation of High Street, Holywood, and was furnished with Credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that Mr Kenneth Henderson, BA, BD, having presented Credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was ordained on 14 September, 2001 and installed as Minister of Aughnacloy and Ballymagrane; that they have under their care as a Student for the Ministry Mr David Irvine; that the Congregations of Drumquin and Edenderry were visited during the year; that changes to the Code Pars 62 (5) and 97 (h) were approved, in each case nem con; 20 votes being registered in favour, with no abstentions; and that Financial Statements are being printed together in booklet form.

Retired
Resigned

Ordained

Under care
Visited

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J H Flaherty, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev W J C Mercer, MA, Senior Minister of Ballygoney and Coagh, died on 14 November, 2001; that the Rev T W A Greer, LLB, BD, having presented credentials from the

Died

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| Installed | Presbytery of North Belfast was installed as Minister of Molesworth on 28 September, 2001; that the Rev A S Thompson, MA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Iveagh, was installed as Minister of 1 st and 2 nd Moneymore on 9 November, 2001; that Mr A N Kerr, MB, BCh, BAO, FRCSI, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast, was ordained to the Office of the Christian Ministry and installed as Minister of the Congregations of Ballygoney, Coagh and Saltersland on 25 January, 2002; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr A T S McAlister, BSc, MSc, Mr Knox Jones, and Mr David Brown; that during the year they visited the Congregations of Dungannon and Union Road and Lecumpher; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately; that the voting for the Overtures sent down to Presbyteries by the General Assembly was as follows: Overture anent Par 65 (2) For 40, Against 0, Overture anent Par 97 (h) For 40, Against 0. |
| Ordained | |
| Under care | |
| Visited | |

SYNOD OF DUBLIN

The **SYNOD OF DUBLIN** report that the Rev George Alan Mitchell, BA, DipCG, is their Moderator and that the next stated meeting is appointed to be held at the direction of the General Assembly meeting in June, 2002.

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| Resigned | The DONEGAL PRESBYTERY report that the Rev J G Jones, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev W A Watson, BA, BD, having received a Call from the Congregation of Scarva Street, Banbridge, resigned his charge on 12 September and was furnished with credentials to the Iveagh Presbytery; the congregations of First and Second Ray, and Carrigart were visited; that the financial statements of the congregations are being published in a Year Book; and that voting on Overtures anent Code Pars 65 (2) and 97 (h) was in each case 19 For, and 0 Against. |
| Visited | |

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| Retired | The DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY report that the Rev Samuel Anketell, MA, BD, is their Moderator; that there retired on 30 June, 2001, Rev Robert Cobain, BA, and on 28 February, 2002 Rev Charles McCurdy, MA, BD; that on 4 September, 2001 Rev Katherine Meyer, BA, MDiv, was installed as University chaplain in Trinity College, Dublin and that Rev William McLaren, MA, BD, presented Credentials from the Presbytery of West Lothian and was installed as University Chaplain in Dublin City University and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; that on 26 January, 2002 Mr S J Lockington, BA, BD, presented Credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane and was ordained and Inducted to the charge of Mullingar and Corbooy under the Home Mission Development Scheme; that the Presbytery has under its care as a Minister without Charge, Rev Ruth Gregg, BD, and |
| Installed | |
| Ordained | |
| Under care | |

as a Student for the Ministry, Mrs Karen Campbell; that during the year the following congregations were visited: Abbey and Ballina, Killala and Ballymote; that the Overtures sent down anent Pars 65 (2) and 97 (h) of the Code were approved, with 24 members voting for and none against in each case; that the Financial Statements of all Congregations are being published separately.

Visited

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev A A McCullough, BEng, MDiv, is their Moderator; that the Rev T D Allen, BSc, BD, Minister of Clones, Newbliss, Stonebridge and Ballyhobridge, resigned his charge on 5 April, 2001, having received and accepted a Call from Ballyrashane, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Coleraine; that the Rev B C G Black, BSSc, BD, Minister of 1st Monaghan, resigned his charge on 7 March, 2002, having received and accepted a Call from Ballygowan, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that they have no students for the ministry under their care; that during the year no congregations were visited; that the Financial Reports for each Congregation are being printed separately.

Resigned

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. The Business Board is charged with preparing an Order of Business for the various sessions of the General Assembly, examining resolutions, overtures and memorials being submitted, and making all necessary arrangements for the discharge of the Assembly's business. With the willing help of the new Convener of the Arrangements Committee, Rev Colin Morrison, and others, the Board has continued to discharge these duties.

2. This year the timing of business on Friday has been left flexible to allow for the possibility of the closing of the Assembly following on immediately after Prayers, should all items on the agenda have been cleared by that stage. Information about abbreviated timings in the event of an accumulation of lapsed business, and details of the "Alternative" format for the presentation of Assembly reports are now printed in the "Guide to Assembly Procedures" (see the Yellow Pages, Pars 11 and 16, at the front of this book of Reports).

3. Even where the "Alternative" format is not being followed, speakers submitting reports are encouraged to make full use of the modern technology now available, eg by projecting pictures or paragraph headings on to the screens, but such arrangements should be made with the Information Officer, Mr Stephen Lynas, in good time.

4. Questions, which should be written out in advance and placed in the box provided, 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.

5. Amendments should be written out and submitted to the Clerk's desk before they are spoken to.

6. To assist the orderly transaction of business the following recommendations are made:-

- (i) All questions dealing with one topic should be dealt with before moving on to another topic.
- (ii) Speeches under resolution 1, "That the Report be received", should be made only where there is no later resolution dealing with the subject.
- (iii) In the special case of the Church and Government Committee the report will be taken as a separate item, with its own question time, etc.

7. If business lapses, conveners will have the choice of standing by for the first available slot (which all interested in that report should note), or having the item rescheduled for Friday.

8. If business runs late on Friday afternoon the Assembly may adjourn to the Minor Hall or May Street Church.

9. The front row of seats in the Assembly Hall will be reserved for those wishing to speak, who are requested to come forward to these reserved seats in good time and give their names before beginning their speech.

10. Copies of the Annual Accounts are available to members of Assembly upon request to the Financial Secretary's Office.

Board Membership

11. The Business Board is appointed in accordance with the provisions of Par 275 of the Code to take office on the 15 March preceding the Assembly. The Board for the year 2002-2003 together with the associated Arrangements Committee, is as follows:-

THE CLERK, Convener

- (a) The Moderator, and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, the former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, all Assembly Conveners and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards, Financial Secretary, Youth and Information Officers.
- (b) Rev WA Kennedy; W Graham — Rev Dr J Thompson; WH Scott — Rev Dr J Harper; W Pentland — Rev SWW Neilly; R Gibson — Rev GE Best; E McCleary — Rev Dr MA Barry; G McCullough.
- (c) Rev JJ Andrews; WG McDowell — Rev JW McAuley; N Carmichael — Rev TJ McCormick; P McGonigle — Rev JT Magowan; R Patterson— Rev D Bannerman; J McIlroy.
- (d) Rev TC Morrison; G Crooks— Rev Dr Ruth Patterson; V Elliott — Rev JR Lambe; Miss VJ Wilson.
- (e) Rev Dr R Kane; G Elder — Rev TV Mawhinney; A Smyth — Rev R Herron; W Steele — Rev WT Bingham; S McKinney.
- (f) Rev JG Jones; J Moody — Rev A Mitchell; W McIlreavy — Rev DT Moore; J Jenkins.

A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (5) Rev TC Morrison, Convener

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Information Officer, Hospitality Secretary, TH Cochrane; Rev TC Morrison.
- (x) Revs Alan S Thompson, PT Dalzell; D Crowe, M. Fisher.
- (y) Revs JR Lambe, GE Best, TJ McCormick, R Herron, D Bannerman; Miss VJ Wilson, GY Crooks, WG McDowell.

Other Churches

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

Church of Ireland General Synod 2002: Rev A V Martin, Dr John Kirkpatrick

Methodist Conference 2002: Rt Rev Dr H A Dunlop, Rev David Cupples, Mr John Henderson.

Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev W J Orr

Eglise Réformée de France: Rev Uel Marrs

The URC Assembly 2001

Rev Trevor Gribben reports:

1. The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church met at the University of York from 16th to 19th July 2001. Due to the unavoidable absence of Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow, I had the privilege of representing our General Assembly, and was accompanied by Rev Colin McClure, who attended as a full voting member in partnership with the URC. The URC extends this right to a number of sister churches in the British Isles.

2. Much of the procedure and business broadly reflected that of our own Assembly. We began with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, followed by the formal constitution of the Assembly and the induction of the new Moderator, Rev Elizabeth Welch by the outgoing Moderator Rev Bill Mahood, originally from Northern Ireland. The fact however that the URC General Assembly is residential, in 2001 running from a Monday lunchtime through to a Thursday afternoon, gave it an added dimension. Not only did this mean that almost all Assembly members were in attendance for the entire Assembly, and indeed it seemed present at every item of business, but it also allowed for greater interaction, both over meals and in informal gatherings. The evenings were also used creatively, with both fringe meetings and a very pleasant social evening to bid farewell to the retiring General Secretary Rev Tony Burnham.

3. The agenda for the actual business sessions was quite packed. It included both normal Assembly 'house-keeping' and reports on ongoing work, as well as brief 'snap-shots' of the life of the URC in different synods. One report in particular that stood out was that of the Life and Witness Committee, convened incidentally by another Northern Ireland exile, Rev Frank Beattie. This was both realistic, recognising the challenge of outreach in a secular society, and at the same time visionary, as it affirmed the central place of evangelism in the life of the Church and called for those with gifting in evangelism to be sought out and released for ministry at every level of the Church. Like most Assemblies there were also some tense and indeed controversial moments, chiefly around discussions related to inter-faith issues and the implications of the human sexuality debate.

4. Towards the end of the Assembly the Moderator, along with several key staff members, took time to meet with all the visiting delegates, giving us the opportunity to share our impressions of the Assembly and to express our appreciation for the generous hospitality we received. This reflected a real desire, reflected throughout the week, to ensure that visiting delegates were given every opportunity possible to feel part of the Assembly. This was much appreciated and greatly added to our participation.

The Methodist Conference 2001

Very Rev Dr Howard Cromie reports:

1. The 232nd Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland was held mainly in Seymour Street Methodist Church, Lisburn, for the business sessions from Friday, 8th June until Tuesday, 12th June, 2001.

2. The opening service was held in Fisherwick Presbyterian Church, when the Rev Harold Good was Installed as Vice-President of the Conference and President of the Methodist Church in Ireland. The theme of his inaugural address was – “Let My People Go”, taking the Exodus story and applying it to life in the modern world – the need for liberation in the Church, in politics and in society.

3. The Presbyterian representatives were the Very Rev Dr Howard Cromie, the Rev Ian S McDowell and Mrs Sadie Meban. They were warmly welcomed and were given the opportunity of bringing greetings and addressing the Conference.

4. Four candidates for the Methodist Ministry were ordained at the Conference service in Fisherwick Church. Each ordinand gave a short statement on his or her sense of call, and the English President, the Rev Inderjit S Bhogal, who is of Indian background, gave a comprehensive address. After the Ordination there was the celebration of Communion. Presbyterians do not have a monopoly of long services!

5. Bible Studies were led each day at noon by Bishop George Irvine from South Africa. He brought such words as Repentance, Reconciliation, and Renewal to life as he illustrated them from “Real Life” situations which he had witnessed in South Africa and which apply equally here in Ireland.

6. The business sessions were well ordered yet relaxed, but with a general feeling of trust and co-operation. There appeared to be very little evidence of divisions among them.

7. There was some discussion on a proposed Covenant between the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland by which the two churches will commit themselves to work more closely together.

8. The Methodist Women’s Association and the Young Women’s Groups held their meetings in Railway Street Presbyterian Church and were well attended. Women played a significant role in the Conference as did the young people.

9. We were impressed by the strong sense of social concern that pervaded the Conference. A full report highlighted the alarming rise in the suicide rate in Ireland, especially among young men, and thought was given to the pastoral issues this raises.

10. Concern for asylum seekers also loomed large, pointing out that some were being held in Maghaberry Prison. It was encouraging to hear how some Methodist churches in the Republic have been reaching out hands of friendship and have found considerable numbers of such people turning to them and attending their services. In some places this has had a renewing effect on worship and brought blessing to local churches.

11. One of the most perceptive reports was on the Arab/Israeli conflict in the Middle East given by Mrs Gillian Kingston.

12. Methodists and Presbyterians share many concerns and challenges which we need to face together as co-workers for the Kingdom of God.

The Welsh Assembly 2001

Rev R Vallely reports:

1. When I was appointed to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales I spoke with some colleagues who had represented our Church in previous years. From each of them I received glowing comments about the Welsh Assembly, especially on the warmth of welcome and the fellowship. I would affirm their comments as our experience from arrival on Monday 16th July, 2001 to departure on Thursday, 19th July. The warmth of welcome, the enthusiasm, and the friendship were enjoyed by both Zoe and myself during our stay at the University of Wales, Lampeter. It was a thrilling experience and both of us are indebted to our Church for enabling us to share in another part of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2. The Assembly was efficiently and effectively led by the Moderator, the Rev Ellis Wynne Davies who gave us and the other delegates a warm official welcome at the Opening Session. I was able to respond by bringing greetings from our Moderator and our General Assembly. I expressed appreciation for the prayerful interest of the Welsh Church in our political impasse. I also told members that we prayerfully stood with them over the recent foot and mouth crisis and the communal division.

3. At the Tuesday evening session the new Moderator was installed. Dr Brynley Roberts, an elder from Aberystwyth, came to office and conducted the business for the remaining sessions of the Assembly. The Assembly signalled another change in the office-bearers by accepting the resignation of their General Secretary, the Rev Gareth Edwards who will return to the Parish Ministry after the 2002 Assembly.

4. When we received the printed Reports of the Welsh Assembly we noted that both English and Welsh were used. This knowledge did not prepare us for the extent to which Welsh is used almost exclusively in debate, in worship and in conversation. We are indebted to excellent translators over the personal earphones and by conversation being in English when we were present. The deep desire to retain and maintain not only the Welsh language but also the culture was specifically addressed during one of the debates. "Crisis in the Welsh Speaking communities" drew a decision to ask the Welsh National Assembly to establish a Commission to research ways to preserve the language and culture.

5. The debates centred around such issues as a document on Uniting the Churches in Wales, which did not receive majority support; the introduction of guidelines on the safety of children; Elders presiding at the Lord's Table; and the future of the Theological College Building in Aberystwyth.

6. The Worship sessions were memorable for the singing which we shared in, even though the words were in Welsh. The fervent preaching with an emphasis on revival was inspirational.

7. Socially, we enjoyed the residential nature of the Assembly; the meal times and for Zoe trips to places of interest in the enjoyable company of wives of Assembly Members.

8. We will retain many happy memories of our visit to this branch of the Christian Church and to the scenic country of Wales.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia 2001

Rev Dr R F S Poots reports:

1. Australia seems far away, but the warmth of welcome dispelled distance and there was genuine delight that the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand and our Church had accepted invitations, which for the first time had been extended to sister Churches, to the Centenary Assembly.

2. First impressions were of a Church in many respects similar to our own filled with determination to guard and to spread the Gospel, which is reflected in its commitment to overseas mission, to work among aboriginals and to a Home Mission whose 'border riders' spend their lives in caravans towed by four-wheel drive vehicles in order to reach the remote and lonely cattle stations of the Outback.

3. The Assembly meets every three years which necessitates greater authority being given to the State Assemblies, though Australians, historically, have opposed the centralisation of power, both politically and ecclesiastically. All Commissioners attend business sessions and there is a much greater spread of participation in debates, though with shorter speeches, than we know. It was interesting to see rulings by the Moderator being challenged and then being put to the House for determination.

4. The Australian Church, in general, is more conservative than we are. The ordination of women to the eldership has been so divisive that it is left to each Presbytery to decide its own policy. An attempt to reintroduce the ordination of women to the ministry did not get so far as being put to the vote.

5. The Church very much perceives itself to be the 'Continuing Presbyterian Church of Australia' and there is still hurt, no doubt felt also within the Uniting Church of Australia, over the division which took place with the formation of the Uniting Church in 1977. It was good, therefore, to see the President of the Uniting Church, the Rev Prof James Haire, present at the Centenary Celebration, an exciting event which attracted thousands to Sydney Town Hall.

6. The praise was led by a 400 strong Korean choir. Congregational praise was a blend of the traditional and vibrant contemporary hymns, more vibrant than would have found a welcome at our General Assembly and, remarkably from our point of view and surprisingly in a Church of protective conservatism, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney was officially represented.

7. A final inspiring Service of Thanksgiving was held in Canberra, the capital city, in a lovely church building set at the centre of the seat of Government. The minister, the Rev Joy Bartholomew, is one of the few female ministers of the Church, and her husband is her Associate Minister. The Governor General attended.

8. The Presbyterian Church of Australia is a warm-hearted group of friends in Christ whose ambition is to glorify God. It has a significant contribution to make to the spread of the Gospel, provided it can free itself from over-introspective conservatism.

The PCUSA General Assembly 2001

Rev Robert Herron reports:

1. The 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) met in Louisville, Kentucky from 9th-16th June, 2001.

2. On the night of the official opening, four candidates for the position of Moderator addressed the Assembly and after speeches by their proposers, each faced 20 minutes of questioning from the floor. Rev Jack Rodgers, a minister and scholar from Pasadena, California, gained the support of 55 percent of the 558 commissioners (voting members) and was appointed Moderator of the 2001 General Assembly.

3. During the first few days there were no plenary sessions, instead committees met to accept, reject or amend resolutions from church bodies and individuals sent to the Assembly. When the 'licensed' resolutions were put to the commissioners in plenary session there was further debate before an electronic vote was taken. Advisory delegates, categorised as ecumenical delegates, missionary partners, theological students and youth, voted first. The results of the voting patterns of advisory delegates were displayed in graphic form on large screens. Having been "advised", the commissioners voted and within seconds the result appeared, again this was presented visually. The duration of the entire voting process was less than one minute. If a resolution had financial implications these were outlined to the Assembly before a vote was taken.

4. There were a number of divisive issues on the Assembly's agenda. One of the most closely watched debates led to the adoption of a statement affirming 'the unique authority of Jesus Christ as Lord'. The Assembly approved the formation of a seventeen-member task force to 'lead the PCUSA in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity, ... seeking the peace, unity, and purity of the church'. The task force will explore issues related to Christology, biblical authority and interpretation, ordination standards and power within PCUSA. It will make its final report to the 2005 General Assembly.

5. It was the question of ordination standards that dominated much of the official and unofficial business of the 213th General Assembly. After some hours of debate, the Assembly voted by a 60% majority to send a proposed constitutional amendment to the Presbyteries that would delete section G-6.0106b (the commonly called 'fidelity and chastity' provision) from the PCUSA's *Book of Order*. The measure must be approved by Presbyteries to take effect and requires a two-thirds majority.

6. Other issues on the Assembly's agenda included:

- the ethical and moral implications of stem cell and foetal tissue research;

- strategies to strengthen support for pastors in their first charge and support for church leaders;
- the establishment of a fund to give financial assistance to Presbyterians who are attempting to adopt a child;
- a policy statement on domestic violence;
- a new strategy for revitalising campus ministry in higher education.

7. The Assembly issued an apology to Americans of African descent for the institution of slavery and called for a study on the issue of reparations for African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and others who have experienced unjust treatment.

8. Moved by firsthand testimonies of guests from war-torn parts of the world, the Assembly voted on a wide-ranging list of global and peacemaking concerns. There were resolutions on:

- environmental issues;
- ‘sex-tourism’;
- AIDS;
- a call for the demilitarisation of US anti-drug policies in Colombia;
- a statement calling for withdrawal of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- the Assembly urged that the US government send humanitarian and economic aid rather than military assistance to countries of the Middle East;
- the Assembly added the name of a Canadian oil company to the church’s list of corporations whose stock is subject to divestment because of the company’s role in funding the Sudanese government’s war against many of its citizens.

9. There was also a resolution supporting peace efforts and encouraging US companies to invest in Northern Ireland.

10. Voting members attended all plenary sessions of the Assembly, as well as the committee meetings held during the first few days. There was also a good attendance at the various lobbying events and social, educational and worship gatherings during the eight days, giving the overall impression that this is a church with enthusiasm within its membership and which takes its work seriously.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Rev Roy Vallely

1. Following his resignation as Arrangements Committee Convener at the 2001 General Assembly, Rev Roy Vallely has been a valuable adviser and consultant in our preparation and planning for this Assembly. We trust the arrangements in place for this year will continue to ensure the efficient arrangements that were the hallmark of his convenership.

Transport

2. A complimentary limousine has been provided by James Stevenson and Son for the use of the Moderator on Monday night and by Houston and Williamson for the remainder of the week. A similar facility for the outgoing Moderator on the Monday evening is provided by Melville and Co Ltd. The thanks of the Assembly is expressed to all concerned.

Review of Assembly Arrangements

3. Following the 2001 General Assembly a review was conducted of some aspects of the Opening Service and other acts of worship during Assembly Week. Issues raised included the length of the opening service, music within it, the nature of the reception of new licentiates and recently retired ministers at the Wednesday evening rally, and the source of the invitation to the guest speaker at the Wednesday evening Rally and daily prayers. Resolutions are appended to test the mind of the Assembly.

Rev Prof James Haire

4. We look forward to welcoming the Rev Prof James Haire as our Speaker for the Assembly Rally on Wednesday evening. Prof Haire will also speak at Midday Worship from Wednesday to Friday.

Communion Service

5. Following the decision of the General Assembly in 2001, the Communion Service this year will be held in Church House commencing at 9.30 am.

Catering Arrangements

6. Bread and Cheese lunches will be available at lunch time on Tuesday, with proceeds going to the World Development Appeal as usual. No meals will be sold in the Minor Hall on Wednesday – Friday, but instead tea and coffee will be available at a small charge and space at tables will be available for those who may wish to bring their own lunch.

Voting Cards

7. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk at the Carrickfergus Window where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning, after which Members should contact the Financial Secretary's Office.

Admission

8. Admission to the Private Session is only for those who have and show their own voting card. In any vote the Moderator may call for voting cards to be shown and only those displaying their own voting card are eligible to vote.

Expenses

9. All Members may claim a daily allowance, but travel expenses cover the cost of only one return journey in the week. Claims should be made on the

appropriate form obtainable from the Reception at the Wellington Street entrance. Full details of rates are printed on the form.

COLIN MORRISON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That the professional amplification controller and the visual display operator be admitted to the private session.
4. That a grant of £15,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.
5. That the Business Board, with its associated working committee, for the ensuing year beginning 15 March, 2003 be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code.

BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Convener: Rev IVOR SMITH

Secretary: Mr STEPHEN LYNAS

1. The work of the Board and its Committees has continued throughout the year dealing with a range of important matters, with the work on the new hymnbook taking up the bulk of our time and effort.

2. There has been continued progress on developing our communications strategy, particularly in conjunction with the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities.

3. The number of ministers using email has now passed the 300 mark. This has greatly helped increase the effectiveness of our internal communications.

4. We are very grateful for the assistance of the Financial Secretary and the convener of Finance and Staffing as we addressed the issue of the deficit in our accounts, which was drawn to the attention of last year's Assembly.

5. This year we bid farewell to three of our conveners, Rev John Carlisle, Rev Richard Hill and Rev Ivor Smith. Each has served the Board and the Church well, and we thank them for their contribution to our work.

6. During the year two members of staff resigned from the department. Mr Paul McFarlane, Video Assistant, and Mr Martin McNeely, Information Assistant. Both served the department and the wider church well and we thank them warmly for jobs well done and wish them well in their future careers.

Rev Ivor Smith

Stephen Lynas writes:

1. Like a good author, Rev Ivor Smith has been credited with many titles during more than twenty years of outstanding service to the Board of Communications. He began as a Board and Committee member, then a Committee Convener and at this Assembly he ends his term as Convener of the Board.

2. His original enthusiasm for things historical and related publications has carried through into every aspect of the communications world. Particularly, his Londonderry wisdom and common sense have greatly benefited the Board as it has sought to facilitate the General Assembly in difficult and far-reaching decisions concerning the new hymnbook.

3. Aside from his tireless management of both Board and related Committees, his Convener'ship has been marked by pastoral concern for the Board's staff. His friendly and encouraging banter in the office has been appreciated, as have his personal calls when things have been more difficult. For all he has brought to the Board of Communications, Rev Ivor Smith has its warmest thanks.

Rev John Carlisle

1. At this Assembly Rev John Carlisle completes his seven-year term as convener of the Communications Administration Committee. This Committee is responsible for a wide range of matters. He has steered the committee through its work steadily, quietly and in a friendly and cheerful manner. His work and his personality have won the respect and warm affection of his colleagues.

Rev Richard Hill

1. Rev Richard Hill has been convener of the Media Committee since 1997. He has a very wide interest in, and understanding of, media issues, and has brought many of them to the attention of the committee. This has involved a great deal of time and effort, particularly for him. His energy and expertise have been phenomenal, and have been indispensable to both the committee and other agencies of the Church. As a Board we hold him in very high regard, and are indebted to him for a job very well done.

Minister in Recognised Service

Rev Dr Bert Tosh reports:

1. I continue to work in Religious Broadcasting as a Senior Producer in BBC Northern Ireland. This involves being responsible for the transmission of some 430 hours of radio programmes on BBC Radio Ulster and about 15 on network radio along with a small amount of television.

2. The world of broadcasting is changing rapidly. I am aware that I may have stated this in earlier reports to the Assembly but the pace of change slackens little. In the midst of all this, religious broadcasting does have an important place but clearly in a multiple channel world, the proportion of time devoted to it overall is bound to fall. The world of religion is also changing with an increasing number of people quite unmoved by organised religion yet still seeking some sort of spiritual satisfaction. All these factors continue to make the world of religious broadcasting both interesting and challenging.

3. I am grateful to all those people who contribute in so many ways to a wide variety of programmes. Without their commitment and co-operation, our programmes would be the poorer.

4. At the time of writing, I continue as the Convener of the Vacancy in First Lisburn.

MEDIA COMMITTEE

1. The committee has sought to fulfil the remit of the Assembly in a number of ways:

2. Religious advisers for TV and radio have kept us informed of the impact of rapid change in broadcast media.

3. Very Rev Dr John Dunlop reported that he would be standing down as religious adviser to UTV this year. UTV will appoint a successor. This is not a church appointment, but we will note the outcome with interest.

4. The Media Committee wish to record thanks to Dr Dunlop for over seven years service to UTV and the Church in this capacity. He has given wise counsel and been an extremely able ambassador for the Church in the Media.

5. The Convener met with Mr Alan Bookbinder, Head of Religion and Ethics in the BBC, when he visited Northern Ireland. A great deal has been reported in the press about the fact the Mr Bookbinder is agnostic. The Convener had the opportunity to discuss a number of concerns about the future of religious broadcasting on the network. Mr Bookbinder was very positive about the role of Religion in the BBC, and is a strong advocate of religious broadcasting.

6. The Media Committee has lobbied a number of television networks on matters of taste and decency.

7. We noted with interest that Ulster Television's Holy Ground Christian magazine programme enjoyed excellent ratings. We have encouraged UTV to consider similar programmes in the future.

8. Local coverage of Presbyterian events and productions involving Presbyterians in the media during the last year has been good. The Information Office continues to circulate over 150 stories per year on Church related issues.

9. The Convener and other members of the committee have had opportunities to comment on media issues on local radio and in the local press.

10. Media Watch articles continue in the Herald, examining a range of media issues.

R HILL, Convener

COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Department

1. In our contemporary society an efficient and reliable communications network is essential and this is equally applicable to our Presbyterian Church in Ireland. For some time now this committee has felt that it is necessary for the role of communications to have a high profile in the workings of our Church. A five-year development plan for the Communications Board has been presented to the Panel on Priorities. This plan has significant implications for the Communications Department (including the Video Unit) and for the promotion of a corporate identity for our Church.

2. Stephen Lynas and his hardworking staff maintain an excellent service to the Church in the areas of information, advertising and media relations.

3. The Presbyterian Briefing publication for United Appeal continues to be a successful means of informing Church members about the purpose of the United Appeal. Last year's target was exceeded by over £400,000 and the Board attributes this mainly to the effectiveness of the Briefing as promotional material.

4. We remain indebted to the dedicated help of the PROP ladies in the distribution of Points for Prayer booklets and Update leaflets. From the start of

2002 Update leaflets ceased publication. Enquirers are encouraged to telephone Prayerline or use the Internet connection for weekly updates.

Herald

5. The editor, Rev Arthur Clarke, and his production team consistently present an attractive magazine with very wide-ranging and thoughtful articles, which deserves a larger readership than it receives at present. An improved production schedule has meant that recent editions have been ready for distribution in good time for the beginning of the month.

W J CARLISLE, Convener

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1. As part of its remit, the Society publishes books and pamphlets on a wide range of historical subjects, particularly relating to Irish Presbyterianism. During the year we published Prof John Thompson's Robert Allen Memorial Lecture on Presbyterianism and ecumenism, entitled "If winter's here, can spring be far behind?" Our most recent publication is Ebb and Flow a book of essays in Church History in honour of Prof Finlay Holmes, and edited by Dr Donald Patton.

2. The Society's programme of events is designed to appeal to a variety of historical interests.

3. We invite all who are interested to visit our room in Church House (Room 2.20) which is on the second floor and is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.00am – 12.30pm and Wednesday 10.00am – 12.30pm and 1.00pm – 3.30pm. Our Assistant Secretary will be pleased to assist members and visitors in whatever way he can.

4. We thank all who support the Society. The Incidental Fund remains a vital source of income, therefore, we express our gratitude to the General Assembly for its generosity.

W J H McKEE, Convener

FAMILYBOOKS LIMITED

1. Business over the last year has been difficult for the shop, although we continue to trade profitably. We were concerned at the start of 2001 that the foot and mouth outbreak might have had some bearing on our direct sales to congregations, as by early spring, there had been a marked decline in requests for bookstalls. Bookstall activity did subsequently pick up, although we suffered from the cancellation of the Sunday School Fun Day.

2. As regards business in the shop, for much of the year this generally was quite slack. Trade overall in the Spires Mall has been poor, with quite a few of the other shops vacant and, as a Board, we continue to have concerns about the Mall position. We cannot be certain, but we would estimate that at least 75%

of the people coming into the Mall do so to visit Familybooks, with the other shops bringing very few people into the Mall.

3. During the summer, we carried out some renovations involving knocking down the wall between the two former shops. This now gives us a combined shop which can be handled by one cash point rather than two. It is still early days, but we believe this has been a great success and there has been a very positive customer reaction.

4. The Board would continue to encourage congregations and individual members to support the bookshop of the Presbyterian Church.

D THOMSON, Chairman

PUBLIC WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Of necessity much of the work of the Public Worship Committee over the past year has been taken up with the preparation of the new Irish Presbyterian book of praise. The four sub-committees, ie existing materials; contemporary materials; psalmody and liturgical materials; children's materials, have been working full out and, at the time of going to press, are well advanced towards a definitive list for inclusion. Much thought centred around the question of what to call the new hymnbook. Various titles were put forward and after much debate, and providing there are no copyright problems, it was agreed to use the title *Worship Together*, under the umbrella of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Various layouts for the new hymnal were discussed and it was eventually agreed to use a biblically based layout commencing, as Genesis does, with creation and going through the biblical narrative right up to the doctrine of the last things in Revelation.

2. Four publishers were asked to tender for the production of the new hymnal, ie Kevin Mayhew Publishers; Kingsway Publications; Oxford University Press and SCM Canterbury. Kevin Mayhew withdrew at an early stage due to a heavy workload. The latter three sent representatives to meet the Hymnal Committee and, on recognising that a core hymnal such as ours had never been hitherto undertaken by Kingsway Press, they too withdrew. This left the committee with Oxford University Press and SCM Canterbury. The committee pay warm tribute to Mr. Clive Knox (Financial Secretary) and Mr. Jonathan Kelly (Financial Accountant). They initially drew up a list of proposal assumptions which were circulated to the publishers. On receiving a response to these proposal assumptions they further drew up a summary of responses to the proposals received. This exercise clarified a number of important points, particularly in relation to the alternative financial possibilities open to us as a Church. It focused the committee on such matters as: (a) origination costs (b) selling price of the book (words and music) (c) royalties to be received by Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

3. Comparing origination costs, the Committee decided to appoint SCM Canterbury.

4. Clearly, much groundwork still needs to be done to ensure that we come up with the best versions of hymns married to the best possible

arrangements of tunes. When it comes to subject matter, we need to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of praises under the various subject headings. Indexing is also very much under consideration to ensure that the hymnal can be conveniently and competently handled. It is the wish of the committee, and indeed now the publisher, to ensure that the new hymnal will be attractive in its presentation, comprehensive in its subject matter, singable in its usage, and be widely used in the praise of God throughout our congregations and maybe even far beyond.

5. As far as our relationship with the Church Hymnary Trust is concerned we understand that the complete separation took place at the 31st December 2001. On going to press it has emerged that the figure accruing to Presbyterian Church in Ireland will be 22.21% of whatever the total capital figure will be at the 31st March 2002. This will be paid into a central account of Presbyterian Church in Ireland whose General Assembly, at its forthcoming meeting will decide what is to be done with this money. It is the considered opinion of the Public Worship Committee that this money, made up of royalties from the sale of hymn books, should be used for matters dealing with public worship at the discretion of the General Assembly. Hence the attached appropriate resolution.

6. The siting of the proposed Resource Centre has again been raised throughout the year at meetings of the Committee. There are those who feel it should be sited at the Church House complex, thus taking advantage of the considerable volume of passing traffic to and from Church House. However, in the light of the fact that a Resource Centre is already planned in the refurbishing of the College, and that clearly two Resource Centres for Presbyterian Church in Ireland would be one too many, and also that the Committee on the Overview of Funding has ruled that the Resource Centre will have to be self-financing, it was the unanimous opinion of those present at the last meeting of the Committee that it should be sited at the College. This would enable it to have the advantage of some part-time secretarial help and enable students at the college, both ministerial and lay, to familiarise themselves with its contents.

7. On the issue of the section on the sacraments within the Experimental Revision Folder, it should be noted that all Presbyteries responded – some in a way that is commending of the materials, others in a way that is critical of the materials. It should be made clear that as far as services for the Church are concerned only the 1965 Book of Public Worship, edited by the late Professor John Barkley, has the authority of the General Assembly. The materials within the Experimental Revision Folder have always been issued in the name of the Public Worship Committee and at no time had, or ever claimed to have, General Assembly status. They have been mere suggestions, meant to be helpful to ministers in the conduct of particular services, which ministers are free to use, revise, alter or ignore. It has been the practice that when a sub-committee from within the Public Worship Committee has been appointed to produce materials for a particular service, it has been left to that sub-committee to get on with the job without reporting back to the full committee. On reflection, this may have been unwise in that the materials produced by the sub-committee can then be said not to have the full authority of the Public Worship Committee. With regard to the section on the sacraments, it is the considered opinion of the Public

Worship Committee that these should be withdrawn and revised, taking into consideration the various points that have been raised by Presbyteries and the Doctrine Committee.

W T J RICHARDSON, Convener

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. The Church Architecture Committee has met on seven occasions since the last report to the General Assembly, including their annual "autumn tour", which this past year took place in counties Antrim and Londonderry.

2. The Committee dealt with numerous submissions ranging from the building of new churches, church halls and manses, to the installation of data projectors and the provision of adequate disabled access to church properties.

3. Whilst the submissions regarding disabled access to church property have been numerous, the Committee wishes to emphasise the fact that forthcoming legislation (2005) will require disabled access to all areas of public buildings (ie churches and church halls) and that such access should give way to integrated access within the building (not a row of wheelchair places at the back). Provision of a disabled toilet should also be made.

4. The Committee has increasingly made it their priority to help congregations by giving adequate advice at the initial stages of planning as well as approval when final plans are submitted. This procedure is working well and appears to be much appreciated, especially when major building work is required. The Committee encourages congregations to consult with them as early as possible, especially when major repairs or building work is to be undertaken.

5. The Committee has been pleased to give advice to congregations which have needed to re-configure their sanctuary to facilitate more modern forms of worship and which have sought to provide larger concourse areas for informal gatherings before or after church services.

6. As the number of new manse projects is increasing, the Committee would appreciate that full site plans and diagrams are included with all applications.

7. The Committee wishes to remind congregations to examine the correct procedure regarding submissions, and emphasises the need for Presbytery approval for all planning applications submitted to the Church Architecture Committee.

8. The Committee is actively examining recent legislation regarding listed buildings in the Republic of Ireland, and recently has been involved in the "Quinquennial Review of the Planning Appeals and Water Appeals Commissions."

9. The Convener and Rev. R. Cobain have represented the Church as members of the Ulster Historic Churches Trust during the past year.

10. The Committee acknowledge the help given by their volunteer experts and advisers, and especially that of Miss Rosemary Jack who is recovering after her recent serious illness.

L W H HILDITCH, Convener

MEMORIAL RECORD

Rev Samuel Scott, BD, PhD, ThD former minister of Tullycarnet, died on 25 July 2001 in the 80th year of his age and the 39th of his ministry.

Born in East Belfast, he was employed for some twenty years in the Sirocco Engineering Works, but felt the call to full-time Christian service. Having spent two years with Belfast City Mission, he attended Queen's University and Assembly's College, gaining in 1965 the degree of Bachelor of Divinity (PTFI).

An assistantship in St. Andrew's, Rosetta led to his licensing by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 9 May 1963 and to his ordination in Clough on 19 September the same year. He ministered in Co Down to the united congregations of Clough and Seaforde for two years, and thereafter in Taughmonagh for a further two and a half years, during which period he served also as chaplain in Belfast City Hospital. On 30 May 1968 he was installed in Tullycarnet, where he remained until 4 November 1983.

He was awarded doctorates by Greenwich University School of Theology, USA.

He is survived by his wife and a daughter.

Rev William John Crossley Mercer, MA, senior minister of Coagh and Ballygoney, died on 14 November 2001, in the 86th year of his age and the 59th of his ministry.

A Belfast man, he was to inherit from his father, who was for many years chairman of Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, an interest in antiques and Fine Arts. Formal education took place at Bedford College, Belfast, Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated in Arts in 1939. He spent a year at New College, Edinburgh before coming to Assembly's College, Belfast.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 11 June 1941, after an assistantship in First Derry, he crossed the Irish Sea to Liverpool and the congregation of Trinity, Princes Road. During a ministry there of some eight years he became a hospital chaplain and Free Churches Chaplain to the University of Liverpool, and he undertook a period of study in its Law School. Having been an officiating Naval Chaplain in Londonderry, he continued chaplaincy work with the RAF in Liverpool and subsequently also in Tyrone.

It was on 7 March 1951 that he was installed as minister of Coagh and Ballygoney, where he was to spend more than 34 years, a long and faithful ministry which produced a history of Ballygoney congregation and ended only with retirement on 1 November 1985. A traditionalist who loved his Church, he valued its doctrines and liturgy. A convert of the late W P Nicholson, in earlier days he followed a tradition of open-air preaching, and his sermons were always well prepared and thought provoking.

Crossley Mercer was quiet and thoughtful by nature, a man of integrity, gentle and courteous and with a sense of humour. Kindly and considerate, he had a heart of compassion and a reputation for supporting the underdog. The respect he habitually gave to others earned him theirs in return. A member of the General Assembly's Architecture Committee, his interests extended also to history, music, books and gardening – and to a much-loved car.

He and his wife had three sons who, with her and their families, survive him.

Rev Derek George McMeekin, BA, MSc, MA(Phil), PhD, minister of First Ahoghill, died on 6 January 2002 in the 55th year of his age and the 29th of his ministry.

Born in Belfast in 11 December 1947, he attended Belfast High School, Regent House, Newtownards, and graduated in Arts from the Open University in 1985. An avid student, he acquired academic distinction in other spheres in subsequent years.

Brought up a Methodist, he offered himself as a candidate for the ministry of that Church, and served as a probationer in Dun Laoghaire and Enniskillen. Ordained on 17 June 1973 in Bangor, he served in the Republic of Ireland in Gorey, Co Wexford and Mountmellick, Co Laois; then in Northern Ireland at Portadown, Epworth and Mahon, and at Cullybackey. Received into the Presbyterian Church in 1986, he spent a period of assistantship in Carnmoney before receiving a call from the congregation of First Ahoghill. His ministry there, fuelled by deep personal devotion and prayer, was extended further through his involvement in the Faith Mission, and as a Convention speaker both in Ireland and overseas; and the missionary outreach work he established in his own congregation is testimony to his abiding interest in evangelism. He did not hesitate to deploy a sense of humour and his talent for storytelling as he commended the word and the worth of the Master.

The people to whom he ministered with dedication, and the wider Church too, are the poorer for his premature death; and the family whom he loved, his widow Audrey and their three daughters, Heather, Esther and Lydia, are commended in their great loss to the comfort and consolation of Him who is Lord of life and death and of the Church on earth and in Heaven.

Rev Samuel Eaton, MA, HCF, senior minister of McQuiston Memorial, Belfast, died on 15 February 2002, in the 90th year of his age and the 63rd of his ministry.

A twin, he was born in 1912 in Raphoe, Co Donegal, where his father farmed, and where the family was connected with First Raphoe congregation. It was at the Royal School there that he received his education and subsequently at Magee College, Trinity College, Dublin, and Assembly's College, Belfast.

Having completed his theological training, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Donegal on 13 November 1938, serving as Assistant in Ulsterville congregation until he accepted the call of First Killyleagh, where he was ordained on 27 July 1939. During World War Two he served as a chaplain with the RAF in North Africa, Italy and the Far East. The year 1950 brought a move to Bushmills, where he exercised his gracious ministry for almost nine years. On 10 March 1959 he was then installed as minister of McQuiston Memorial, where he remained until retirement on 20 September 1975.

He brought to one of the largest congregations of the General Assembly, qualities which had been nurtured in other places in earlier years. A man of humble faith, he was a faithful pastor, a caring counsellor, and an effective preacher of the gospel. His was a warm and friendly personality, and his contact

with those of the Presbyterian tradition to whom he ministered, and with those from other Church backgrounds, was enriched by a sense of humour. Always interested in sport, he played hockey for Ulster at a time, and found recreational outlet in subsequent years on the golf course.

Upon retirement he and his wife Molly returned to North Antrim and took up residence in Portballintrae, where there was opportunity to build further upon the good relationships the years had brought them through family and friends. The loss of his wife in 1991 after almost fifty years of happy partnership prompted a move to Bangor, to an apartment in the neighbourhood of West Church, of which congregation he became a supportive member, making regular and valued contribution out of his experience in parish ministry to one of its house study groups. He became a resident of Sunnyside, Bangor for the last six months of his life.

He will be missed by many, but especially by his two sons, Bryan and Denis, and by their families in the UK and in Australia.

Rev Alexander James Beattie, ACIS, senior minister of Merville and Greenbank, died on 1 March 2002, in the 79th year of his age and the 33rd of his ministry.

He was born on 9 July 1923 in North Belfast and had early aspirations towards a career in medicine. Family circumstances redirected him into the world of business. Years spent at the Belfast College of Technology, the School of Accountancy and the Metropolitan College enabled him to qualify as an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, and for a time he taught Business Studies in the Technical College in Lisburn. Deeply interested and involved in the life and work of the Church from his youth up, he became Boys' Brigade Captain in Bethany congregation at only nineteen years of age; at a later date he held the same position in Dunmurry, where he also served as an elder for fourteen years. His decision to enter theological college as a mature student was in response to a call of God which he deeply felt, and he studied at Assembly's College, Belfast. His ordination in Townsend Street in 1969 soon called upon him to assume the role of peacemaker in an area affected by the disturbances of the Troubles.

A call from the congregations of Newtownstewart and Gortin took him in 1971 to Co Tyrone; but the challenge of Church Extension came just two years later, with work initially in Lisnabreen, Bangor, and then with the addition of Ballycrochan. The two new causes benefited both materially and numerically from his energy and expertise, and in 1978 Ballycrochan merited undivided attention. During this period his business acumen served the General Assembly well in his appointment as convener of the Statistics Committee, from 1981 to 1986.

Although it was the onset of ill-health which prompted a move to Merville and Greenbank in 1986, he immediately initiated a scheme for the renovation of Manse and Church property, and it was there that he spent the last three years of active ministry.

In Alex Beattie practical skills and spiritual gifts were combined, and he made full use of both in the service of the Kingdom. Kindly encouragement was freely given to young and old alike, that men and women might make the best

of their own lives and be their best in their life for God. His common sense was widely respected; his belief in good order was acknowledged, as was his sense of humour.

For more than fifty years of a life that was full and fulfilled he had the loving, supportive companionship of his wife Ruby, before he entered the ministry, wherever they shared in ministry, and in the years of happy retirement they enjoyed in Bangor. She survives him, together with their son and daughter and the grandchildren.

REPORT BY THE CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

TO

The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the United Free Church of Scotland in respect of the year ending 31 December, 2001.

CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION

1. The sales of the Church Hymnary Third Edition show a marked decline on the previous year with 5,913 copies sold compared with 9,766 copies in 2000. The Royalty produced was £2,848.82 compared with £4,271.01 the previous year.

SCOTTISH PSALTER 1929

2. In total, only 22 copies of the Scottish Psalter bound with the Third Edition of the Church Hymnary were sold in the year 2001, compared with 640 copies the previous year.

IRISH PSALTER

3. The sales of the Irish Psalter totalled 948 copies compared with 1,420 copies in 2000.

FUTURE OF THE TRUST

4. In view of the intimation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Presbyterian Church of Wales they would not be participating in the production of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary, negotiations took place to agree a fair division of the capital of the Trust Funds to be paid to these Churches. This has now been agreed and will be based on the royalties earned by the sales of the Hymnary in past years. Arrangements will be made for the agreed proportion of the capital to be distributed to these Churches in proportion to the estimated sales.

CONTRACT WITH THE PUBLISHER FOR FOURTH EDITION OF THE HYMNARY

5. The Trustees have been negotiating the terms of the contract for the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary. The contract envisages that there will be 3 basic editions which the publisher is obliged to keep in print, namely Full Music, Melody and Large Words. Other editions can be produced by agreement.

STATE OF FUNDS

6. Notwithstanding the distribution to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Trustees are confident that they have sufficient funds to meet the costs of the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary. It is therefore proposed to distribute the Royalties in 2001 to the constituent Churches in the usual manner.

GEORGE W PENROSE, Chairman
JOHN M HODGE, Secretary and Treasurer

MARCH, 2002

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the resignation of Rev I F Smith as Convener of the Board of Communications be received, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev W A Kennedy be appointed in his place.
3. That the resignation of Rev W J Carlisle as Convener of the Communications Administration Committee be received, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev Dr R A Russell be appointed in his place.
4. That the resignation of Rev R Hill as Convener of the Media Committee be received, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev C Glover be appointed in his place.

Communications Administration

5. That the General Assembly express appreciation to the Board of Directors and staff of Familybooks and to the editor and production team of the Herald for the excellent service they provide, and encourage the church to support the bookshop as it operates in an increasingly competitive commercial climate and to promote readership of the Herald among its congregations.

Public Worship

6. That a grant of £800 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Public Worship Committee.
7. That the General Assembly agree that the origination costs of the new hymnal ie £24,050 be paid from the sum accruing from the Church Hymnary Trust.
8. That the General Assembly retain the balance of the amount accruing from the Church Hymnary Trust for the following purposes:

- (i) The production of the new hymnary in electronic format.
- (ii) Costs incurred in the launch of the new hymnary.
- (iii) Costs 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.

Historical Society

9. That a grant of £13,700 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Historical Society.

Church Architecture

10. That a grant of £500 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.

General

11. That the Board of Communications, together with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 277 of the Code as follows:

NOMINATION BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. On 28 February the General Board, acting on behalf of the Assembly, accepted Mr Norman Chambers' notice of retirement with effect from 31 August, 2002, and instructed the Nomination Board to commence the procedures for finding a successor. The General Board also decided that in this appointment the Alternative procedure should be used, ie interview by a ten member Panel appointed by the Nomination Board to submit one agreed name (See Reports 2001, p 115; Mins 2001 p 30).

2. The Nomination Board duly met on 5 February, when the following appointments were made.

Interviewing Panel

Moderator and Clerk

3 Specialists appointed by the Board of Social Witness

5 Others: Revs Dr Donald Watts, Desmond Knowles; D F Adair, R I Bashford; Mrs Kathleen Mawhinney.

Reserves: Very Rev Dr D H Allen (to deputise for the Moderator, if necessary), and Rev David Temple (to deputise for any one of the "Others", if necessary).

The three Specialists were subsequently named as Revs Roy Vallely, T J McCormick and Dr Jean McClune.

Contact Person: Mr Norman Chambers.

External Assessor: Professor David Bamford.

3. It was agreed that the Interviewing Panel should finalise the job description on behalf of the Board, and should also act as the Short-listing Committee. An advertisement for the post was also approved.

4. At time of writing interviews have not yet taken place, but it is hoped that, if all goes according to plan, it may be possible to submit a name to the Assembly in Daily Minutes, together with brief details of the nominee's application.

5. As this volume of Reports was going to press Rev Professor J C McCullough indicated his wish to retire from the post of Principal at Union Theological College. The Faculty are being consulted about a possible successor, and it is hoped to submit a name to the Assembly in Daily Minutes. A resolution of thanks will be submitted by the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That.....be appointed Director of Social Service and Secretary of the Board of Social Witness.
3. That the resignation of Rev Professor J C McCullough as Principal of Union Theological College be accepted, and that.....be appointed Principal in his place.
4. That the Nomination Board be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 276 of the Code as follows:

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev R HERRON

1. The Board met on three occasions during the past year. The main items of business are included in the Committee reports.

Rev Robert Herron

Rev A D Davidson writes:

2. The gratitude of the General Assembly is due to the Rev Robert Herron, who now completes his seven years of service as Convener of the Inter-Church Relations Board. This convenership demands much of the post-holder - wisdom, diligence, courage and a conciliatory spirit, and all of these qualities were apparent in the out-going convener.

3. Despite the demands of a heavy pastoral charge, Robert Herron devoted considerable time, enthusiasm and energy to the business of the Board and its various Committees, discharging his duties with quiet efficiency. Outside our own Church he was a worthy representative of the Assembly in his numerous contacts with other denominations and Councils of Churches, including the 23rd General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches held in Debrecen, Hungary in 1997, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA in 2001, as well as in countless meetings of the Irish Council of Churches, its Executive Committee, the Irish Inter-Church Meeting and its Committee.

4. One other matter deserves mention. Many who will never be involved in the work of inter-church relations at national or international level will know of, and will long remember, the Christian leadership he gave to his own people and to other Churches in Omagh in the aftermath of the enormous tragedy that devastated that town in August 1998. There he proved the possibility of, and the value of, good inter-church relations at the local level, which he himself had done much to foster. That example is an abiding inspiration to the whole community.

Rev A D Davidson

5. Rev Tony Davidson has completed seven years as Convener of the Irish Church Relations Committee. He has fulfilled his responsibilities with enthusiasm and determination. During his convenership he has represented PCI at various inter-church gatherings and has presented a Presbyterian viewpoint with clarity, conviction and self-criticism. He has given time and spent much energy serving the Committee and the Board expresses thanks to him for his contribution to the work of the Church.

Ministers in Recognised Service

Rev Andrew Gibson reports:

1. My work at Belfast Bible College continues to be stimulating and fulfilling. I have recently focussed my work more clearly on the teaching of Missiology and in particular, the changing face of mission in the twenty first century. It is very satisfying to encourage reflection at a wide range of academic levels, in churches and with youth groups, although I sometimes feel frustrated that the common perceptions of mission are so far from the realities. None the less the task of educating the church in its understanding of the mission of God cannot but be vital both for the growth of the Kingdom throughout the world and for the spiritual health of PCI and other older churches who are always in danger of either spiritual lethargy or spiritual arrogance.

Rev Desmond Maxwell reports:

1. I keep telling myself that I must be having fun since time passes so quickly. Certainly I have a great joy in my work at Belfast Bible College where there is daily contact with students from 32 different countries. Lecturing, and the preparation that it demands, is as rewarding as it is fulfilling. Moreover in the course of the past year I have had opportunity to teach in both Burkina Faso and Hungary as well as numerous situations in Ireland.

Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:

1. This year in Restoration Ministries we have continued our partnership with ECONI on the theme Exile and Homecoming, exploring what it means for the church to affirm hope in a sectarian society.

2. The ministry of listening and prayer continues on a steady, quiet and confidential basis. New ventures include a pilot project, taking people deeper in what it means to be kingdom people in the Northern Ireland situation, and our early Morning Prayer time for clergy and church workers.

3. We in Restoration Ministries were honoured by a visit from HRH the Prince of Wales in February 2002 as part of a special event on Reconciliation: "What Have Our Efforts Produced?"

4. Once again I have had the privilege of travelling to many different places to give retreats and to share the vision of reconciliation and healing.

ENVIRONMENTAL PANEL

Rev Samuel Millar reports:

1. The Panel continues to meet five times per year, alternating meetings in Church House with those in outside locations. Among other visits, the Panel went to the farm of one of its members, Liz Sheppard and saw the results of several years of tree planting. The Ballinderry Fish Hatchery provided the venue for a fascinating and successful visit, where under the expert guidance of the owner, Alan Keys, members learnt a great deal about the conservation of fish stocks and the many problems facing our native fish. One particularly

commendable aspect of the work of this hatchery is its educational role, where a schoolroom is provided and children are encouraged to assist with the releasing of reared fish into the wild. It was the view of members of the Panel that this visit clearly demonstrated stewardship of God's Creation in a most practical way.

2. Some members have been speaking to Presbyteries on the work of the Panel and the role of the Christian in the environment. At a meeting with the Templepatrick Presbytery, a young farmer spoke of the many problems facing his community, and what he saw as being the inevitable adverse consequences for the environment at large. A memorial based on this contribution is to be presented to the General Assembly. The issues raised are critical for many aspects of life throughout our island and the members of the Panel empathise with the farming community as it deals with many seemingly insoluble problems.

3. With regret the Panel accepted the resignation of one of its founding members, Rev Trevor Magowan. He has a deep interest in matters environmental, and the work of the Panel today results in a large amount from the care, diligence and enthusiasm with which he acted as its Convener.

4. There is concern in the Panel that there is no representation from the Republic of Ireland, apart from Donegal, and the Board would welcome suggestions for membership from the south, east and west of the island.

5. The Panel encourages congregations to avail of the Creation Day Order of Service which was launched at the 2001 General Assembly, and which draws together our thanks to God the Creator and provides prayers and readings appropriate to our gratitude.

IRISH CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Irish Council of Churches

1. The postponed AGM of the ICC was held on 20 September 2001 in Dromantine Conference Centre, Newry. The Methodist/Church of Ireland Draft Covenant was introduced by Rev Dudley Levistone Cooney from the Methodist Church and Rev John Rutter from the Church of Ireland. Rev David Nesbitt responded on behalf of Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Questions were raised about the implications of the Covenant for local relationships between Methodists and Presbyterians. The change in Anglican language from 'Apostolic Succession' to 'Historic Episcopate' was noted.

2. The President of ICC, Rev Dr Ian Ellis sent a message of sympathy to the National Council of Churches in USA after the events of 11 September 2001.

3. The Church of the Cherubim and Seraphim has been accepted as a member of the ICC.

4. The ICC Executive Committee has had fruitful dialogue with some of the new churches in the Dublin area. Some representatives of these churches have been invited to speak at the AGM on 7 May 2002.

5. The ICC has initiated a research project into the religious life of refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers.

6. The Board of Overseas Affairs has received reports from Christian Aid concerning the response to the war and famine in Afghanistan, the situation in Sudan, the Middle East, and Sri Lanka.

7. Rev Robert Herron will be nominated as president of ICC at the AGM.

Irish Inter-Church Meeting

8. The consultation on the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Document on Justification by Faith took place on 4 June 2001. Rev Andrew Gibson gave a summary of his contribution at the October meeting of the Board.

9. Rev Dr William Crawley and Mrs Susan Williams have agreed to be on the working party on spirituality.

10. The Department of Social Issues has looked at issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers, global warming and climate change, and studied the Methodist report on suicide. Matters concerning the homeless in Dublin and the retention of asylum seekers in Maghaberry Prison have also been raised. A meeting was convened for those in the participating churches involved in child protection issues. A consultation is planned on poverty and prosperity.

11. The Irish Inter-Church Meeting is to be held on 19/20 April 2002. The theme is Pathways to Peacebuilding. This theme has emerged from the 'Moving Beyond Sectarianism Project'

Inter Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages

12. Rev John Brackenridge reported to the Committee on the work of the Inter-Church Committee on Mixed Marriages (Appendix 2). He included in his report some recent research on mixed marriages in Northern Ireland.

TONY DAVIDSON, Convener

APPENDIX I

INTER-CHURCH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met in January 2002. The members of the Committee are:

| Church of Ireland | Methodist | Presbyterian |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Rev I J E Knox | Rev D C Bain | Mrs E Cobain |
| Ven G A McCamley | Rev T M Kingston | Rev A D Davidson |
| Rev Canon J Mayes | Rev E T I Mawhinney | Rev R Herron |
| Rev W Ritchie | Mrs H O'Neill | Rev R F S Poots, OBE |

2. It is anticipated that the Rev S Hancock, of St Patrick's, Waterford will demit his charge on 30 June 2002. The Presbyterian Board of Mission in Ireland has invited the Methodist Church to continue to have responsibility.

3. In Galway and Ballinasloe, Rev Dr Sahr Yamsu has replaced the Rev R Cobain who has retired. Good relationships continue with the Church of

Ireland in Ballinasloe in whose building the Methodist/Presbyterian congregation worship.

4. It will not be possible for the Rev D Range to demit his charge of Christ Church, Limerick, in June 2002, due to a health problem. The Methodist Church, after consultation, has agreed to retain responsibility for one further year.

5. Presbyterian and Methodist Churches are involved in a united chaplaincy in five different colleges in the Dublin area.

6. The Rev Canon J Mayes and the Rev F L Munce reported on the United Church of Ireland/Methodist Church in Strathfoyle. The Presbyterian temporary building in Strathfoyle has been taken down. The Presbyterians are now worshipping in the Church of Ireland building and share in the conduct of worship, with just a few operational difficulties. The Church of Ireland/Methodist building was opened in 1970. Numbers have fallen throughout the period from 300 to 40 families. The building has deteriorated and is in need of improvements which will involve major expenditure.

7. Rev D R Rogers reported on the congregation of Sandymount. The United Presbyterian and Methodist congregation has been together now for 26 years under the alternating ministries scheme. A family service and a common communion liturgy have been established. While most of the congregation are senior citizens there are also business people living locally in apartments and some overseas people on short term contracts with their work. The Minister of Sandymount is also Presbyterian/Methodist chaplain in Tallagh hospital.

Church of Ireland/Methodist Church Draft Covenant

8. It was explained how the Church of Ireland/Methodist Church Draft Covenant is a declaration of intent to create an atmosphere for circuits and parishes to work together. There was some discussion on how this affected Presbyterian/Methodist relations within the alternating ministry scheme. It was agreed that copies of the draft covenant would be sent to the Inter-Church Relations Board of the Presbyterian Church.

APPENDIX II

REPORT ON THE INTER-CHURCH STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIXED MARRIAGES 2000 - 2001

Rev John Brackenridge reports:

1. The Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages met in Mount Oliver, Dundalk on Friday, 16 November 2001. In the absence of the Rt Rev Michael Mayes Bishop of Limerick, Co-Chairman of the Committee, the Most Rev Anthony Farquhar, Co-Chairman, acted as Chairman for the Meeting.

Changes to the Committee Membership

2. It was noted that the House of Bishops plans to appoint a successor to the Rt Rev Michael Mayes and the Presbyterian Board of Inter-Church

Relations will appoint successors to the Rev John Brackenridge and Mrs Olive Marshall. The Committee heard apologies from the Rt Rev Michael Mayes and Mrs Olive Marshall.

Report on the Meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages 2000 - 2001

3. There was a brief discussion on last year's Report and it was noted that the Report had been distributed and approved by each of the Churches.

Joint Preparation for Inter-Church Marriage

4. Rt Rev Mons Patrick Devine reported on courses held in Dublin. These follow the new format adopted in recent years and continue to prove beneficial to those who attend. Approximately 130 couples have registered for the courses this last year, representing an increase in demand and uptake in all parishes. Future courses are booked well in advance, reflecting a continued need and also the worth of past courses as reflected in feedback from participating couples. However a serious shortage of trained facilitators for the courses has become apparent.

5. Ken Dunn reported that pre-marriage courses held in the Greater Belfast area had not taken place in the last year. The problem of a shortage of facilitators which has been heightened in Dublin also exists in the Belfast area but at such a level as to make the holding of inter-church preparation an impossibility. With clear evidence of a continuing need for good marriage preparation for Inter-Church couples, the Committee expresses its concern and highlights the need for Inter-Church facilitators to be made available.

6. It was felt that every effort should continue to be made by each Church to support and commend preparation courses to all engaged Inter-Church couples.

Recent Trends in Inter-Church Marriage

7. Recent trends in the celebration of Inter-Church marriage services continue to be, in the main, positive. Nevertheless, it was agreed that we should not underestimate the very real difficulties, which must be faced by some couples. In this regard, it was noted that an awareness of the issues involved in pastoral care of Inter-Church couples is a crucial part of the training of theological students. The Committee also highlights the value of a good working relationship between the clergy at a local level.

8. The Committee expresses concern over the growing numbers of couples within each of the traditions who choose to marry outside licensed places of marriage.

9. It was acknowledged by the Committee that Inter-Church marriages are occasions for pastoral care and sensitivity, and all strategies should be used to encourage couples in their commitment to their own churches during the time of marriage preparation.

Pastoral Care of Inter-Church Families

10. Rt Rev Mons Patrick Devine updated the Committee on a new initiative in Dublin, which brings Inter-Church couples and clergy together as part of the pastoral care of Inter-Church families.

‘One Bread One Body’

11. A discussion took place concerning Inter-Communion in the context of ‘One Bread One Body’, the joint document from the three Catholic Episcopal Conferences of England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland, concerning the Eucharist in the life of the Church and the establishment of general norms on sacramental sharing. The discussion was in the context of the practice and experience of other countries.

Date of Next Meeting

12. It was agreed that next year’s meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages take place in Mount Oliver, Dundalk on Friday, 15 November, 2002 at 2 p.m.

Members of the Committee

Rev John Brackenridge
 Most Rev Gerard Clifford
 Rt Rev Mons Patrick Devine
 Mr Kenneth Dunn
 Most Rev Anthony Farquhar (Co-Chairperson,)
 Mrs Olive Marshall
 Rt Rev Michael H G Mayes (Co-Chairperson)
 Very Rev Brendan Murray
 The Rev Ronnie Nesbitt
 Rev Aidan O’Boyle
 Rev David Turtle

RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the past year the Race Relations Committee has reviewed its role and remit and now defines these as follows:

The Role of the Race Relations Committee

- Agenda
- monitoring race relations in the Republic and Northern Ireland
 - monitoring the situation regarding asylum seekers and refugees in both jurisdictions
 - networking with appropriate government, church, inter-church and community committees/ organisations/ agencies/ programmes
 - continuing support for race relations in South Africa

- Role**
- monitoring and reporting
 - education: raising awareness and concern and promoting biblical and theological reflection, among ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
 - representations to government, in liaison with the Church and Government Committee
 - active support to threatened persons from ethnic minorities

Policy

2. The Committee continues, albeit slowly, to work on a policy statement for the Presbyterian Church regarding refugees and asylum-seekers, at the request of the Church and Government Committee. The following outline has been agreed:

- (i) A brief statement of biblical principles
- (ii) A brief outline of ethical principles
- (iii) Definition of terms (see para 7 below)
- (iv) Information – numbers, provision (NI and the Republic)
- (v) What we can do as a church, at the levels of General Assembly, Presbytery and (most important of all!) Local Congregations
- (vi) Networking
- (vii) A Code of Practice (individual, congregational), to include appropriate language, attitude, witness in the community, business and public life generally

Contacts

3. In order to become better informed about the situation of asylum-seekers, refugees and members of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland the Committee has invited presentations from relevant organisations: the Equality Commission and The Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities. These have proven very valuable. Representatives expressed themselves gratified and even surprised to discover the Race Relations Committee's existence and the interest of the church in these issues.

4. The Convener continues to make personal contact on the Committee's behalf with other relevant agencies. He attended the launch in October 2001 of a new publication 'No Welcome Here' by Democratic Dialogue. This publication contains very useful and up-to-date information on asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland and Britain.

5. Ms Fee Ching Leong, a member of our Committee, continues to represent the Irish Council of Churches on the London-based Churches' Commission for Racial Justice and represented the CCRJ at the Christian Network for Racial Justice, Birmingham, December 2001. She also represented our Committee at a NICEM conference in March 2002

Racial Attacks

6. With the plight of asylum-seekers and refugees, together with the incidence of racial attacks, including in Northern Ireland and the Republic,

featuring almost daily in the news media, it is imperative that as a church we give Race Relations a more prominent place on our agendas.

Terminology

7. The following is taken from the Methodist Newsletter:

Asylum-seeker: An asylum-seeker is a person who, for one reason or another, flees to a country other than their own and applies for protection in that country. What such a person is essentially asking for is to be granted refugee status in that country in accordance with the UN Convention relating to the status of refugees.

While their applications are being assessed and processed they are and remain asylum-seekers. It is only after their application has been accepted that their status changes from that of an asylum-seeker to that of a refugee.

Refugee: A refugee is thus a person whose application is accepted by the government of the country to which he/she flees and applies for protection. The UN defines a refugee as a person who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable to, or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his normal habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it'. This UN Convention of 1951 was signed by Ireland in 1956 and ratified in 1996.

Immigrant: Another, often not unrelated, term in the debate about asylum-seekers is the term immigrant. An immigrant is someone who arrives in a country other than their country of origin with the intention of settling there. Such people are legally required to get the permission of the host country to live there. European Union nationals, for example, are entitled to apply for a residence permit, valid for up to five years, if they can support themselves without State assistance.

GORDON GRAY, Convener

WORLD CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to liaise with other church and inter-church bodies - namely the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Conference of European Churches (CEC), and the Leuenberg Church Fellowship (LCF). We value the closer contact experienced this year with our partner churches in England, Scotland and Wales (see 3 below).

Leuenberg Church Fellowship

2. It was a great privilege for PCI to host the Leuenberg Church Fellowship Assembly in Belfast last June. Some 150 delegates from many parts of Europe attended. Apart from the Assembly business they greatly valued the

opportunity to visit a number of projects and groups involved in Peace and Reconciliation work and also appreciated the hospitality given as they visited 30 local churches and shared in worship on Sunday, 23 June. The host congregations felt they benefited from meeting and sharing with members of the wider church fellowship. The Committee thanks Prof J C McCullough for his part in the work and preparation for the Assembly and for his contribution to the Leuenberg Executive Committee to which his term of office finished last June. We also thank Mr Stanley McDowell who acted as administrator for the Assembly and Rev S E Hughes, who co-ordinated the visits to congregations.

Consultation on Identity and Partnership

3. The consultation between the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Wales, the United Reformed Church and PCI took place 4-6 December 2001 at the Windermere Centre. Twenty-five delegates from the four churches, together with two observers from WARC, met together to discuss: the issues currently facing each church; the effect of devolution on the societies where each church is; how each church understands its reformed identity today and how each church sees its mission. It was felt that the consultation was very worthwhile giving an opportunity for valuable dialogue. An interesting comment was made by one of the participants – ‘there was a family feel to the meeting compared with ecumenical meetings across the traditions’! It was agreed that a similar meeting be held in about 2-3 years time.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

4. It is proposed that Rev G Farquhar and Rev K Crowe be appointed as delegates to the European Area Council to be held in Oradea, Romania, 18-23 August 2002.

5. The 24th General Council of WARC meets in Accra, Ghana, 30 July - 13 August 2004.

Conference of European Churches

6. The 12th Assembly of CEC will be held in Trondheim, Norway, 25 June - 2 July 2003. It is proposed that three delegates attend from PCI.

United Reformed Church

7. Rev C McClure attended the URC Assembly in July 2001 as a voting delegate. He also attended the URC Ecumenical Committee meetings in September 2001 and January 2002.

PCUSA

8. Rev R Herron attended the 213th Assembly held in Louisville, Kentucky in June 2001. In order to continue the strengthening of the link an invitation was extended to the Clerk Designate, Rev Dr D Watts, and two others to visit PCUSA. Rev Dr D Watts, Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson and Rev D Baker visited the administrative headquarters of PCUSA in January 2002.

GABRIELLE FARQUHAR, Convener

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Annual Appeal

1. The annual appeal for World Development 2001 took up the theme 'Good Works'. As followers of Jesus Christ we are indeed commanded to do good works and to be ready to share with others, to seek justice, rebuke the oppressor and defend the fatherless. Many congregations have once again, responded generously and the total donations received to the end of March amount to £440,587. Funding from the 'Good Works' Appeal will be channelled through Christian Aid and Tearfund to support the Mosoj Yan Home for street girls in Cochabamba, Bolivia, The Construction Collective for women builders in Kingston, Jamaica, Flood Disaster Mitigation in the Brahmaputra Valley, India and Thyolo Agro-Forestry in Malawi. Twelve further projects located in Ethiopia, Egypt, Malawi and Jamaica, will also benefit and a list of these additional projects can be found on the World Development web-site at www.presbyterianireland.org/worlddevelopment.

Visits to development projects

2. In August 2001, The Moderator, Dr Alastair Dunlop and Mrs. Anne Dunlop visited projects in Kenya on behalf of World Development, and the Committee is grateful to them for their continued encouragement and support. The Convener travelled to Malawi as part of an interdenominational group in September/October and saw something of the work of three organisations which will benefit from the current appeal.

Emergency grants

3. The Committee has also made grants to be shared by Christian Aid and Tearfund of £20,000 for relief work in Afghanistan, October 2001 and £10,000 for rehabilitation work following the volcano in Goma, February 2002. For some years now the Committee has made 5% of the appeal available, on request, to the Overseas Board and a grant of £10,000 was made in February 2002. This grant to be used by the relief agencies of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, to provide food during the famine crisis in Malawi.

Raising Awareness

4. It is also the aim of the Committee to raise awareness of the need for development work and to encourage practical support of justice campaigns such as Drop the Debt, Fair Trade and Ethical Tourism. The world's trading systems often work against the poor who are producing such everyday basics as tea, coffee and sugar. Paying a few pence more on Fairtrade items ensures a decent wage for the producers. The parliaments at Westminster and Edinburgh and the Northern Ireland Assembly have already made it a policy to provide fairly traded products within their premises, and Stormont has also recommended this policy to local councils. The Committee acknowledges the efforts being made by the Christian Union at Queen's University, Belfast, to encourage Christian organisations to also show concern for the poor in this way. The Committee would therefore urge members of Assembly and congregations to also make it a

practice to use fairly traded products at home but especially at congregational events.

AIDS

5. The modern day plague of AIDS is devastating the developing world with a projected death toll of 64 million plus. For the past few years our annual appeal has funded one or more HIV/AIDS related projects. The annual appeal 2002 will focus entirely on HIV/AIDS.

HAZEL McCALL, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Irish Church Relations

2. That the following appointments be made:

To the Irish Council of Churches - Revs S Anketell, S J Campbell, L E Carroll, R Cobain; Mrs P Crossley; Revs A D Davidson, G A J Farquhar; Miss D Gilmour; Revs Dr R J G Gray, R Herron, Dr S Hutchinson; Mrs M Irwin; Revs D B Knox, C D McClure, D Nesbitt; Mr J A Patterson; Rev H Robinson; Mr I Scott, Mrs E Sheppard; Rev Dr D J Watts.

To the Irish Inter-Church Committee - Revs A D Davidson, Dr D J Watts.

3. That the resignation of the Rev A D Davidson as Convener of the Irish Church Relations Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev L E Carroll be appointed in his place.

World Church Relations

4. That Rev G Farquhar and Rev K Crowe be appointed as delegates to the European Area Council of WARC to be held in Oradea, Romania, 18-23 August 2002.

5. That Rev Dr D J Watts, and be appointed to attend the 12th Assembly of CEC to be held in Trondheim, Norway, 25 June - 2 July 2003.

6. That Revs A D Davidson, S E Hughes, and be appointed to attend the 24th General Council of WARC to be held in Accra, Ghana, 30 July - 13 August 2004.

World Development

7. That the General Assembly encourage the use of fairly traded products within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and advocate the use of fairly traded tea, coffee, and other products within Church House and also at presbytery and congregational events.

Race Relations

8. That the General Assembly urge all congregations to be aware of and offer hospitality to refugees and asylum-seekers resident in their areas.

9. That Sunday, 8 September 2002 be recognised as Racial Justice Sunday

General

10. That the following grants be made from the Incidental Fund:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Irish Council of Churches | £16,400 |
| Irish Inter-Church Meeting | £8,000 |
| Conference of European Churches | £3,434 |
| Leuenberg Consultation | £1,000 |
| World Alliance of Reformed Churches | £10,030 |
| World Alliance of Reformed Churches' General Council Fund | £1,000 |
| Race Relations Grants: | |
| (i) Diakonia Council of Churches, Durban, South Africa (Vuleka Trust) | £1,500 |
| (ii) Churches Council for Racial Justice | £400 |
| (iii) Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, Belfast | £350 |
| (iv) Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities | £350 |
| (v) Irish Refugee Council | £400 |
| Environmental Panel | £150 |
| General Work of the Board | £5,000 |

11. That the resignation of the Rev Robert Herron as Convener of the Inter Church Relations Board be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev A D Davidson be appointed in his place.

12. That the Inter-Church Relations Board, with its associated working Committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 278 of the Code as follows:

OVERSEAS BOARD

Convener: Very Rev Dr S J DIXON
Secretaries: Rev Dr R J T McMULLAN
Mrs MARGARET MYERS

CHRIST FOR THE WORLD – THE WORLD TO CHRIST

Rev Dr R J T McMullan

1. The Overseas Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has come to the end of an era due to the impending retirement of the Rev Dr R J T McMullan and, in his place, we welcome to the office of Executive Secretary the Rev W S (Uel) Marrs who takes over responsibility for the work on 1 September 2002. We record our gratitude to God for the ministry and service of Rev Dr R J T McMullan as Executive Secretary to the Overseas Board for the past 20 years and previously as a missionary to Malawi for 13 years.

2. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been singularly blessed by his leadership of the Overseas work for over two decades. By sheer hard work and utter commitment to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, Dr McMullan has raised the profile and impact of overseas work to an unprecedented prominence in the General Assembly as well as the Presbyteries and congregations of our island. By his wisdom and zeal for God's glory and readiness to involve himself face-to-face with leaders in partner-churches all over the world, he leaves a legacy of respect for PCI as never before in our history.

3. Even during his student days, Dr McMullan demonstrated a passion for missionary work by interrupting his theological studies at New College, Edinburgh to cover the furlough of the Very Rev Dr John Ross, and ensured continuity of a pioneering scheme in Livingstonia. Returning after one year, he resumed and completed his studies and was ordained Assistant Minister in Seaview.

4. In 1969, Dr McMullan and his wife Joyce went to Malawi with our Foreign Mission. In 13 years there, he was Chaplain to the schools in Mzuzu and Regional Representative of SCOM and later Chaplain to the University of Malawi. Professor Kings Phiri (History, University of Malawi and former Chairman of the Student Christian Organisation in Malawi – SCOM) wrote in 1982, "Rev McMullan has been a strong witness for the Lord to the University Community of Malawi. Both he and his wife Joyce have given an entirely new and uplifting face to the Chaplaincy. They have been open and approachable in character, full of energy and activity both indoors and outside and ever ready to commute long distances to serve different sections of our widely scattered University community."

5. Recognising his zeal for Christ, capacity for hard work, willingness to face the rigours of inconvenient travel and vision for building the Kingdom of God worldwide, the General Assembly appointed him Foreign Mission Convener in 1982, later called Secretary of the Overseas Board.

6. Those who have shared with him in the Overseas Board and its many committees appreciate his phenomenal grasp of names and details of all our partnerships around the world. Those who serve as missionaries with the Board speak of his pastoral heart and care for them which went far beyond the call of duty. In the General Assemblies and Synods of partner churches and international Missionary Councils, he is greatly respected and exercised a unique influence, as his experience, insight, wisdom and discernment were appreciated. In Ireland, he has forged close and God-honouring relationships and practical co-operation with interdenominational missionary societies.

7. In Church House, he became a trusted colleague, whose advice was sought and whose wisdom was valued by other staff. His influence has been felt across the full range of Boards as he spoke with obvious knowledge on world affairs and with a great grasp of financial issues due to his training in accountancy. Throughout the church he is a towering figure, whose contribution to the world church will not easily or soon be forgotten.

8. Much, far too much, has come to be expected of one in such a position. He has carried an incredible workload, has enabled and encouraged a generation of missionaries to fulfil their calling to serve Christ overseas, and has stirred our Presbyteries and congregations to put world mission where it belongs at the heart of worship and witness. In all this he has been supported and encouraged by his wife Joyce, who shared his vision with equal passion.

9. We assure him of our prayers that he and Joyce may enjoy a long and happy retirement with the satisfaction of knowing that he has won the esteem, gratitude and indeed the affection of the whole Church and her partners worldwide.

GLOBALISATION, MISSION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

10. “Globalisation” is the order of the day. From World Economic Forum meetings in Davos and New York to the World Trade Organisation gatherings in Seattle and Doha, and the G8 meetings in Genoa, it is a topic that has dominated discussion by the world’s leaders and in the world’s media, and has implications for the Church’s Mission in the twenty-first century.

11. But what exactly is “globalisation” and why should it be of concern to those churches and mission agencies involved in world mission, and particularly to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland? “Globalisation” is usually used with reference to business, trade and economics, but is that all there is to it?

12. Globalisation is about the increasing inter-connectedness of the world, its peoples and communities, and a growing sense of a global whole. Decisions made in one part of the world have a significant impact in other parts of the world. Global solutions are sought to some of the world’s most pressing human problems. Globalisation is changing the way communities and cultures see themselves, and most important for our Church, is “changing the context” in which the global mission of the Church will be done in the future.

13. What is this “changing context”? We have witnessed the development of a global youth culture based on global brands and western values and aspirations. This development is not welcomed by everyone and the anti-globalisation protesters are concerned that the so-called “level playing

field” of global trade serves only to increase the power and wealth of multi-national corporations and to drag the weaker nations into ever-deepening poverty.

14. Fundamentalism in Islam and Hinduism and possibly in Christianity can be seen as a way of using long-standing religious beliefs to resist the pressures of modernisation and the undermining of traditional ways of life. Ethnic identity is being promoted as a way of finding security and meaning in a larger and more complex world.

15. Given that worldwide there is an increasing number of diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, and racial people groups seeking to hold ever more fiercely to their identity, there is now a growing incidence of terrorism and war. The fact that there are more than twice as many countries in the world today as compared to fifty years ago is evidence that a twin and opposing force to globalisation, namely fragmentation, is tearing apart nation states, and this makes world mission a more dangerous task.

16. At the heart of the globalisation debate are cultural issues and questions about justice for the poor, peace in their communities and the disintegration of the created order. The questions arise: How should Christians view this phenomenon of globalisation and the trends it is introducing in our world? What change is globalisation bringing to the context of World Mission?

17. We can address these questions by using the theology of the Kingdom of God as a lens through which to view these trends and to guide and direct the priorities of our Church in world mission into the twenty-first century.

SITUATIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

18. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland and its Overseas Board has partnerships in several countries in Asia and Africa, and during the year has monitored situations of conflict in these countries and the consequences for communities of people including Christian communities as follows:

- In the Moluccan region of Indonesia through Eukumindo (European grouping of Churches and Missions relating to Indonesia) and through the good offices of Prof James Haire who visited Halmahera in January 2002, where people are beginning to re-establish their communities. He also met with leaders of the Reformed Churches in eastern Indonesia to encourage them, as they made a plea to their Government to restore the civil and religious liberties for all in Indonesia, but especially for those in their war torn region of the Moluccas.
- In India and particularly in Gujarat where at the end of February serious communal riots were triggered by the attack on a group of Hindus returning from Ayodia, resulting in many deaths and serious injuries and the destruction of property and livelihoods throughout Gujarat.
- In Pakistan where minority groups, including Christians, came under attack in the aftermath of the events of 11 September and the invasion of Afghanistan. Fortunately the situation has calmed considerably and the Church continues with its life, witness and service in this Islamic Republic.

- In the Middle East and especially in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza where in recent weeks the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, led by Yassar Arafat, has deteriorated into a war of attrition which neither side can win and where the possibility of peace appears to be as far off as ever.
- In Sudan where the civil war continues with the Government of Sudan forces bombing civilian targets in the south, mainly in the oil state of Bentiu in Western Upper Nile. The main liberation movements have united in an effort to defeat the Government forces and thus the civil war is set to continue for the foreseeable future. Sadly oil interests, and the resulting revenue, is enabling the Sudanese Government to prosecute the civil war against the already ravaged South.

ASIA

19. Anyone who has watched closely developments in the continent of Asia in recent years will realise that the terrorist attacks of 11 September on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington were but one stage in Islamic Jihad. For in recent years this particular dimension of Islam has been visible in Asia, not least in Indonesia, where thousands have died in the Moluccan Islands.

20. As a church we need to commit ourselves to ongoing prayer and support for the increasingly oppressed and persecuted Christian minorities in a number of Asian countries. At every opportunity we must challenge governments of this vast continent to dedicate themselves to upholding the civil and religious liberties of all their citizens.

21. In the past year **India** has been in the news headlines as a result of the long-standing tension with Pakistan over the disputed territory of Kashmir. More recently there have been serious religious clashes between Hindus and Muslims, concentrated in Gujarat State, where more than 500 people have been killed. Yet it must not be forgotten that Gujarat is persevering with a long, slow process of rehabilitation and reconstruction in the aftermath of the earthquake in January 2001, especially in those towns closest to the epicentre. The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop and Mrs Dunlop visited Gujarat in March to see the work and witness of the **Church of North India** and the progress being made with the rehabilitation of communities and the reconstruction programme. Sadly, they had to leave Ahmedabad after a two-day visit due to the security situation.

22. In response to the Moderator's letter in March 2001 £748,566 was raised for the earthquake victims in Gujarat by the end of last year. Altogether some £1.5 million has been contributed to the CNI for the rehabilitation and reconstruction work from within India and from Christian Churches and agencies world-wide. This has gone towards funding the reconstruction of the Hindu village of Mavnugam in a new location within Jamnagar District, the repairing and rebuilding of churches and manses, and the building of around 80 houses for Christian families scattered throughout the earthquake affected areas of Gujarat. A further £78,308, granted by Ireland Aid, is to be used for the rebuilding and rehabilitation of schools and hostels within the Diocese of Gujarat.

23. **The Diocese of Gujarat**, under the leadership of Bishop Vinod Malaviya, is responsible for the implementation of the work of rebuilding and reconstruction. Good progress is being made and Rev Uel Marrs shared in the re-opening of the CNI Church in Bhuj, the epicentre of the earthquake, in January.

24. Our personnel in Woodstock School, Mussoorie, in the Agra and Gujarat Dioceses of the CNI, in Goa and western India and in Chennai (formerly Madras) with the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship, experience both challenges and encouragements in their different spheres of service.

25. The Macwans continue to minister amongst Gujaratis in the **Wembley** area. Widespread redundancies amongst airline and airport staff have given an added dimension to Christopher Macwan's chaplaincy work at London Heathrow Airport and they have been encouraged by the responses received through their work in the community and through the Bible Study and prayer meetings.

26. Our Church continues its work in **China** mainly through the Chinese Christian Church, the Amity Foundation and its Teacher's Programme. The Chinese nation has a growing involvement in our global economy and also in international relations. The Christian Church is seeking to play its part in the great nation of China. In many parts of China it is relatively free while in others it still suffers repression and marginalisation. Yet the Church in this nation of sixteen hundred million people continues to grow and mature in its faith and in its desire to make Christ known and loved. We are currently seeking to identify two experienced persons to represent PCI at the China Forums of the Churches' Commission on Mission (CCOM) and Global Connections.

27. While **Indonesia** continues to struggle with many economic and political difficulties, most trouble spots have been quieter in recent months. James Haire made a ten-day visit to Halmahera in January and found that the situation there has settled down reasonably well. This has been encouraged by the attitude of members of the **Halmaheran Church** (GMIH). While several hundred Christians endured the trauma of forced conversion to Islam, many display great courage and, in seeking reconciliation, have openly welcomed Muslims back into their communities.

28. In January Very Rev Dr John Dixon made a short visit to Manado in North East Sulawesi to visit Halmaheran refugees and to meet with church leaders to discover how the **Evangelical Christian Church in Minahasa** (GMIM) is supporting some 40,000 refugees as they await repatriation to Halmahera.

29. Given the security situation, it is still not advisable for outsiders to visit West Timor. Many East Timorese refugees remain in camps around Kupang, but are still hoping to be allowed to return to their homes in their now independent nation. Rev Elsy Niap from the **Evangelical Christian Church in West Timor** (GMIT) continues her post-graduate studies at Union Theological College.

30. Reformed Churches in Eastern Indonesia recently made a plea to their government for the restoration of civil and religious liberties for all in Indonesia, but especially for those in the conflict-torn regions in the East Indonesia. Arrangements have been put in place to enable the leaders of the

twenty-four Reformed Churches to meet twice yearly for fellowship and to discuss the way ahead for their Churches.

31. Our relations with the **Christian Church in Sumba** (GKS) continue to develop and we are encouraged by the work being done in lay training and in education and health. Many young Sumbanese, who are members of the Church, are receiving a good education in the island's institutions, thus enabling them to be prepared for a life of work and service both in Sumba and beyond. We expect to continue having a PCI missionary serving in the Church in Sumba.

32. In September PCI hosted the 51st General Assembly of **Eukumindo**, an umbrella organisation of European churches seeking to support the Indonesian Church. Some twenty-six delegates were gathered from Europe and Indonesia and the conference allowed for the exchange of information on the religious, political and social situation in Indonesia.

33. **Nepal** has become an increasingly troubled country over the past year. The massacre within the Nepali Royal family last September followed by a breakdown of cease fire negotiations with the Maoists has led to a steady decline in the overall security situation, with a state of emergency being imposed. Travel within the country has become increasingly difficult, and tourism, a major source of income for Nepal, has slumped. For security reasons, the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) have had to suspend projects and withdraw personnel from many rural areas, particularly in Western Nepal. Towards the end of 2001 UMN took the difficult decision to close Amp Pipal hospital, although the local community is continuing to run the hospital. The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop and Mrs Dunlop visited Nepal in March to see the work of UMN and visit our personnel.

34. Last April the Board of the UMN initiated a process to determine the role of the Mission in Nepal in the next decade, in a changed and changing world and in a changing Nepal. Issues relating to UMN's Mission, Vision and Governance have been discussed within UMN and with the member bodies. It is planned to bring this process to completion in December 2002 at a special meeting of the member bodies.

35. In recent months there has been a good deal of movement to and from Nepal of PCI personnel working with UMN, though this has not been helped by difficulties in obtaining visas. Our missionaries continue to serve in a wide variety of roles including personnel, administration, teaching, and medical work. They also contribute to the worship and life of the local Nepali churches in a variety of ways.

36. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, the government of **Pakistan** has been facing a huge challenge in dealing with Islamic extremists within the country, while working out its foreign policy, not least towards the USA. President Pervez Musharraf has decided to restore the minority religious groups to the country's Electoral Roll. We have been seeking to relate supportively, yet sensitively, to the **Presbyterian Church in Pakistan**, who form part of the small Christian minority in the country. While it was not appropriate for anyone from PCI to visit Pakistan in early 2002, as had been envisaged, we continue to support the Presbyterian Church there by providing grants towards theological training, women's programmes, the production of Christian literature, and the support of pastors in rural areas.

37. In **Thailand** over the past year we have continued to hear of the effective witness of the Christian Literature and Bible Correspondence ministry of The Lamp. PCI's support of this work developed out of our partnership with the Church of Christ in Thailand, who established the Lamp of Thailand in 1972 as part of its evangelism programme. We give thanks to God for the faithful service of Mrs Supaporn Insaeng, Director of the Lamp of Thailand, who retires in April 2002.

38. **The Presbyterian Church in Myanmar** (formerly Burma) continues its mission and out-reach to the people in the north of the country and there has been an encouraging response with a number of new churches being established. We continue to support the theological education programmes at Tahan Theological College which expects to move to a new site during 2003. We also support the post-graduate training programme of the Church to enable the Theological College to gain full accreditation in South East Asia. Soe and Puii Min complete their studies in the Philippines in June this year and will return to serve the Church.

EUROPE

39. The introduction of the single currency, the Euro, to part of our island has brought home the realisation that we are linked economically, as well as socially and religiously, to the other countries in the continent of Europe. There have been dynamic changes in the spiritual, social and political landscape of Europe over the past years, and our once Christian continent is now defined in terms such as 'post-Christian', 'post-communist' and 'post-modern', all terms which indicate the lack of a clear identity. This highly secularised, materialistic society, full of contradictory ideas, presents the Christian Church with a great challenge but also gives an opportunity to lay fresh foundations for the future.

40. Over the past year the Board has continued to build up relationships with churches in France and Spain, the Czech and Slovak Republics and in Hungary, Romania and Ukraine. We have listened to each other, increased our understanding of each other's situation so that together we are better equipped to be part of helping shape a future for our continent based on Biblical values.

41. Since 1987 we have had a church to church relationship with the **Eglise Réformée de France** (ERF). This has been developed through exchange visits of personnel and youth teams and last summer a Youth Board team paid a reciprocal visit to the Ardèche region. Ministers from PCI have served in parishes in the ERF since 1989 and each year an invitation is issued by PCI to the ERF and by the ERF to PCI to send a delegate to the General Assembly of PCI and to the National Synod of the ERF. This is a very useful orientation to our two churches and this year Rev Uel Marrs will represent PCI at the National Synod to be held in Nimes from 9-12 May. Rev Raphael Picon, Executive Secretary for International/Inter-Church Relations, visited PCI in June 2001 to discuss and progress our partnership and further discussions will take place, in Paris, later this year.

42. We continue to support the work of Stephen and Deborah Pacht among Jews in Paris. The outreach in Paris last summer was quite successful and Stephen Pacht reports an encouraging response from contacts he invited to a recent Seminar.

43. The planned two year exchange programme set up to increase understanding and co-operation between PCI and the **Spanish Evangelical Church (SEC)** comes to an end in August 2002. Revs Dave McCarthy and Uel Marrs will visit Spain in April to meet with the Permanent Commission of the SEC to review the two-year programme and to discuss a second two-year programme of exchange visits for 2003 and 2004. They will visit the congregation in Torre del Mar and also PCI personnel working in Valencia.

44. Last January the Presbytery of Andalucia commissioned Mrs Jackie Hartsmith-Foy, who lives near Torre del Mar and last year studied theology and mission at Belfast Bible College, as leader of the small English speaking congregation in Torre del Mar.

45. Our relationship with the **Church of the Brethren** in the Czech and Slovak Republics continues through links between Ministers and congregations in PCI and their counterparts in both republics. Recently there have been three further proposals for congregational twinning and it is expected that interested Ministers will go with Rev John Kirkpatrick to the Czech Republic to visit these congregations. This year we are looking forward to welcoming Rev Tibor Mahrik and Rev Daniel Heczko to the General Assembly.

46. The Children's Hospice, under the Klicek Foundation, was opened on 1 September last and is now up and running. The Sunday School and Youth Project 'Making a Difference in Europe' contributed £37,000 towards the building and equipping of the Hospice. A small group from First Broughshane congregation are planning to visit the Hospice this summer.

47. The relationship between PCI and the Synod of the **Reformed Church in Hungary** was strengthened when in January of this year the Rt Rev Dr Alastair and Mrs Dunlop, accompanied by the Rev John and Mrs Joan Kirkpatrick made the first Moderatorial visit to Hungary. They met with Bishop Bolcskei, Bishop Meszaros and Dr Daniel Szabo and had the opportunity of discussing issues concerning both Churches. The Church there faces a time of change as later this year there will be elections for the position of Bishop in all four Church Districts.

48. In the past we have benefited from having with us Bursars from Hungary and Romania and are looking forward to the arrival, in September, of Mr Scabolcs Suszter who has been selected by the Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary to do post-graduate study at Union Theological College and to be linked to a congregation of PCI.

49. The Rev Zoltan Tarr, who is responsible for the youth programmes of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary, hopes to visit PCI for several weeks to relate to youth work in general, and to the work carried out through the Youth Board.

50. Links with our partner churches are strengthened in the receiving and sending of personnel. Last summer three teams of young people went to Romania and formed new relationships with their contemporaries and also gained a better understanding of each other's culture and church situation. We plan to send two more teams this summer, one to Miske and one to Cluj.

51. We are looking forward to a visit from Bishop Geza Pap who was installed as Bishop of the Transylvanian District of the **Reformed Church in Romania** in January 2001. Bishop Pap is visiting the Church of Scotland in May

and will subsequently visit our Church. Economically Romania is still undergoing a transition from the planned economy to the market economy, with all the implications involved in such a process. Rev Dr Victor Dobbin, Chaplain General Emeritus, through contacts with Rev Kiss, Secretary to Bishop Geza Pap, is arranging a Seminar on Business Ethics for a group of businessmen in Cluj, and it is hoped that in the future these will be organised locally.

52. A relationship has developed slowly between PCI and the very small **Hungarian Reformed Church District** in Trans-Carpathia, in the western part of Ukraine. Interest in **Ukraine** grew as teams of young people from PCI were sent to Dorcas camps in Hungary and to camps in Ukraine working with children from the Chernobyl area of Ukraine. In 2001 a team went to Trans-Carpathia and another team may be sent there this summer. We have with us at present Zoltan Literati, our second Bursar from this District, who is continuing his post-graduate study in Practical Theology under the guidance of Professor Bill Addley.

AFRICA

53. The situation in the continent of Africa south of the Sahara is a complex one. However in the midst of political uncertainties, economic hardships, natural disasters, social problems, health crises, proliferation of denominations, and human fallenness there continues to be evidence that Christ is building his Church. Rapid numerical growth continues to be a characteristic but, as with the Church in the Western world, there is a major challenge to the 'traditional' denominations as young people seek the freedom to express their worship and spread the gospel in ways that the traditional structures find hard to accommodate. Complacency with large numbers, and the lack of human and material resources to disciple adequately those coming into church membership is leading to the danger of increasing nominalism despite the natural exuberance in worship.

54. We believe that partnership with existing churches is the best way to work with Christ in the building of his Church in Africa. This method is not without its difficulties and it means ongoing work to maintain and develop relationships with African churches and their other overseas partners from Europe, America, Asia and Australasia. While modern methods of communication make this possible on a day to day basis, travel by our executive staff and Board officials is still most important.

55. As a small Church in world terms, we find that the sending of personnel to work within our partner Churches, under, and alongside, national staff is our major contribution. Since the periods of service by individuals and families tends to be shorter than formerly, it means that the work of recruitment, training, preparation and pastoring is an expanding part of the work of the Board and its Executive staff.

56. In the African scene our personnel continue to serve in medical work, secondary and theological education, and chaplaincy, but community, social and rural development work is an expanding area of involvement as the need increases. The latter reflects an increasing sense of responsibility by our partner churches to address the material, physical, and social needs, as part of a holistic presentation of the gospel. In the present economic climate the national

governments are simply unable to address many of these issues. This has forced churches to try to carry loads too heavy for them to bear.

57. Our partnership in **Kenya** is with the **Presbyterian Church of East Africa** (PCEA). Its roots are in Scottish Presbyterian mission work going back to the late 19th century. It became an independent church in 1956 and continues to grow. Our personnel assist the PCEA in theological training and Theological Education by Extension based at the Presbyterian College at Thogoto near Nairobi. The goal of upgrading this college to be a Presbyterian University is still being pursued, with necessary staff and other development taking place. We also make a contribution in the areas of Teacher Training, Rural Community Development and Evangelism. The responsibility for funding the development work, that our personnel are involved in, is ultimately the responsibility of the PCEA, but through our personnel, congregations and agencies of our church are coming to their aid. The civil engineering expertise and time of the Rev Eddie Dorrans as a consultant to the water scheme at Honi Farm has been a most valuable contribution.

58. The Rev David Kiarie of PCEA, with his wife Violet, received a Call to special ministry in Second Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church, where he has been working since October 2001. We welcome them and this opportunity for strengthening our partnership with the PCEA.

59. **Malawi** continues to go through very difficult times. During the first half of 2002 it has suffered one of the worst food shortages for over fifty years due to drought and the export of the maize surplus in 2001. At the time of writing it is calculated that over seven million of Malawi's twelve million people are in need of food aid, and a state of emergency has been declared by President Muluzi. The World Food Programme, the British Government, and several church relief agencies are providing food or money to purchase food, but it is a race against time since many have already died of hunger. The situation has been aggravated by one European Government recently severing links with the Malawi Government and completely cutting off its substantial aid.

60. AIDS continues to deplete the 'educated class' upon which the country depends for its administrative, health, education, and security needs, and, indeed, the whole fabric of society and the nation. Thus our volunteers, short-term and longer term personnel serving in education, community development and medical work have been making a very significant contribution to the nation and the Church under very trying conditions.

61. Our partner Church in Malawi is the **Church of Central Africa Presbyterian** (CCAP). Her resources are very limited and yet she continues to be resilient, and to respond to the huge challenges with vision and energy. In the Southern Region the **Blantyre Synod**, under the leadership of General Secretary Rev Daniel Gunya, is addressing the spiritual, pastoral, and social needs of the church and community, as well as giving a strong lead to the CCAP General Synod and other churches in the country. The churches are taking up issues of justice, human rights, and the erosion of democracy within the nation.

62. Our link with **Nkhoma Synod** in the Central Region is maintained through our personnel who serve in education and theological education, and help to produce materials for Christian education. This Synod especially takes very seriously the need to address the relationship between the gospel and

cultural values especially as they affect youth and family life. Evangelism amongst an increasingly visible and confident Moslem community is also being carried out in a positive and pro-active way.

63. **Livingstonia Synod** in the Northern Region, with whom we have the greatest involvement in Malawi, continues to run extensive medical, educational and rural development programmes. The need for teachers for its five secondary schools is especially critical as is its work in evangelism and lay training. The Synod is the proprietor of three rural hospitals, five secondary schools and a lay training centre where PCI personnel work alongside their national colleagues, bearing witness to Jesus Christ through their lives of service.

64. The CCAP is the major partner in the joint Theological College at Zomba. PCI has had a significant input to theological education in Malawi over many years and continues to give very necessary assistance in terms of staff and finance to this vital area of training ministers and building up the Church of Jesus Christ. The Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM) headquarters is now on the same site at Zomba and shares some of the same staff.

65. Student work in Malawi is carried on by The Student Christian Organisation of Malawi (SCOM); Scripture Union Malawi, and more recently the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Student Organisation (CCAPSO) of the Blantyre Synod. Several of our personnel are involved in these organisations and we assist with some financial help with their programmes.

66. We regret to report that in **Sudan**, at the time of writing, there is little progress towards a settlement of the civil war in the South which is now in its twenty-ninth year. The Government of Sudan, with its economic strength coming from oil revenue, would seem to have no serious intention of pursuing peace. The bombing of villages and institutions continues with the consequent loss of life and injuries to many civilians as well as the loss of their livelihoods.

67. The Government of Sudan has confiscated property belonging to the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches and has used a policy of divide and rule with the **Presbyterian Church of Sudan** (PCOS). The PCOS is also experiencing serious division, and the whole situation, from a spiritual and humanitarian point of view, should be a matter for fervent prayer. However, we rejoice that even amidst these human limitations and failings, the PCOS continues to minister to its people in Upper Nile Province, in northern Sudan, and in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in northern Kenya, and to bear witness to Christ through faithful pastors, evangelists and deaconesses.

68. Sadly the first missionaries to go to work in **Togo** with the **Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Togo** (EEPT) had a very difficult experience and had to return home due to the closure of the Bible School in Atakpame. We will be discussing the way forward in our partnership with the leaders of the EEPT later this year.

MIDDLE EAST

69. Since the beginning of the Palestinian Intafada in September, 2000 the Israeli-Palestinian issue has been a central issue in the Arab world, and since the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11th, 2002 the Middle Eastern conflict has been at or near the centre of world concern. The so-

called 'War on terrorism' has probably affected the outlook of the present US administration that had been otherwise less obviously involved than its predecessor.

70. In **Israel** and the Palestinian territories waves of ever-increasing violence have become constant. In Israel there is much fear and tension on account of the unpredictability and frequency of attacks by suicide bombers. In the Palestinian authority areas there has been great economic hardship on account of closures and security measures by the Israeli forces. There has been huge loss of life and a corresponding hardening of attitudes. At the time of writing there is little sign of negotiations being resumed, although a proposal of peace has recently been made by Saudi Arabia's crown prince.

71. At the end of 2001 the Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee did not recommend that the draft of a stringent anti-missionary private member's bill be presented to the Knesset. However some are eager to introduce legislation of this nature in the future.

72. Avril Gracey has been continuing to work as housekeeper at Stella Carmel. Negotiations are underway to transfer or lease the centre to the Messianic Congregation whose worship centre is in the grounds of Stella, but this will probably not be done until early in 2003. Jews for Jesus, whose work we support in France, now has an office in Israel.

73. In the light of this deteriorating security situation and the increasing loss of life and destruction of property the Board sent the following message of encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ in Israel and Palestine at a time of continued conflict in the Holy land:

"We want to assure you of our prayers for you during this time of continuing conflict and distress. We understand that there are many pressures on you in day-to-day life as well as at times of violent attack and we are encouraged by the expressions of concern and help that demonstrate your commitment to the unity of Christ's body across other divisions. We continue to pray with you that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict may be reached and that righteousness, peace and healing may abound."

74. Through a visit to **Lebanon** by Principal Cecil McCullough in 1998, contact was re-established with the three major Protestant Churches and with the Near East School of Theology (NEST). For the past four years we have given a scholarship to a Sudanese student at NEST who returned to Sudan at the end of 2001. We will support another Sudanese student with a scholarship for the years 2002–2005.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

75. Our Board's mission work in Latin America is in the huge country of **Brazil** which is on the eastern 'horn' of South America and covers almost half of the sub-continent. Our partner churches are the **Independent Presbyterian Church** (IPI) and the **Presbyterian Church of Brazil** (IPB). Both have their origins in the work of Presbyterians from the USA which started in the mid nineteenth century. The two churches work well together especially in mission work in the remote parts of the country, for example in the Caiuá Indian Mission in which we are involved.

76. Our partnership with IPB is more recent and we have been invited to attend the 35th Supreme Council of the IPB in July 2002 when it is planned that a partnership agreement will be signed. It is hoped that Very Rev Dr John Dixon, Rev Professor Bill Addley and Rev Uel Marrs will attend, with the latter two visiting the locations in Brazil where our missionaries are serving.

77. In October 2001 Rev Leontino Farias dos Santos, Moderator of IPI, and Rev Eber Lima, Executive Secretary, visited Ireland. They were introduced to the Overseas Board and attended our annual Residential Conference and shared with us the challenges and opportunities that face the IPI in mission at this time. The IPI have appointed the Rev Eber Lima to come and serve as a minister in PCI during 2003, and appropriate steps are being taken to facilitate this.

78. Our partner Church in the **Caribbean, The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands**, continues to address the challenges of bearing witness to the love of God and His salvation through faith in Christ in a context of much social deprivation, high rates of crime and violence. Our personnel are involved in care for the young and the elderly, lay training, children's work and women's work, and in pastoral ministry in a Charge (several small congregations). We endeavour to encourage and enable the United Church in her mission at a critical time in the ministry of the church to the people of Jamaica as we respond to requests for personnel to serve in the United Church. Since several of our personnel expect to be completing their service in the United Church later this year it will be necessary to consult with the Church to determine the future shape of the partnership.

MISSION EDUCATION

79. In a rapidly changing world, delivering relevant, balanced and effective mission education continues to be a challenging task and remains a high priority of the Board. The task of mission education is one of partnership, operating at different levels and involving both groups and individuals. A partnership in which Board staff are available to offer information, advice and guidance to Presbytery Mission Agents (PMA's), ministers and congregational leaders, or individual congregational members. A partnership in which these people in turn, operating locally, stimulate interest, pass on information, and encourage greater involvement and commitment to the work of mission around the world. A partnership in which missionaries, overseas visitors and bursars, mission volunteers and members of overseas teams share mission news and information from around the world with the wider membership of PCI throughout Ireland.

80. It is encouraging to see that many congregational leaders are accepting responsibility for stimulating and encouraging involvement in the mission of Jesus Christ not just at home but also overseas. Individual members are not only well informed about the needs, opportunities and challenges of world mission but are also actively involved through regular prayer support, generous giving and, in some cases, through their willingness to go and serve in the mission of Jesus Christ in other lands.

81. We commend PCI congregations that have sent teams overseas for two or three weeks. Each visit has been a great benefit and encouragement to the

Christians they went to see and help. Equally significant is the fact that each team member, as well as their sending congregational family, has gained so much more from the experience than was ever imagined – proof that engaging in cross-cultural mission is not ‘one way traffic’. For some it comes as quite a shock to realise that we do not have all the answers and that in our partnership in mission overseas we have much to learn from our brothers and sisters in Christ.

82. PMA’s have an important and pivotal role to play in helping to stimulate and develop an ongoing interest and involvement in the work of mission overseas in congregations within their presbytery. It is encouraging to see a number of presbyteries organising their own overseas mission events, either to complement the mission tour or as an alternative, in years when no tour is planned. In the past year, in one presbytery, over 50 people from congregations throughout the presbytery, who had been involved in mission in various ways at home and overseas, came together on the same night to share their experiences in one of three different locations. In another presbytery, Congregational Mission Agents (CMA’s) worked hard to encourage attendance at a special Presbytery Mission Rally at which a missionary from that presbytery had been invited to speak. On the evening, over 700 people attended!

83. Presbytery Mission Tours are about people relating to people – presenting the needs, opportunities and challenges of the Mission of Jesus Christ in other lands. Whilst there are variations from Presbytery to Presbytery, the format of Presbytery Mission Tours has remained largely unchanged for almost a decade. We will shortly be meeting with Presbytery Mission Agents to review all aspects of the tours to see how and in what form they should continue and what changes or improvements would be helpful. Overseas Mission Tours were held in East Belfast, Iveagh and Armagh presbyteries in the autumn of 2001, and in Donegal, Ards and South Belfast in the spring of 2002. Further tours are due in Down, Newry, Omagh, and Templepatrick presbyteries in the autumn.

84. In the past year, missionaries on Home Assignment, returned mission volunteers, members of overseas teams, relations and friends of overseas personnel, overseas visitors and bursars, and Board members, have willingly and enthusiastically engaged in deputation speaking on behalf of the Board. We offer sincere thanks to them all, acknowledging that without their stimulating and informative presentations, and the sharing of often profoundly challenging insights, PCI members’ knowledge, understanding and commitment to the work and needs of mission overseas would be very much the poorer.

85. A pattern has now been established whereby in each deputation period two deputation training days are held one month apart at the beginning, and a review day held at the end. In order to prevent deputation overload and to provide regular opportunities to receive spiritual nourishment, all missionaries on Home Assignment are now guaranteed one Sunday a month free of all deputation responsibilities.

86. Additional electronic equipment has recently been purchased so that more of our missionaries can use PowerPoint® (computerised) presentations if they so desire. The usefulness of PowerPoint® as a presentation tool is acknowledged but we are aware that care needs to be taken not to become overly dependent on this means of communication to the extent that people can no

longer communicate with their audiences face to face. We will endeavour to ensure that training emphasises the need for effective communication and that, whatever methodology is used, it is important that it matches the personality and skills of the presenter.

87. Up to date news and information from our personnel and partner churches overseas is regularly available from a number of sources and publications. The weekly Prayerline continues to provide timely information that facilitates prayer for specific people, needs and situations. In addition, the Presbyterian Herald with 10 issues a year, Wider World published quarterly and World News available annually in September, all provide a varied selection of interesting news and information from overseas mission situations.

88. The thrice-yearly publication of the Prayer Update leaflet was discontinued at the end of 2001. As a consequence, we believe it is vitally important that every effort is made to ensure a wide and full use of the weekly overseas Prayerline bulletin by members of all PCI congregations. We are in process of carrying out a detailed analysis of Prayerline recipients and the congregations they belong to. This will enable 'gaps' to be identified and steps taken to encourage 'non-users' to join the existing group of 850 e-mail recipients of Prayerline.

89. Existing records show that at least one person in around 400 congregations (roughly 70% of all PCI congregations) is receiving a copy of Prayerline each week. We know that some congregations include some or all of Prayerline in their printed announcements each week, while others reproduce it and make copies available for interested members. A survey will be conducted over the coming months to determine the extent to which Prayerline is being used.

90. The Assembly Hall was again almost full for our annual United Missionary Rally, which took place on Tuesday 23 October 2001. A varied programme of reports sought to demonstrate that 'People Matter to God', which was the theme for the evening. Lynn and Heather Cochrane spoke of the work of 'church planting' in Cruzeta in North East Brazil. Ann Henderson and Irene Lutton, PWA members from Greystone Road, Antrim, shared their experiences of a three-week visit to the Bible Institute in Dourados in southern Brazil. Rev. Danny Rankin reported on the PCI Youth Team visit to Thailand and Helen Johnston spoke of her work with the United Mission to Nepal. The evening concluded with a challenging address by the Moderator. It was a privilege to have the Embangweni Choir taking part on their last night in Ireland. Their unaccompanied singing in harmony of 'Bwerani Mose' – 'Come all ye people' – as they walked into the Assembly Hall at the start of the evening, will long be remembered by all who were there; a moving call to worship the Lord whom we all seek to serve.

PERSONNEL VISITS AND VISITORS

91. During the year the following missionaries passed to higher service: Rev J Finlay Stewart, India 1936 - 1942 and Mrs Dorothy Hunter, Zambia 1973 - 1977. Mrs Feddy Anna Harpur, daughter of the late Dr and Mrs Arnold Frank of the Jewish Mission in Hamburg, passed away early in 2002.

92. We give thanks to God and record our appreciation for the faithful witness and service of Dick and Moreen Gordon, Kenya 1966 – 1970, 1975 – 1979 and Malawi 1996 – 2000; Colin Dick, Malawi 1996 – 2001; Shirley Rutherford, Malawi 1997 – 2000; Richard and Brenda Kerr, Malawi 1988 – 2001; Richard and Denise Ross, Nepal 1997 – 2001; Nigel Craig, Romania 1998 – 2001; Jill Gibson, Malawi 2000 – 2001; and Richard Gracey, Malawi 2000 – 2001.

93. We give thanks to God for the faithful witness and service of all of our missionaries during the past year. Some are experiencing much blessing as they share with their national colleagues, in the spread of the gospel and the building of Christ's Church, while others are experiencing great opposition to the proclamation of the gospel in the situations where they serve. They face difficulties, frustrations and sometimes danger in the situations in which they and their families live, work and bear witness to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and we thank them for their faithfulness to their calling to serve overseas.

94. In the past year the following visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by our partner Churches and the United Mission to Nepal, and to meet with our missionaries to encourage them and listen to their pastoral and other concerns:

- Revs Dr Terry McMullan and Uel Marrs to the Transylvanian District of the Reformed Church in Romania, and to share in a partner church consultation of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary; to Kenya to consult with the PCEA and meet with and visit our personnel serving there, and to consult with the Presbyterian Church of Sudan; and to Nepal and India to consult with UMN and with the Church of North India and to visit and encourage our personnel serving in both countries.
- Rev Uel Marrs to Spain with Rev David McCarthy to consult with the Spanish Evangelical Church and visit the Torre del Mar Church and our personnel serving in Valencia; to France to visit our personnel serving in Privas and Aix en Provence, and to attend the National Synod of the Eglise Réformée de France.
- Very Rev Dr John Dixon to Kenya to visit the PCEA and our personnel; and to Sulawesi in Indonesia to visit the Halmaheran refugees and to meet with the officers of the Minahasa church, which has provided support for the refugees.
- Mrs Maureen Patterson, accompanied by her husband, Rev Ivan Patterson, to Nepal to meet with our personnel and to visit some of the projects of the United Mission; and to India to meet with our personnel and visit extensively in Gujarat to see the work of the Diocese and the progress being made in the earthquake rehabilitation work.
- Mrs Margaret Myers to Kenya to visit our personnel and their work situations and to attend meetings with the Presbyterian Church of Sudan.
- Rev John Kirkpatrick to the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Romania to visit our partner churches and our personnel in these countries, and to attend Hope 21 a conference entitled "Shaping Europe's Future

Together” with the sub-title “Exploring the Hope of the Gospel for Twenty-first century Europe”

- The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop and Mrs Anne Dunlop to visit the Reformed Church in Hungary; to India to visit our personnel and the Diocese of Gujarat and CNI officers in Delhi; and to Nepal to visit the UMN and our personnel in the situations where they serve and to minister to their spiritual needs.

95. During the year twelve missionaries were appointed to serve long or short term overseas in China (1), Kenya (3), Malawi (3), Nepal (3) and Togo (2) (see Appendix A). We thank God for these new missionaries and would encourage our people to pray for and support them as they and their families settle into their new locations.

96. Last summer young adults served as short-term volunteers in Jamaica (3), Malawi (4) and India (1) and several medical, nursing and physiotherapy elective placements were arranged in Kenya, Malawi and Nepal. During the year there were team visits to Misca and to Cluj in Romania, to the Nagyberg area of Ukraine and Youth Board teams to France and Thailand. All-age teams visited Malawi from Ballyloughan and McCracken Memorial congregations, Kenya from Greenwell Street, Newtownards congregation, and Romania from Ballylinney congregation.

97. During the year we were delighted to receive the following visitors from our partner Churches:

- Rev Raphael Picon from the Eglise Réformée de France
- Rev Enrique Capo from the Spanish Evangelical Church;
- Mr Edward Mtonga from Embangweni School for the Deaf, Malawi; Rev H Matiya Nkhoma, General Secretary of the Synod of Livingstonia, Malawi;
- Rev Shawish Nyawelo Kir, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan;
- Rev Peter Kenyanjui, Deputy Secretary General of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa;
- Rev Samuel & Mrs Chelo Arnoso from the Spanish Evangelical Church for two months experience of congregational life and witness;
- Mr Kistone & Mrs Vesta Mhango from Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi;
- Mr Peter Gitau from the Presbyterian Church of East Africa;
- Rev Leontino Farias dos Santos, Moderator, and Rev Eber Ferreira Lima, Executive Secretary, of the Igreja Presbiteriana Independente do Brasil (Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil);
- Bishop James Terom (Moderator) with Mrs Jiramani Terom and Dr Sagar Lall (General Secretary) of the Church of North India;
- A choir from Embangweni Mission Station in the Synod of Livingstonia which visited, spoke and sang throughout our Church, and whose ministry was greatly appreciated.

THE HOME BASE

98. In 1999 the Board set up a Pastoral Care group to review the pastoral arrangements for missionaries. After engaging in this task for two years, it became clear that this remit should be extended to take in all aspects of pastoral

care from the initial inquiry, through the interview process, the training and preparation, the appointment of the person, entering a new culture and the necessary cultural and church orientation, pastoral care in the field of service, on home assignment and re-entry to the work place at the conclusion of overseas service.

99. The Board's Pastoral Care Working Group is in the process of developing a model for the pastoral care of missionaries from the initial inquiry to their resignation from the service of the Board. We expect this missionary care model to be implemented towards the end of 2002, and it will be necessary to keep the matter of pastoral care for missionaries under review in the coming years.

100. Due to a greatly increased work load in carrying out the remit of the Overseas Board, the Finance & Staffing Committee agreed that careful attention would need to be given to the re-structuring of the executive and administrative staff functions. The re-structuring exercise brought the following result regarding the administrative staff: A Senior Administrative Officer, two Senior Secretaries with special responsibility for financial affairs and mission education; a part-time Secretary; and a Junior Secretary. The above posts are now operational and the Overseas Office is functioning efficiently.

101. With regard to the executive staff of the Overseas Board, it was initially decided that the executive function could be carried out by the Executive Secretary and the Education in Mission and Partner Relations Officer. However, it has now become clear that a third executive officer should be appointed so that the remit of the Board can continue to be carried out effectively and efficiently. A submission was made to the Panel on the Overview of Funding which has approved the post, with the funding being met from the Board's own resources. It is expected that the appointment will be made by January 2003 at the latest.

102. The Presbyterian Women's Association contributes to the work of the Board and its seven working committees through its office bearers and members of its Executive Committee, and through its annual grant to the overseas work of our Church, which in 2001 was £283,500. We value our partnership with the PWA and thank the members of the Association for their continued prayer and financial support for our missionaries as they serve Jesus Christ in many different countries in our world.

103. Civil war, religious intolerance and persecution have increased in several of the countries where we have partner Churches, and especially in India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Sudan. During the year we have asked the Church and Government Committee, through the General Board, to make representations to the British and Irish Governments, the European Union and the United Nations. These representations have been received sympathetically and action taken where possible.

104. Many members of the Board willingly give of their time and gifts to serve and contribute to one or more of the Board's seven working committees. In addition, the Conveners of the Board and its three area committees attend consultations with our partner Churches, visit missionaries in their country of service and speak about the work overseas in the congregations of our Church.

We record our thanks for this voluntary but dedicated service which enables PCI to be a Church in mission.

105. Over the past year we have continued to encourage congregations and individuals to share in the overseas mission work of our Church. We have been encouraged by the response of our members who have committed themselves to prayer and to supporting the work overseas financially through the United Appeal and through extra mile giving. We record our thanks to the United Appeal Board for helping to ensure that the target of honour for the total appeal is reached each year.

106. Over the past year congregations, organisations and individuals, the Presbyterian Women's Association, Young Women's Groups, our children and youth and the Junior Boys' Brigade have contributed approximately £468,583 to projects and special objects within our partner Churches. We record our thanks to all who work hard for the benefit of others and for the spread of the Gospel, and we appreciate being able to make these additional funds available where the need is greatest. We thank the Container Group for their hard work in sending three containers of educational and medical supplies to Malawi.

107. The Board ended the year with a deficit of £95,298 on its current account, due to additional expenditure in respect of staffing, which is being met out of the sale of the Manse occupied by the present Executive Secretary. We have appointed an Honorary Treasurer and a Finance Sub-Committee to be responsible for monitoring expenditure and income and preparing accounts.

108 We value our membership of Global Connections (formerly the Evangelical Missionary Alliance) and the opportunity to meet with those who are taking new initiatives in world mission. Our attendance as observers at several of the forums of the Church's Commission On Mission (CCOM) provides much useful information regarding the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. Our membership of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies provides the opportunity to reflect upon and to discuss mission issues and concerns and to examine the methods being used to proclaim the gospel in different contexts.

109. We conclude this report by giving thanks to God our Father, to Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord and to the Holy Spirit who sustains, strengthens and guides us as we seek to fulfil our calling to go and make disciples of all nations.

110. **Dr. Max Watson** wishes to resign as Convener of the Asia Committee. As a former missionary to Nepal he had long experiences of this area. We thank him for all that he did for the Overseas Board.

APPENDIX A

In the report most of the names of missionaries have not been mentioned but their names and spheres of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

BRAZIL

| | | |
|-------------------------|------|--|
| Mabel Colson | 1990 | Caiuá Indian Mission, Dourados |
| Lynn & Heather Cochrane | 1996 | Independent Presbyterian Church National Mission in Cruzeta, Natal |

INDIA

| | | |
|----------------------|------|---|
| James & Willi Barton | 1966 | Education Consultants, Goa |
| Norman & Joan Duncan | 1994 | Layman's Evangelical Fellowship and CNI |
| Linda Jackson | 1996 | Woodstock School, Mussoorie |
| Brian Wilson | 1996 | Woodstock School and CNI, Mussoorie |
| Elizabeth Matthews | 1998 | Diocese of Agra, CNI |

JAMAICA

| | | |
|----------------------|------|---|
| James & Pat Cameron | 1990 | Directors, Children's Homes |
| Leonora Wasson | 1994 | Associate Regional Director, Cornwall Council |
| Christine McMahon | 1998 | Director of United Church Senior Citizens' Home |
| Joan & Malcolm Scott | 2000 | Discovery Bay Charge of United Church |

KENYA

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|---|
| Stephen & Angelina Cowan | 1985/9 | Outreach & Development Work, PCEA Tuum |
| Deborah Ford | 1996 | Teaching at Presbyterian College, Kikuyu. On study leave |
| Naomi Martin | 1991 | PCEA Teachers' College, Rubate |
| Derek & Linda Roulston | 1998 | Development work, PCEA |
| Paul & Anne Bailie | 1998 | Presbyterian College, TEE and teaching at Alliance Boys' High School |
| Andrew & Clerah Clenaghan | 1999 | Development work, PCEA at Zombe in Kitui District |
| Gary & Mary Reid | 2000 | Honi Farm, PCEA, Nyeri |
| *Stephen & Magali Robinson | 2001 | Presbyterian College and teaching at Musa Gitau Girls' Secondary School |

MALAWI

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|---|
| Freda Algie | 1969 | Principal, Wives School, Zomba Theological College |
| Margaret Young | 1995 | Midwife, Ekwendeni Hospital |
| Diane Cusick | 1995 | Wives School, Zomba Theological College |
| Neil & Sara Kennedy | 1997 | Medical Officer & Teaching, Embangweni - on final home assignment |
| Clare McIntyre | 1997 | Karonga Girls' Secondary School |
| Stephen & Ruth McCracken | 1999 | Acting Director of Lay Training Synod of Livingstonia |

| | | |
|----------------------------|------|---|
| Maurice & Sheila McNicholl | 1999 | Acting Executive Director, Projects Office, Blantyre Synod |
| John & Rosemary Hanson | 1999 | Chaplain, Blantyre Synod |
| *David & Clare Kennedy | 2001 | Teaching at HHI Secondary School and Accountant in Blantyre Synod Projects Office |

NEPAL

| | | |
|------------------------|------|--|
| Linda McKee | 1985 | UMN - on study leave |
| Joy Gowdy | 1992 | Tutorial teacher, UMN - on study leave |
| Pauline Orr | 1993 | Nurse/Tutor, UMN - on home leave |
| David & Sandra Rodgers | 1995 | Formerly Director, Amp Pipal Hospital - on final home assignment |
| Helen Johnston | 1996 | Personnel Director - UMN |
| Adam & Lorraine Coupe | 1999 | Communications and Patan Hospital - on final home assignment |
| *Peter & Åsa McDowell | 2001 | Coordinator, Language & Orientation Programme and working with expatriate personnel and Nepali women |

TOGO

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------|--|
| *Roderick & Sheena Mulholland | 2001 | To work in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Togo - on home leave |
|-------------------------------|------|--|

ROMANIA

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------|--|
| Csaba & Ilona Veres | 2001/1993 | Youth work and ministry to street children, Cluj |
|---------------------|-----------|--|

FRANCE

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|--|
| Gordon & Sandra Campbell | 1989 | Professor in New Testament in Free Faculty of Reformed Theology in Aix en Provence |
| Rodney & Denise Cameron | 1998 | Eglise Réformée de France: Parish of Privas and Flaviac |

GREAT BRITAIN

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|
| Jack & Phyllis Thompson | 1970 | University of Edinburgh |
| Christopher & Nivedita Macwan | 1989 | Working among Asians in Wembley |

Short term missionaries serving for a minimum of two years, are supported in overseas locations. Their names and spheres of service are as follows -

BRAZIL

Naomi Keefe 2000 Valley of the Lord Orphanage, Recife

CHINA

*Stuart Craig 2001 Teaching English, Tai'an Teachers' College, with Amity Teachers' Programme

HUNGARY

Clare Maguire 2000 Teaching English in Miskolc

INDIA

David & Cheryl Adair 2000 Woodstock School, Mussoorie

INDONESIA

Mervyn McCullagh 1998 Teaching English, writing English language courses and church work - on home assignment

ISRAEL

Avril Gracey 1999 Stella Carmel Centre with Church's Ministry among Jewish People

KENYA

Norman & Pauline Kennedy 2000 Lay Training and Literature, PCEA - on home leave

*Alison Bullous 2001 Veterinary work - PCEA, Tuum

MALAWI

Donald & Una Brownlie 1999 David Gordon Memorial Hospital, Livingstonia

Dibbie McCaughan 2000 Teaching at Wm Murray Secondary School, Nkhoma

Tracey Lamont 2001 Teaching at Wm Murray Secondary School and Nkhoma Institute for Continuing Theological Training

*Rosalind White 2002 Teaching at Bandawe Girls' Secondary School

NEPAL

*Catherine Elliott 2001 Tutorial teacher, Butwal

CZECH REPUBLIC

Susan Clarke 1999 Church work and hospitality, Prague

SPAIN

Derek & Jane French 2000 Evangelism & Christian Training,
Spanish Evangelical Church,
Valencia

*Appointed 2001/2002

APPENDIX B**PARTNER CHURCH & MISSIONS**

We work together with partner Churches and United Missions and we list below those in leadership with their respective positions:

BRAZIL

Rev Leontino Farias dos Santos President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev Eber Ferreira Silveira Lima Executive Secretary, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)

Rev Guilhermino Cunha President, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

Rev Wilson de Souza Lopes Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

CHINA

Bishop K H Ting Hon. President, China Christian Council

Dr Han Wenzao President, China Christian Council

Rev Su Deci General Secretary, China Christian Council

CZECH REPUBLIC

Rev Pavel Cerny President, Church of the Brethren

Mr Karel Fojtik General Secretary, Church of the Brethren

Rev Pavel Smetana Moderator, Synodical Council of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

FRANCE

Pasteur Marcel Manoel President, Eglise Réformée de France (ERF)

Pasteur Marc Richalot General Secretary (ERF)

Pasteur Raphael Picon Secretary: International Relations & Mission (ERF)

HUNGARY & ROMANIA

Bishop Gusztav Bolcskei Presiding Bishop, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Rev Bertalan Tamas | International & Inter-Church Relations, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary |
| Bishop Geza Pap | Transylvanian District of Reformed Church, Romania |
| Bishop Laszlo Tokes | Kiralyhagomellek District of Reformed Church, Romania |

INDIA

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Most Rev Z James Terom | Moderator of the CNI Synod |
| Dr V S Lall | General Secretary of the CNI Synod |
| Rt Rev Vinod M Malaviya | Bishop of the Gujarat Diocese CNI |
| Rt Rev S R Cutting | Bishop of the Agra Diocese, CNI |

INDONESIA

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Rev Dr Tobias Messakh | Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor |
| Rev A N Aesh | Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera |
| Rev S S Duan | General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera |
| Rev Yosua Kodu Bili | General Secretary, Christian Church in Sumba |

JAMAICA

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Rt Rev Dr Gordon Evans | Moderator, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands |
| Rev Dr Maitland Evans | General Secretary, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands |

KENYA

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Rt Rev Dr Jesse Kamau | Moderator, Presbyterian Church of East Africa |
| Rev Patrick Rukenya | Secretary General, Presbyterian Church of East Africa |

MALAWI

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| | <i>Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)</i> |
| Rt Rev C L Chimkoka | Moderator, CCAP General Synod |
| Rev Y A Chienda | Senior Clerk, CCAP General Synod |
| Rev H Mvula | Moderator, Synod of Livingstonia |
| Rev H M Nkhoma | General Secretary, Synod of Livingstonia |
| Rev MacDonal Kadawati | Moderator, Synod of Blantyre |
| Rev D Gunya | General Secretary, Synod of Blantyre |
| Rev C L Chimkoka | Moderator, Synod of Nkhoma |
| Rev Dr W Kawale | General Secretary, Synod of Nkhoma |

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the report on Globalisation, Mission and the Kingdom of God in Paras 10-17, together with additional material and questions, be sent down to Presbyteries for discussion and report to the Overseas Board Secretary by 31 December 2002, and that the General Assembly encourage the Overseas Board to examine the implications of the globalisation phenomena for the mission of Jesus Christ so that the priorities of our Church in World Mission into the 21st Century will be clearly set out.
3. That the General Assembly request the Board to examine the consequences of religious conflict for communities of people in its partner Church areas, and to provide spiritual and material support for communities affected by such religious conflict.
4. That the General Assembly call upon our people to pray for our partner Churches in Indonesia, India and Pakistan as they seek to fulfil their calling in mission and evangelism in situations of community tension and conflict, and as they work for peace and reconciliation among their people.
5. That the General Assembly pray for a peaceful solution to the civil strife and conflict in Nepal, and for the United Mission to Nepal as it prepares for a radical change in its mode of service to the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ.
6. That the General Assembly encourage our partner Churches in Europe and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to seek appropriate ways to present the Good News of Jesus Christ to people who live in our post-Christian, post-modern and post-Communist societies.
7. That the General Assembly rejoice at the growth of the Churches in Kenya, Malawi, Sudan and Zambia, encourage prayer for the people of these lands who live in times of political uncertainty, economic hardship, social problems and in some cases civil war, and for the Church as it seeks to minister to the needs of its people in the name of Jesus Christ.
8. That the General Assembly call upon all our people to pray with the people in the Middle East, that a just and lasting settlement of the continuing conflict may be reached and that righteousness, peace and healing may abound in a desperate situation.
9. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for our partnerships in Mission with the Presbyterian Churches in Brazil and our involvement in their national mission, with the prayer that God will richly bless their witness and service throughout the nation in the coming days.
10. That the General Assembly encourage the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands as it continues to witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ, to minister to urban and rural communities and to serve the needy and disadvantaged in the name of Jesus Christ.
11. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the faithful witness and service of our missionary personnel and their colleagues in our partner Churches and Missions in many different and often difficult and dangerous situations, and commend them and their families to our Church for prayer and practical support as they continue to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

12. That the General Assembly encourage the Board to complete its work on its recruitment, training and preparation for service procedures and on the development of a pastoral care model for missionaries throughout their period of service.

13. That the General Assembly give thanks for the continued growth in prayer and support for our missionaries and our partner Churches in which they serve, and encourage the Board to take new initiatives in communicating the challenges and opportunities in world mission to all our people.

14. That the General Assembly thank congregations, the Presbyterian Women's Association, the Young Women's Groups, other organisations and individuals for their valued support for the Mission of Jesus Christ in prayer and by their giving, and further thank all who have given freely of their time and talents to enable our Church to fulfil its missionary calling.

15. That the resignation of Dr Max Watson as Convener of the Asia Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that be appointed in his place.

16. That the retirement of the Rev Dr R J T McMullan as Secretary to the Overseas Board be accepted as from 31 August, 2002 and that the best thanks of the General Assembly be given to Dr McMullan for his outstandingly notable service.

17. That the Overseas Board, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 279 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Conveners: Rev Dr J B MOORE

Very Rev Dr D H ALLEN

Secretaries: Rev Dr R F S POOTS, OBE

Rev D J TEMPLE

Mrs M MYERS

1. As a Board we are called to serve in both parts of Ireland. The location and ethos may be different but the task is the same.

2. It is:

- to confront the indifference and stem the tide of secularism in Ireland's life today;
- to combat the corruption and sporadic violence endemic in Irish society and point to another way;
- to yearn and strive for the Church's renewal.

3. To do so we need:

- to maintain the biblical faith convinced that the Bible is true to its teaching a guide for life;
- to create through the Spirit congregations or fellowships of people born of an encounter with God in Jesus Christ who will be 'salt' and 'light' in their communities;
- to herald the good news which alone can change human life and save our land.

4. We pay tribute to the Board's office-bearers, especially the Rev Dr Derek Poots, Secretary to the Board and Deputy Clerk, whose unremitting labours and wise counsel have been absolutely invaluable. The award of a DD is richly deserved.

5. Ireland is still held in the throes of change on every front. Whether the issues are political, industrial, economic or spiritual, they demand a response from the Church of Christ.

6. The Republic is coping with its entry into the single European currency (Euro) but it is aware that the Tiger's pace in the economy is slowing down and this has a knock-on effect on everyday life.

7. It is also facing a growing discontent with real or assumed restrictions, many of which are being removed under the cover of human rights. The recent referendum on Abortion has left many people confused as to what the true Christian response to such matters should be.

8. The message of the Gospel has never been more urgently needed in our society. Many have severed all connection with the established churches and organised religion. This together with political unrest and discontent is affecting every avenue of life, both North and South.

9. The need to present the Good News in a positive way cannot simply be done through new programmes or changed worship patterns, however attractive these may be. People need a living personal relationship with Jesus Christ and this is what the Board of Mission in Ireland endeavours to facilitate through its various agencies.

10. The Evangelism Committee is encouraging all our people to be 'salt' and 'light' in their communities as well as in their congregations. The Director of Evangelism, Rev Harold Boyce, has been very active in his contacts with the Church at large, and welcomes every opportunity to help.

11. The Irish Mission is hoping to add to the number of its staff of Workers and to continue to positively present the claims of Christ. Through its 'Tent-making Scheme' it could also assist others in a practical way. The Superintendent and Staff seek and value your prayers and financial support for their work.

12. We are sorry that **Mr Douglas Cowan** our Irish Mission Convener has decided through work commitments to resign his convenership. As a former missionary, Mr Cowan took a great pastoral interest in the Mission Workers, which was greatly appreciated. His own financial expertise as an accountant was also very helpful in planning the future strategy and commitments of the Irish Mission. We assure him of our sincere thanks for all his faithful service in the past and wish his successor God's blessing.

13. The Divine Healing Committee encourages all who conduct Services of Healing throughout the Church and it hopes soon to have its brief study of 'Alternative Medicines & Therapies' completed.

14. In a work such as ours we need those who will stand with us prayerfully and financially, thus enabling us to impact more people for Jesus Christ throughout the land.

15. In a fast changing world we do well to remember that the unchanging Christ still has the message that can change people from within, forever.

IRISH MISSION COMMITTEE

1. We live in a world that is changing at an amazing rate. The speed of communications through computers, e-mails and digital television means that we can have instant access to what is happening in every part of the world. This excites many people and leaves others bewildered. Many people change jobs, homes and relationships frequently; some changes are planned, others forced on individuals. Many old stabilising influences like home, regular employment, church and political institutions no longer hold many people. Often we do not know or have time for our neighbours or families. It is in this context that the Irish Mission seeks to witness to people and share the good news of the Gospel.

2. Many people have an inadequate or erroneous understanding of the Gospel message and feel that the Church has nothing to offer. The Irish Mission is concerned to proclaim the message in terms that are biblical and relevant.

3. We have ten Workers operating in different parts of Ireland. All have seen blessing and encouragement as well as disappointments in the last year. Many of our Workers are involved in Bible studies in homes or hotels. These

studies have to start at a very basic level for people who may be reading the Bible for the first time. Some people have come to faith in Jesus Christ. In some areas Irish Mission Workers, have been able to distribute the Jesus Video for viewing by people in their own homes.

4. Most of our Workers are involved in several meetings for children. We are very grateful for the support and encouragement of youth and congregational teams who help our Workers run holiday Bible clubs during the summer months. We regret that some new openings cannot be followed up because of lack of support staff – child protection regulations cover children’s work throughout Ireland. But God is calling children into His kingdom and we rejoice in the spiritual growth among some young believers.

5. Last year Mr Keith Preston and his family moved from the Monaghan area into the town of Dungannon. He is working with some congregations in South Tyrone Presbytery. Mr Tom Moorehead will retire at the end of 2002 after many years faithful service in the Glens of Antrim.

6. We are at present seeking to recruit more Irish Mission Workers and offering support through the Tent-Making Ministry Scheme approved by last year’s General Assembly. We ask ministers and elders to make the need for new Workers known in all congregations and encourage prayer that we will find people with a heart for outreach, especially in the Republic, and an experience of evangelism in their present congregation. We also ask for prayer support in the appointment of new Workers to the place of God’s choice as we have vacancies in a number of parts of Ireland.

Tentmaking Ministries Scheme

7. This scheme was approved by the General Assembly last year. The scheme envisages helping Presbyterians evangelising in both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian situations eg Connemara.

8. However, Par 105 (c) of the Code states, “The Assembly and only the Assembly may decide the Church’s general policy on co-operation or joint action with other churches and authorise congregations, Presbyteries, Synods, board and committees of the Church to participate in joint projects in accordance with such scheme or on such terms as the Assembly may from time to time decide.”

9. In order to enable the Irish Mission to respond to requests for assisting the work of Presbyterians evangelising in non-Presbyterian situations, a resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly.

10. The Irish Mission Committee wish to commend our Superintendent, Rev David Temple, for his work supporting and encouraging our Workers, undertaking many deputation engagements and editing the Christian Irishman magazine. We also thank our office staff for all the work which they undertake so pleasantly for our Workers and Mission. We wish to commend the work of our Mission and in particular our Workers and their families to the prayers and support of the General Assembly.

DOUGLAS COWAN, Convener

DIVINE HEALING COMMITTEE

1. It is encouraging to hear how congregations and Presbyteries across our Church are involved in the ministry of healing. One of the functions of this committee is to seek to encourage and help both those who are already involved in this ministry and those who want to be involved. Services of prayer for healing are held on a regular basis in both individual congregations and at Presbytery level. An increasing number of congregations are incorporating a time of prayer for healing into their Sunday services. This helps the ministry of healing to be seen as a normal expression of congregational life rather than something that is different and distinct. After all, every service of worship in which prayer is offered to God through Jesus Christ, in which His praise is sung, His Word read and expounded and in which the Sacraments are celebrated should be a healing service as people experience the healing and redeeming grace of God.

2. We seek to work in harmony with the medical and caring professions and do not seek to compete with or undermine this aspect of healing. Rather we should be working in harmony with health care professionals.

3. However, there are now so many different 'pathways to wholeness' that as Christians we need to be careful with our involvement. We need to be able to take the many alternative therapies, and their underlying spiritual principles, and hold them up to the plumb-line of Scripture. The Committee is still working on a set of guidelines, which might be helpful in assessing the burgeoning number of alternative and complementary therapies from a Christian point of view. It is not enough to simply assess their efficacy by asking 'Does it work?' We do not accept the philosophy of 'any means to achieve an end' in other areas of our Christian lives and we should not accept it in the area of healing. Many of these therapies are based on principles that are opposed to the teaching of Scripture and are therefore spiritually dangerous.

STEPHEN WILLIAMSON, Convener

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to appreciate the work of Rev Harold Boyce as Director of Evangelism and is encouraged by the response to the seminars and meetings he has arranged for ministers and elders within presbyteries. His work of consultation and counsel with ministers, Kirk Sessions and Evangelism Committees is helping to keep outreach on the agenda of congregations throughout the Church. The booklets he has published have found widespread acceptance and the Committee looks forward to further help to evangelistic thinking as a result of his continued research and initiative.

2. Presbytery Evangelism Agents are an important link between the Committee and presbytery and congregation. In May 2001 a well-attended meeting of agents discussed a wide range of topics with the Director and Convener. It is hoped to arrange such meetings on a regular basis.

3. The advertising campaign of “Power to Change”, which was commended last year for the consideration of congregations, was postponed from March 2002 until October 2002. During the year the Convener dealt with some queries and concerns regarding this initiative and they were fully discussed by the Committee. These were taken up with the “Power to Change” Steering Group who were already in the process of altering some of their material and changes have been made. This is a resource for the church, like the Jesus Video Project, and not an event. It is therefore up to each congregation to decide if and how to use it.

4. The Committee recognises that many members of our congregations spend most of their time at work and so is keen to encourage Christians to see their responsibility as a witness to Jesus Christ in that environment. How this is to be done will form part of the Committee’s work in the coming months.

5. This year the Committee gave grants as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| The Bible Society | £250 |
| The Bible Society for Ireland | £250 |
| The Scripture Gift Mission | £250 |
| The Jesus Video Project | £100 |

Such grants will be kept under review.

JOHN PARKES, Convener

DIRECTOR OF EVANGELISM

The Director of Evangelism, Rev Harold Boyce, reports:

1. The past year has yielded many opportunities for encouraging evangelism throughout our Church. I have been gratified by the response to my two publications, the information file, “Your Hundred Best Evangelism Resources” and the evangelism primer for congregations, “Real Men Don’t Eat Muesli”, though I feel more congregations could benefit from them. The personal evangelism training course has been delayed but should appear quite soon. It has been re-titled “The PEP Course” (Personal Evangelism for Presbyterians). I have been grateful for the opportunity to write a monthly column on evangelism for the Christian Irishman under the title, “From the DoE”.

2. During the year I have had the privilege of attending the Evangelical Alliance’s “Conference for Evangelical Leaders” in Cardiff and a Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast at Westminster. Occasional opportunities for ministering continue to occur, such as in the Christian Training Centre and Belfast Bible College. I have also been involved in convening an Ad Hoc Committee of the Board of Mission in Ireland, looking at ways to respond to PCI’s falling statistics, and am also a member of the 2003/4 Assembly Committee and its Seminars Sub-committee.

3. The main part of my work continues to comprise the Presbytery ministers’ and elders’ seminar programmes, Kirk Session conferences, consultations with ministers and evangelism committees, congregational

conferences and church services. In all of this I attempt to be aware of the availability of relevant material such as books, courses, ministries and internet sites.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

PWA HOME DEPARTMENT

Mrs Maureen Patterson reports:

1. Twenty-one deaconesses and one woman worker are currently within the PCI family.

Personnel

2. During the year, the Board of Mission in Ireland issued Calls to Miss Sheila Sutter and Miss Eleanor Drysdale and they were inducted in First Antrim and West Church, Ballymena, respectively. The Board also granted permission to Mrs Leta Halliday to continue as a woman worker in McQuiston for one further year from 1 September, 2001.

3. Miss Anne Burrows retired from Chaplaincy work at Belvoir Hospital on 30 September, 2001 after 36 years dedicated service as a deaconess, 11 of which were spent at Belvoir. Miss Muriel Cromie has agreed to work one and a quarter sessions a week at Belvoir until the medical care provided there is transferred to the City Hospital.

4. Miss Mary Angus retired on 31 March, 2002 after 37 years of deaconess service, including 29 spent at the Royal Victoria Hospital. As the first hospital deaconess, she was a pioneer in this branch of chaplaincy work and her experience and example paved the way for similar appointments. She has agreed to continue at the RVH part-time for a limited period.

5. Miss Angus and Miss Burrows were appreciated for their care of patients and relatives as well as their pastoral support for staff. They have given significant service to the whole Church.

6. Miss Doreen Draffin tendered her resignation from Rathcoole, in accordance with Par 305 (5) of the Code, on the installation of the new Minister. No request was received from the Minister and Kirk Session for the renewal of her appointment. She is currently on leave and prayerfully looking to the future. She remains under the care of the Presbytery and the Board of Mission in Ireland as a deaconess. The Code makes provision for a deaconess in these circumstances to be retained on the records of the Presbytery and her income continued from central funds for up to one year.

Mrs Ruth Henry resigned from her post with Orangefield Church on 31 March, 2002. She has applied to be retained on the records of Presbytery for one year in accordance with Par 305(8) of the Code.

Review of Deaconesses in Hospital Chaplaincy

7. The value to the service of a deaconess working alongside the Chaplains as part of a chaplaincy team has been recognised increasingly by

hospital managements and by the Church. One Chaplain insisted that the presence of a deaconess is imperative as one who has a recognised Church standing and who is available to minister to female patients and other females.

8. Consequently, the PWA/Home Personnel Committee has set up a panel to review the current provision of deaconesses in hospitals and to assess and report on the needs and opportunities in the major hospitals.

South Belfast Friendship House

9. Mrs Linda Gibson, deaconess at the Vine in North Belfast, has been asked to undertake a feasibility study of the work of SBFH in the context of the social and spiritual needs of the area, the other providers in the district and ministry which it might be possible to develop through the Friendship House. In the meantime Mrs Eunice Moore continues to lead the Ministry team there. A report will ultimately be presented to the Board.

Placement of Deaconesses in Congregations

10. The Board has decided to consult Presbyteries before placing a deaconess in a congregation. Presbyteries will be requested to provide assurance that the placement is appropriate; that there is adequate work to be done, keeping in mind other staff in the congregation, and that proper financial structures have been put in place by the congregation.

Conferences

11. Miss Evelyn Whyte, Mrs Ruth Henry, Miss Doreen Draffin and Miss Carole Cathcart attended the World Diaconia Conference in Brisbane last July.

12. Plans are being carefully laid by the Deaconess Association for the Conference of the UK Liaison Group of the European Diaconia which will be held at Greenmount College, Antrim, in June.

Hungarian Deaconess Training

13. The first two students from Hungary spent the autumn of 2001 working alongside deaconesses in First Antrim and Greystone Road, Antrim. They also attended some classes at Union College and were given an insight into hospital chaplaincy and the work of the centres.

14. The Rev Denis Bannerman, Minister of Greystone Road, addressing the Board, spoke with enthusiasm about how both congregations had been enriched by the experience. He emphasised the opportunity our Church has through this scheme to assist in the formation of Church leaders of the future in Hungary and the surrounding nations.

15. Two further students arrived in mid-March. One has been placed in Newcastle and the other in Hamilton Road, Bangor.

Vacancies for Deaconesses

16. No applications were received from deaconesses for a number of vacancies in congregations. Miss Roberta Irvine and Mrs Sadie McCullough plan to complete their training at Union College in May, 2002, which will help the deaconess shortage, if all goes well.

17. In view of the unmet needs of congregations we invite prayer that God will call new students to study for the deaconess ministry.

PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Mr J W Russell reports:

1. The Directors are pleased to report another very satisfactory year's progress in the work of the Society. The number of new members has increased to almost three thousand and new investment totalled £12 million during this financial year bringing the total assets to just over £24 million.

2. Interest rates fell sharply in the early part of the year and have remained depressed. The resultant downward pressure on income was offset to some extent by the increase in the volume of lending and enabled the Society to produce a gross profit in excess of £1 million. This enabled a dividend of 5.25% to have been declared on all shareholdings for the financial year ended 31 March, 2002.

3. Congregations and individuals continue to make use of the very competitive borrowing facilities available for a wide range of purposes from car, house and land purchase to business expansion and bridging finance.

4. We conclude with our thanks to God for all that He has enabled us to achieve over the past year and pray for His continued blessing in the future.

HOME MISSION GENERAL

1. The report of the Home Mission this year is being written against the backdrop of a referendum on Abortion in the Republic of Ireland which commentators have interpreted as a blow to the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time the Ulster Unionist Leader has called for a Referendum on Irish Unity while also branding the Republic as a sectarian state. It is in this fluid situation that the ministers of the Home Mission present the Gospel – serving some 70 congregations.

Strategy

2. Like all the other major spending boards the Board of Mission in Ireland appeared before the Ad Hoc Committee on the Overview of Funding to present and discuss strategy and aims. In our past experience the budget of the Home Mission has been needs-driven but we are seeking to develop a realistic financial strategy which enables us to live within our means.

Property

3. As a Mission working within the constraints of finance it is always our aim to enable congregations to have property adequate and appropriate to their needs. In the past year our property concerns have been overshadowed by the "listing" of not only the outer façade but also the interior fabric of the historic buildings of all the denominations. This development, as it stands, makes it extremely difficult and, at times, impossible to get planning permission to renovate a building to suit the needs of the congregation or even to sell a

redundant building. The Rev Dr D Poots, Mission Secretary, along with representatives of the Methodist Church, outlined the serious nature of the planning restrictions for the Churches to the Minister, Miss Sile de Valera. Since then representatives of the four main Churches have met with representatives of Duchas, the Planning Authority, and presented them with a document of proposed guidelines for planning authorities which sets out clearly and effectively what the Churches need. This agreed document, produced under the guidance of the Rev Father Patrick Jones of Maynooth, is a rewrite of the sections relating to places of worship in a document of draft guidelines published by Duchas.

4. The Churches acknowledge the need to protect buildings of historic interest and the need to work within certain statutory requirements for planning, but they have grave reservations about the Duchas guidelines as published in so far as the Churches' concerns have not been adequately addressed:

- (a) they do not give an acceptable understanding of the obligation to respect liturgical requirements;
- (b) they are written very clearly with a conclusion that is always weighted in favour of conservation;
- (c) worship and the space for worship are understood in a very narrow way;
- (d) worship is not put in the context of the mission and needs of the Churches
- (e) guidelines on liturgy are not within the competence of a local planning authority.

5. The guidelines do not seem to be inspired by the Constitutional guarantee that "every religious denomination shall have the right to manage its own affairs, own, acquire and administer property, moveable and immovable, and maintain institutions for religious or charitable purposes". The Churches seek to order their property to fulfil their pastoral and mission purposes, including the ordering of their places of worship.

6. It is not acceptable that local or planning authorities judge what is required by the liturgy of any Church. Such judgements are beyond their competence. Thus, they will have to rely on the judgement of the Church.

7. The Churches, working with the planning process, will make available to the statutory body full documentation on the historic, pastoral and liturgical data where required. Certification from the Church leadership will endorse that the works are required by its liturgy.

8. Guidelines should be seen as guidelines and not binding regulations. Consultation and dialogue should make the process of recording protected structures, issuing declarations and planning applications.

9. The Churches proposals have extended the discussion to include the exteriors as well as the interiors of buildings. and have made reference to the difficult problem of redundant buildings.

10. In future, planning applications will require to be prepared to professional standards which will require a team of professional advisors and result in additional costs. In order to assist the process, the Presbyterian Church, in common with the other denominations, will be required to set up an Historic Churches Advisory Committee which should take the form of a panel of experts

from different parts of Ireland. Authority will be sought from the Assembly to make this 'Committee' the responsibility of the BMI though there will be consultation with the relevant Presbyteries and the Church Architecture Committee about its membership and work.

Vacancies

11. Last year the Rev Andrew Watson left the congregations of Donegal and Ballyshannon after nine years for a new ministry in the congregation of Scarva St, Banbridge. We are grateful to God for his warm and refreshing style of ministry. The Rev John Woodside, having accepted the Call of Ballywillan, has left Kilkenny after some eighteen years. Again we are grateful to God for his leadership and for the growth and development of that congregation under his ministry. We pray God's blessing upon both in their new spheres of service. The Rev Brian Hunt has returned to England leaving a vacancy in Irvingstown, Pettigo and Tempo. We again thank God for his seventeen years of ministry. The Rev Charles McCurdy has retired leaving Drogheda and Ervey vacant. We thank God for his fifteen years service in these congregations and we wish him well in retirement.

12. The growing number of vacancies within our church is reflected also within the Home Mission and currently we have some six vacant congregations in need of pastoral care. Given that many HM congregations are small in number and feel a sense of distance from the heart and centre of Presbyterianism in Ireland we seek the prayers of our Church that God will soon send us ministers who will share in the Mission of our Church at home.

Urban Mission

13. Five congregations have been given grants of £25,000 each, paid over three years, under the Urban Mission Scheme which was set up to assist congregations in deprived areas to employ personnel to engage in significant outreach projects. They are Ballysillan, West Kirk, Strand, Ravenhill and Ballykeel in Ballymena. The latter is the first congregation outside Belfast to have benefited from the Scheme.

Inner-City Mission

14. The first grant under the Inner-City Mission Scheme has been made to Westbourne following the Call to the Rev Mervyn Gibson as Associate to the Westbourne Convener. His primary responsibility is to engage in imaginative outreach to the East Belfast area. The grant is for the employment of additional outreach personnel.

Nightlight

15. Nightlight continues to provide a ministry on the streets in face of increased pressure as a result of the extension of opening hours. We are indebted to Mr. John Luke and the volunteers who are sometimes engaged in Christian witness for most of the night. We are also grateful to the growing group of supporters who uphold Nightlight in their prayers and are constant in their giving to this important work. The team has been strengthened by the

confirmation of Miss Christine Brown's permanent appointment as Development Officer. Mrs Katherine Dalzell provides valuable support in the office.

16. Given that those "on the ground" always have a story to tell, and can tell it much better than the convener, reports from two congregations in receipt of Urban Mission Grants and from the Director of Nightlight are attached.

Alternating Ministries Scheme

Galway and Ballinasloe

17. The Rev Bob Cobain retired from the active ministry last June. We are grateful for the years he devoted to Galway and Ballinasloe. His successor is the Rev Dr Sahr Yamsu whose wife, Clodagh, is also an ordained Minister of the Methodist Church.

Christ Church Limerick

18. The Rev David Range will be unable to relinquish the charge of Christ Church, Limerick in June due to ill health. His wife, the Rev CJ Walter, has been giving herself unstintingly to the ministry there. We are pleased to report that Mr Range is on the way to full recovery and we wish him God's richest blessing. The Methodist Church has retained responsibility for Limerick until June 2003.

St Patrick's Waterford

19. The Rev Stephen Hancock has given enthusiastic leadership in St Patrick's, Waterford for over three years. He plans to return to the army as a chaplain at the end of June. The Methodist Church offered the vacancy to the Home Mission to seek a successor but, as Mr Hancock had been in post for less than half the eight years of normal tenure, the Home Mission invited the Methodist Church to station a successor in accordance with the custom of the Alternating Scheme.

20. We are grateful to the Church of Ireland authorities for having cancelled the covenant which placed certain restrictions on the development of the church site at Waterford. Although the site is heritage protected, two developers have expressed interest in purchasing it and are exploring the possibilities. However, our plans to dispose of the property and provide a new church building in Waterford are fraught with difficulties and the Home Mission would value your prayers to clearly and wisely see the way forward in the best interests of the Gospel.

Alternating Ministries Scheme

21. The annual meeting of the Alternating Ministries Scheme Committee was held last Autumn and enthusiastic reports about developments were received from every congregation within the Scheme.

22. The Committee considered the merits of extending the length of ministries, in certain cases, beyond the normal eight years in light of the decision taken by the Methodist Conference in 2000 to grant extensions of up to three

years in the interests of mission, of continuity and where the family circumstances of the minister made it desirable. We would add that significant developments in congregations should also be taken into account.

23. The Assembly will, therefore, be asked to approve extended tenure at the discretion of the BMI in each case after consultation with the Methodist Church, the Presbytery and other interested parties.

Appointment

24. During the year the Union Commission dissolved the union of Kells, Corboy and Mullingar and created the new union of Mullingar and Corboy. The BMI subsequently issued a Call to Mr Stephen Lockington and he was Ordained and Inducted by the Dublin and Munster Presbytery. It was a wonderful witness to the Gospel through the Presbyterian Church when about two hundred and twenty people from all sections of the community and all parts of Ireland attended the service and were entertained at the reception afterwards. The Home Mission has purchased a new Manse in Mullingar. We ask you to pray for God's blessing on this new outreach ministry which has already started with promise.

Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church

25. Two responses to last Assembly's request for comments on this subject have been received from the Doctrine Committee. These responses have been brought together as one report which is printed as an Appendix. A resolution to send the report down to Presbyteries is appended.

Prayer Support

26. The Rev John Faris has been appointed to co-ordinate a new Board scheme to present prayer requests relating to Home Mission Congregations and schemes by e-mail. Brief profiles of congregations will also be sent out.

27. Information will be available monthly at first, and Mr Faris would appreciate prayer requests and other relevant information being sent to him, preferably, by e-mail so as to have the scheme running by mid-summer. His e-mail address is jfaris@presbyterianireland.org

Finance

28. The BMI would wish to express appreciation to the United Appeal Board for the support for the work at home and also the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities and the Committee on the Overview of Funding for their helpful guidance.

Behind the Scenes

29. Our annual report would be incomplete without due thanks to the staff of the General Secretary's office whose office skills enable the administration of the Home Mission to run so smoothly. Particular thanks are due to Mrs Joyce Anderson and Mrs Jennifer McClure. In addition we again pay tribute to the financial talents of Mrs Rosemary Thompson, our honorary treasurer, while also acknowledging the role now being played by Mr Nehru

Dass (Irish Mission) who is in process of taking on the role of administering the Home Mission accounts.

Retirement

30. During his twelve years as Secretary to the Home Mission the Rev Dr RFS Poots has worked alongside three Conveners, minuted many meetings, made countless visits to the four corners of Ireland, befriended ministers and congregations, and used his knowledge of property and law in the best interests of the Home Mission. We are grateful to God for his tireless commitment to the Mission of our Church in Ireland and we wish him a happy retirement.

Urban City Grants

The Rev Norman Hamilton, Ballysillan, reports:

31. In March, 2001 the Board enabled Ballysillan Presbyterian Church to take Mr Mark Shaw onto their staff with a grant from the Urban Mission Fund. Mark's remit was threefold:

- (a) to strengthen existing work with the 20-45 year olds in the congregation;
- (b) to develop ministry to 'fringe' members in the same age range and
- (c) to develop specific ministry to unchurched 20-45s in the area.

32. Much of this is new within an urban congregation, and poses very special challenges to the congregation and its leadership. For example: marriages where neither bride nor groom know any hymns; Sunday worship suitable for both committed Christian folks and those with no church background; discipleship for those with little Christian support.

33. It has, however, been a particular delight for the church to build up deep trusting relationships with the local community in Glenbryn, which was at the centre of the Holy Cross dispute last Autumn. Along with the minister, Mark's work is central to ministry in this community which is massively unchurched. Inevitably such work is over the longer term, but this direct connection with such a local community is thrilling in every way.

Mr Roy Thompson, West Kirk, reports:

34. Since funding was granted by the Board of Mission in Ireland from the Urban Grant this aspect of the overall ministry of the West Kirk Community Project, based in 'The Centre' in Conway Street, has expanded considerably. Indeed the timing of the setting up of this particular ministry was clearly under God's direction. Problems of addiction to alcohol, to drugs, and perhaps to a lesser extent to gambling, are becoming of almost epidemic proportions in the Shankill area, especially among young men, although the starting age as far as involvement with drugs is concerned is becoming much younger. This widespread problem of addiction leads to many other personal and social ills, a breakdown of family and personal relationships, a great increase in theft even from one's own family, and an alarming increase in attempted and, tragically, actual suicides.

35. Convinced that in the Name of Christ we must engage with this dreadful evil in our society we seek to help in two ways through the work of our Project Facilitator, Walter McBride. 'The Centre' is open daily as a friendly environment into which a considerable number of those whose lives are being destroyed by these addictions come and are listened to, counselled, put in touch with other agencies who can help them, and also are sensitively told of the Saviour who can set them free. In addition, programmes of education on alcohol and drug abuse have been provided for younger people who are in great danger of being drawn in to this destructive lifestyle. A group of young people completed one such course provided in part by one of the statutory bodies, and some of them have testified that it has strengthened their resolve not to get involved in the drug scene.

36. The Management Committee of the Project are grateful for the funding provided by the Board of Mission in Ireland which enabled us to provide necessary resources for this work, but, most importantly, enabled us to employ Walter McBride in a full-time role. His commitment to Jesus Christ and His gospel, his deep care for people of the Shankill, and the courses of training he has undergone, make his ministry effective in this area of need.

Nightlight

Mr John Luke, Director of Nightlight, reports:

1. The outreach work of NIGHTLIGHT is continuing in the entertainment area of Belfast. A team of 28 volunteers, working on rota, take Christ on to the streets on Thursday night from 8pm to 11pm and Friday and Saturday nights from 11pm through to 3, 4 or even 5 am.

2. The volunteers are committed Christians of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds who have a burden for the work of NIGHTLIGHT and who have experienced clear direction from God to become actively involved. New team members go through an application, vetting and interview process and then receive "on the job" training. The team is constantly changing as personal circumstances alter and it is always encouraging to welcome new people on board.

3. NIGHTLIGHT focuses on the entertainment area of Belfast known as the "Golden Mile". It seeks to serve those with whom it has contact in a relevant and dynamic manner, based on the 2000 year old model of Christ's Ministry. NIGHTLIGHT endeavours to make clear Christ's message both as an invitation to those who are as yet outside God's Kingdom, as well as a challenge to those who are within.

4. The NIGHTLIGHT base is at the Kinghan Church in Botanic Avenue, where team members can meet for prayer before and after the work on the streets and to which anyone in need of help and counseling can be brought. A regular Saturday and Sunday mornings (1 to 3am) Tea Bar is provided on the footpath outside the church and this has become a great contact point.

5. The Director continues to receive numerous invitations to speak to congregations and this reflects on the high level of support and interest shown by the Church in general. In January 2001, Miss Christine Brown was appointed

as Development Officer and during 2001 has concentrated on Team Development and Contact Follow-up. In March 2001 Mrs Catherine Dalzell was appointed as part-time Resource Worker on a three-month contract and in September she was appointed as a permanent staff member and in that role she has been able to produce Prayer Letters, Information Packs and Leaflets and other resource material as well as co-ordinating deputation.

6. The work of NIGHTLIGHT is supervised by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Director.

R L CRAIG, Convener

APPENDIX

The Rev D Bannerman reports:

THE STATUS OF DEACONESSES IN THE COURTS OF THE CHURCH

1. The General Assembly referred the study on 'The Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church' to the Doctrine Committee and others for 'preliminary comments'.¹ The Doctrine Committee believes that this report raises important and far reaching theological issues, some of which will be dealt with in its discussion on Ministry to be presented to the June 2002 General Assembly. It would be premature, therefore, until these wider issues of ministry have been considered to comment in a definitive way on the report; rather we [ie the Doctrine Committee] will confine ourselves in our 'preliminary comments' to presenting an historical survey of previous reports to the General Assembly in the past with a summary of the main issues raised.

2. The first comment that we would make is that the Role of the Deaconess, as the committee points out, has been considered by the General Assembly from 1973. Therefore there is substantial material available² but it is not easily consulted. Such material needs to be made available in booklet format or in a fresh study of the subject that includes Biblical material etc.

The Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church.

3. It is upon this particular matter we are asked to comment. (Reports 2001 p 174). Basically the position is that the status of Deaconess within the Church has remained unchanged in 30 years in spite of a number of reports to Assembly. Deaconesses are not, of right, members of the Courts of the Church, although they are invited to 'sit and deliberate' in all of them. The Church of Scotland and other Churches have admitted them to voting rights in Church Courts. The Deaconesses would like this issue to be addressed and the sub

1 MGA 2001 P48 Res 8

2 RGA 1973 p21ff, RGA 1974 ppl8-19, RGA 1977 p129 ff, RGA 1988 p139, MGA 1976 p146 re Committee, Code 1980 p169, RGA 1993 p350 ff, RGA 1994 p300 ff, RGA 1995 p286' RGA 1992 p176 re Committee, RGA 2000 p197 ff, RGA 2001 p174 ff

committee of the Board Mission in Ireland would support this. It is pointed out that some Deaconesses who are elders are involved in Church Courts but this is because they personally have been elected as elders.

4. The report cites the following possibilities:

5. *Code Par 182(1) provides that "Special arrangements may be made for a call to the office of a ruling elder under the General Assembly in the case of person appointed to work under an Assembly Board" while Par 182(4) further provides that "Ruling elders ordained under these arrangements shall be members of the superior courts of the Church and shall be eligible for co-option or election to a local Session..."*.

There is no knowledge of that provision ever having been used for deaconesses but the Assembly might favour its use for them. That would have the advantage of simplicity, as few changes to the Code would be needed.

6. *Alternatively, the Assembly might decide that duly commissioned deaconesses in full-time appointments would be full members of Church courts ex officio, though that would raise the question of other "commissioned" persons, such as Irish Mission workers, Overseas Missionaries, "additional pastoral personnel" etc. How far do we go?*

7. *Another option would be to follow the example of the Church of Scotland and create a new all-inclusive Order of Deacons, both male and female*³.

5. It points out that the position of the Church of Scotland is that deacons/deaconesses have a voice but not a vote in Kirk Session, are full members of Presbytery and one in four are commissioned to be full members of Assembly. For us, the creation of a third "Order" would be a major step and require Barrier Act procedure. These issues could easily require a major study and previous Reports to the Assembly would be a good foundation for this.

The Doctrine Committee Report 1973.

6. This Report of 1973 is the only specific Report of the Doctrine Committee on Diakonia. The stated aim was "to trace the main features of service in Christ as recorded in the New Testament. We recall selected historical expressions of Christian Service. We offer patterns of DIAKONIA/MINISTRY/SERVICE which we believe are called for in the changed circumstances of our time. Throughout this document diakonia, ministry and service are being used as interchangeable terms."⁴ This eight page Report covers these three areas. (*see Reports 1973 p.21ff for details of this study*)

7. The Report of 1973 would see the possibility of a developing ministry in the NT and throughout the life of the Church.

8. This Report was sent down to Presbyteries. The relevant part of the report for us is: "There was praise for the work of deaconesses, whose status in the Church seemed to several Presbyteries to be inadequate."⁵ There is no

3 RGA 2000 p197 ff

4 RGA 1973 p21 ff

5 RGA 1974 Par 9 p19

mention of giving deaconesses a vote in the Courts of the Church, but this was not their remit, which was “to examine and advise on the meaning of ‘DIAKONIA’ for the Church’s recognized ministry and service to men.”⁶

The Ad Hoc Committee re Deaconesses 1977

- (i) The Report stated that the Ad Hoc Committee re Deaconesses was appointed at the General Assembly in 1976, in response to a Memorial from the Deaconess Association, with the task of setting forth “more clearly the Scriptural basis” of the office and examining the office and function of a Deaconess serving in the present circumstances of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This substantial Report attempts to clarify the office and work of a Deaconess as it exists at present in our Church. On its recommendations the Assembly adopted a series of guidelines to govern the office and work of Deaconesses. These were included in the 1980 Code⁷.

10. The committee proceeded after clarifying the office and work of a Deaconess to review the office in its Biblical and historical perspectives. In examining the Biblical material the Report asks and answers six questions. In answering the question “who are called to be deacons and deaconesses?” they state: “In the New Testament sense, therefore, all Christians are deacons or deaconesses.”⁸ They leave open the question as to whether the office of deacon is an established office. In examining the historical material there was no attempt to trace the historical development of the office of Deacon but they drew attention to particular points.

11. The report concluded:

“Having taken into consideration both the Biblical and historical data outlined, the committee was persuaded that a proposal to establish an Order of Deacons (male and female), involving the setting apart by ordination of persons called by God to a particular ministry within the Church and constituting them members of Church courts, would be agreeable to the Word of God and in accordance with Presbyterian doctrine. Nonetheless the Committee is not at this point in its discussions presenting such a proposal to the General Assembly.”⁹

12. The final conclusion of this Ad Hoc Committee came the following year:

The Committee have given further consideration to proposals that would promote a fuller integration of deaconesses with the courts of the Church. We have come to the conclusion that no generally satisfactory proposals to this end can be made at the present time, though the issue is important and will require consideration at some future time.¹⁰

6 RGA 1973 Par 1

7 Code (1980) Para 303

8 RGA 1977 p132

9 Ibid., p135

10 RGA 1978 p139

13. Embodied in the Report some reasons are given for the committee's inability to make positive proposals. These will be included in our own final comments. Ad Hoc Committee re Ards Memorial on Deacons 1993¹¹

14. This report is judged as valuable by the present committee on the Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church.¹² Its remit was to "re-examine the case for the office of deacon in the church, fulfilling a pastoral role"¹³. The Report examined the Biblical evidence, the historical background with particular reference to Ireland and the Eldership, and then looked at the present situation.

15. Its judgment is as follows:

*"To isolate one group whose particular ministry is visiting in homes, hospitals, nursing homes or people in need and to raise them to a formal, ordained office in the church, while others are fulfilling equally significant ministries, seems unwise. Pastoral care is exercised by a whole range of people within the church and we must not inhibit that work by formalising it. Neither must we contain pastoral care within the one office of deacon so that teaching and ruling elders are exempt from being shepherds of the flock."*¹⁴

16. The final outcome of this Report was that the re-introduction of the office of deacon is not necessary, but that faced with the need for additional pastoral care congregations may respond by selecting, training and appointing pastoral visitors.

17. After considering these previous Reports we return to comment on the present one.

Preliminary Comments upon Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church

18. There is, as stated earlier, the need to collate relevant material in booklet form or engage in a fresh study of the subject. A fresh examination acknowledges that the subject is not static.

19. The 2001 Report offers 4 options:

- (a) *leave things as they are.* — This would be unsatisfactory to the Deaconess Association but satisfactory to many who are happy with the present situation.
- (b) *ordain all deaconesses as ruling elders, with a slight adjustment of existing provisions of the Code to specifically include elder-deaconesses as members of Kirk Sessions. (A congregation does not elect or call its deaconesses).* — We presume that this ordination would be under Par 182(1) of the Code (see Sect 1 of this paper). To ordain in this way gives the impression of bringing this in by the "back door" and would be creative of opposition. Congregations in many cases do not co-opt any to the Kirk Session and as a result of this

11 RGA 1993 p350 ff

12 RGA 2001 par 12 p176

13 RGA 1993 par 1 p350

14 Ibid., par 25 p355

procedure there could be a variety of status amongst deaconesses in different congregations.

- (c) *to introduce new legislation to make all duly commissioned deaconesses members of church courts;* - To do this and make deaconesses members of church courts could be opposed simply on the grounds that it is being imposed. At grass roots level in the Church there is the strong view of the congregation or Kirk Session 'calling'.
- (d) *to introduce a new "Order" of deacons/deaconesses to include other commissioned church workers.* — As par 10 states that this would be a major step requiring careful thought and Barrier Act procedure. The 1993 Report on Deacons¹⁵ would be valuable if this option is seriously considered. The Report of 2001 suggests that 'one (or two)' of these four options above might be chosen by the Assembly for further study. Such study ought to be pursued in terms of comment 1 above.

20. The following five reasons were given by the committee which submitted the 1977 Report for their not proposing an Order of Deacons.¹⁶ (male and female)

- (i) 'A male Diaconate had neither established itself as an effective office within the Church in the past, nor was there any evidence of a demand for it in the present.'
- (ii) 'That the Presbyterian Church in Ireland now includes a number of "special ministries" that in earlier years might have been considered as the work of deacons.'
- (iii) 'That women were now eligible for the office of ministry of Word and Sacraments in our Church.'
- (iv) 'That the General Assembly, having in 1973 rejected steps to enable the Church to obtain freedom in determining matters of doctrine without danger of legal penalties, it might require a special act of Parliament to establish such a Diaconate.'
- (v) A further point re Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith would still be relevant today. In view of the fact that it is sometimes argued that deaconesses are prohibited from a closer relationship to the Courts of the Church, because they do not sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Committee did seriously consider recommending a change to this end in their Services of Commissioning and Installation. The Committee do not consider that there is any real difference between solemnly affirming and signing the Confession, but have accepted the view that it is a symbolic distinction between the concepts of 'commissioning' and 'ordination,' and are therefore proposing no change in the matter at this point.

21. Points (i) to (v) raise current issues which most probably would need to be addressed.

22. If deaconesses are made members of Church Courts the expectation is that Irish Mission Workers will also be made members. The Report of 2001,

¹⁵ RGA 1993 p350 ff

¹⁶ RGA 1977 p135

would envisage the possibility of Overseas Missionaries,¹⁷ 'additional pastoral personnel' etc following, and it asks, 'How far do we go?' Might personnel in Shankill Road Mission and Kinghan Mission, be added?

23. Has the question been faced as to what would happen if a 'deaconess' or 'other person' is ordained by Presbytery and co-opted to a Kirk Session and resigns from his/her post? Does such a person remain a member of Kirk Session? How would this situation relate to a missionary who proved to be 'short term'?

24. The present position of deaconesses is comparable to that of licentiates (although they may proceed to ordination), and to Retired Ministers who, whilst they may be invited to sit and deliberate in the Presbytery in which they live, do not have a vote. In the case of Retired Ministers they are full members of their own Presbytery and other courts.

25. There has come to the attention of the Committee Reports in the 1950's on Various Ministries. In 1952¹⁸ a Biblical and Historical account is presented. This especially relates to teaching of divinity in schools. Their resolution to ordain such but not to permit administration of the sacraments or to rule and sit in Church Courts was amended 'to receive suitable recognition by his Church'.¹⁹ Would this be a further extension of ordination as is stated in the 2001 Report? There may have been a particular case of a licentiate of the Church who was teaching divinity in a school that raised this question.

26. For our purpose this Committee presented a Report in 1961 on the 'Ministry of Women', and in it they dealt with CHURCH SISTER. The committee's view was that there was nothing to prevent a Church Sister from being a member of the Courts of the Church in her own right. However, they did not feel that the Church "would be ready at this stage to accept legislation to put it into being."²⁰ We quote their conclusion as a comment.

27. "Others, who might be slower to accept the view that there may be orders of ministry other than the traditional four, viz, Pastor, Doctor, Elder, Deacon, would argue that the Church Sister, either at the outset of her ministry or after a fixed term of years, should be ordained as an elder and sit in the Kirk Session of the congregation where she labours; thus she would have her place in the courts of the Church. There are practical objections to this in that a congregation might feel that its freedom to choose its elders was restricted. Furthermore, since Church Sisters are transferable she might be acceptable as an elder in one congregation but not in another. Did a Kirk Session in any way resent her presence, it would make her work very difficult. We cannot therefore recommend that Church Sisters should be compulsorily ordained as elders. We

17 Cox J.T. Practice and Procedure in the Church of Scotland p659

In 1939 the General Assembly approved an Association of Women Workers (discontinued 1944.) included in it were Women missionaries, Church Sisters, Deaconesses, and other Women duly appointed by a Court. If this organisation was still in existence would all of these groups be available for ordination? If they were, would this have influence in Ireland?

18 RGA 1952 p122ff

19 MGA 1952 pp 32-33

20 RGA 1961 p133

would however point out to congregations that they are free to choose Church Sisters as elders. We would also recommend that Church Sisters should be required to be “in attendance on the Kirk Session” for consultation as and when needed.”²¹

Church Courts

28. Any study of “the Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church” needs to consider also the nature and function of those courts. Calvin observed “... if in every human society some kind of government is necessary to insure the common peace and maintain concord ... this ought specially to be observed in churches, which are best sustained by a constitution in all respects well ordered.” (*Institutes Book IV, Ch X*).

29. However, in contrast to churches with a system of Canon Law, which tended to be viewed as something immutable, Calvin was open to the idea of change and development. “But as in external discipline and ceremonies, [the Lord] has not been pleased to prescribe every particular that we ought to observe (he foresaw that this depended on the nature of the times, and that one form would not suit all ages), in them we must have recourse to the general rules which he has given, employing them to test whatever the necessity of the Church may require to be enjoined for order and decency Things of this nature ... for the edification of the Church should be accommodated to the varying circumstances of each age and nation; it will be proper as the interest of the Church may require, to change and abrogate the old, as well as to introduce new forms.”

30. While the latter quotation does not deal explicitly with the constitution or membership of church courts, this principle of *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* does apply to them. Primarily concerned with Biblical doctrine, Calvin’s role in the development of Church structures was secondary. Dr Duncan Shaw writes, “As the Reformation was mainly a religious revival ... the Church organisation was not as consciously constructed as doctrinal statements were. Each Church grew up in the face of certain difficulties or within a special situation. The constitution was the result of a tension between theological insights and the dictates of necessity.” (*The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland 1560 - 1600, p xi.*) The differences among churches which have inherited the theology of Geneva but a wide range of governing structures bear this out. As G D Henderson puts it, “Precisely what limits must be set to the flexibility of the Presbyterian system of conciliar church government it is impossible to decide categorically.” (*Presbyterianism, p 128*).

31. It is therefore doubtful whether any of the options placed before last Assembly with regard to the status of deaconesses in church courts could be ruled out as being incompatible with the Reformed tradition.

32. There are, however, other considerations to be taken into account. The constitution and membership of its courts are matters for the Church to determine in the interests of its own efficiency and effectiveness. In what way

21 Ibid., pp33-134

will a proposed change assist the mission of the Church? Membership of Church courts should not be granted simply for the sake of conferring the status it is perceived to carry. Scripture does not commend those who seek status for its own sake (eg Matt 20. 20-28; 23. 6; 3 John 9).

33. Membership of church courts can, and should, be conferred on any category of office-bearer where that enables them, or the church courts concerned, to carry out their duties more effectively, as eg the former category of “missionary elder” illustrates. There could also be certain parallels with the (now rare) category of ordained assistant, who was called by a Kirk Session, ordained and inducted by Presbytery and thereby became a member of Kirk Session and the superior courts of the church.

34. The duties of the various courts of the Church are set out at length in the Code Chapters II (Kirk Session), IV (Presbytery), VI (Synod) and VII (General Assembly). It would be a useful exercise to see how the addition of deaconesses, or any other category of church worker, would enable those courts to discharge these duties better.

35. However, the question has also to be asked whether it is possible for a church court to become too large for its own efficiency. In 1902 W T Latimer referred to the General Assembly as “an overgrown court”. (*A History of Irish Presbyterianism*, p 540). That is a fair point and its membership has increased substantially since then.

36. In his day Charles Hodge wrote, “ There are ... many things as to which [the Church] is at liberty to act as she deems best for God’s glory and the advancement of his kingdom (*The Church and its Polity*, p 122). It is reasonable to conclude that, as Church courts exist to serve the mission of the Church, the acid test is how far any proposed change in their membership will promote that mission in the time and place in which the Church finds itself.

CHURCH EXTENSION COMMITTEE

1. The following is a summary of the work of Church Extension during 2001.

Belfast Area

New Mossley

2. The congregation continue to explore ways to develop and improve their Outreach. The work of the Church Development Committee continues to progress and they are greatly encouraged.

3. The Committee realise that works of improvement are required to the car park and that repointing work is required to the brickwork.

Taughmonagh

4. Meetings have been held with Church Committee members to discuss various design proposals for the provision of a new entrance greeting area with a new meeting room at the front of the Church. In view of the fact that the Rev

Bill Moore is leaving Taughmonagh, the Committee considered that it would be appropriate to postpone the work, pending a new appointment.

5. The Committee would wish to thank the Rev Bill Moore for all his work over the years and to wish him well as he takes up his new post in Scotland.

Coleraine

Ballysally

6. The congregation have indicated their appreciation for the installation of new lights and ceiling, and the work carried out in 2001 to the roof of the main building.

7. The Rev John Coulter is encouraged that more people are realising their financial responsibilities and that a number of young people have been converted in the last year.

8. The congregation is in good spirits and is celebrating 25 years in 2002.

Londonderry

Strathfoyle

9. The Rev Stanley Stewart reports that the remaining Strathfoyle congregation continues to worship in the Church of Ireland building, and that this arrangement is satisfactory.

10. Concern has been expressed regarding the future of the congregation, given the problems of the surrounding estate. No offers have been made for the site which is presently on the market.

Sites

Antrim

11. The site in Antrim has been sold for £460,000.

Carrickfergus

12. Presbytery has advised that the present site at Marshallstown Road, should be sold and that a new site should be purchased in a more suitable location. It was agreed that until an alternative site had been identified, the present site at Marshallstown Road should be retained.

Ballymacross, Lisburn

13. Discussions continue regarding the possibility of purchasing a site at Ballymacross.

Finance*Wellington Street, Ballymena (Porting)*

14. The Committee agreed that a “porting” grant of £30,000 be given to Wellington Street, Ballymena.

United Appeal

15. The Board agreed that £175,000 be returned from the Church Extension account to the United Appeal.

16. As there are sufficient funds in the account to finance projects for the next 12 months, no application has been made this year to the United Appeal Board. It was agreed that an application will be made for 2003 and we trust the Board will be understanding and supportive.

Bequests

17. The Committee acknowledge with thanks the generous bequests which were received during the last financial year from the Estates of Dr Dorothy Faulkner and Ethel Hamilton Meeke which totalled £222,960.

Remit of Church Extension

18. There was ongoing discussion regarding the remit of Church Extension which was restated as:

- (i) the provision of financial support for new buildings and
- (ii) assisting Church Extension charges with the maintenance and upkeep of their property;
- (iii) the provision of grants for establishing a cause.

Members agreed to give further consideration to this matter during the incoming year.

Support

19. The Committee appreciate the co-operation of Presbyteries throughout the year and the prayerful and financial support from many people and various organisations.

20. May all who serve in Church Extension Charges, Minister, Interim Sessions, and working Committees be encouraged in their work and know God’s guidance as they seek to extend His Kingdom.

21. The Rev George Moffett has served for seven years as Convener of the Committee. Due to on-going decisions it is desirable for him to continue for a further year.

GEORGE MOFFETT, BRIAN KNOX, Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Irish Mission Committee

2. That the General Assembly permit the Board of Mission in Ireland to make grants to communicant members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland working in non-Presbyterian situations and seeking help under the terms of the Tentmaking Ministries Scheme.

3. That the resignation of Mr Douglas Cowan as Convener of the Irish Mission Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev R A Patton be appointed in his place.

Evangelism Committee

4. That the General Assembly commend the work of the Director of Evangelism and encourage Ministers, Kirk Sessions and congregations to make use of this gifted service.

5. That the General Assembly encourage congregations to support Bible Sunday on 8 December, 2002.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

6. That the General Assembly congratulate the Directors of the Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited for the success of the Society and urge congregations and individuals to make use of the lending facilities offered through the Society.

Home Mission Committee

7. That the General Assembly appoint the Conveners of the Board of Mission in Ireland, the Home Mission Convener, the Rev Dr D J Watts, Mrs C Poynton and the Rev S G Anketell to the Alternating Ministries Scheme Committee.

8. That the General Assembly approve an extension of ministry in Alternating Ministry Schemes at the discretion of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

9. That the Board of Mission in Ireland be authorised to set up an Historic Churches Advisory Committee as set out in the report.

10. That the report on the Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church be sent down to Presbyteries for consideration and report to Rev Dr D J Watts by 31 December, 2002.

Church Extension Committee

11. That the Rev George Moffett continue as Co-Convener of the Church Extension Committee for one further year.

General

12. That the Board of Mission in Ireland, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Central President: Mrs MAUREEN PATTERSON

Executive Secretary: Mrs MARGARET MYERS

Theme for the year: 'Choice in a Changing World'

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Board of Mission in Ireland and the Overseas Board).

1. PWA selected the theme '**Choice in a Changing World**' for the past year. We live in a fast changing world and in a society which suffers from choice fatigue. People are now seeking help from different agents to help manage their choices. Our theme for this year has given us the opportunity to encourage our members to follow the example of our Lord, who chose to do the Father's will.

PWA Executive Committee

2. The Executive Committee which is responsible for progressing the work of the Association met on nine occasions throughout the year.

3. The Executive Committee is preparing for a morning Conference (14 September 2002) for branch office bearers to focus our vision and to help with programmes which are relevant to the needs of our day.

4. We record our sincere thanks to Mrs Margaret Myers, PWA Executive Secretary, and to our office staff, Mrs Rita Maguire, Miss Margaret Young and Miss Naomi Campbell, for the way in which they fulfilled their responsibilities.

Executive Committee 2002/2003

Office-Bearers:

Central President:

Mrs Maureen Patterson (Iveagh)

Home Vice-President:

Mrs Zoe Vallely (Carrickfergus)

Overseas Vice-President:

Mrs Rosemary Cowan (East Belfast)

Home Treasurer:

Mrs Marbeth Russell (Ards)

Overseas Treasurer:

Mrs Doreen McMullen (South Belfast)

Committee Members:

Mrs Margaret Clarke (Ards)

Mrs Gillian Drennan (Monaghan)

Mrs Eileen Greenlee (Armagh)

Mrs Jenny Kirk (Newry)

Mrs Lorna Brown (Ballymena)

Mrs Amanda Blair (Omagh)

Mrs Helen Murdock (North Belfast)

Mrs Barbara Thompson (Route)

Miss Elizabeth Smyth (Coleraine)

Mrs Maureen Weir (Templepatrick)

Mrs Sheila Fell (Derry/Strabane)

Mrs Sandra Fleck (Tyrone)

Mrs Pearl Johnston (Donegal)

Mrs Hilary Hull (ex officio)

Mrs Mary Boggs (Down)

Mrs Gwen Irwin (ex officio)

Mrs Hilary Jess (Dromore)

Mrs Alison McCaughan (ex officio)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mrs Pat Colvin (Dublin & Munster) | Mrs Edith Neale (YWG) |
| Mrs Valerie Stewart (Foyle) | Mrs Arlene Birney (ex officio) |
| Mrs Jane McClure (Iveagh) | Mrs Margaret Myers (ex officio) |
| Mrs Rita Maguire (ex officio) | |

Events 2001/2002

5. The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 29 March 2001, in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Margaret Thompson.

6. The Annual General Meetings were held on 10 May, 2001 in the Assembly Hall, Church House. The Guest Speaker, Miss Elsie Quinn, gave a challenging address on the theme 'Choice in a Changing World'.

7. The Executive Committee hosted a Coffee Morning in the Minor Hall on 31 May 2001 for PROP and retired personnel. Mrs Eileen Mol gave an entertaining talk. The Committee wish to express their sincere thanks to the members of PROP for their continued help in many practical ways.

8. For the first time, in recent years, a Reception for Women was held on the Tuesday morning of General Assembly Week, 5 June 2001, in Church House.

9. The Central President and the Executive Secretary represented PWA at the 'topping-off' ceremony performed by the Secretary of State, at the new Vine Centre, on 15 June 2001.

10. A Communion Service in the Chapel Church House was conducted by Rev Ivan Patterson, Newcastle, prior to the Executive Committee meeting on 6 September, 2001.

11. The PWA Annual Conference was held on 15 September, 2001 in High Kirk Church Hall, Ballymena. Both Home and Overseas personnel joined in fellowship with members of General Committee and highlighted the changing contexts in which they have worked.

Home Personnel

12. PWA wishes to thank most sincerely the Rev Dr Derek Poots, Secretary of the Board of Mission in Ireland, for his willing support and invaluable advice given over the past twelve years. We pray God's blessing for his retirement.

Overseas Personnel, visits and visitors

13. PWA continues to be involved in the Overseas work of the Church and we record our deep gratitude to Rev Dr Terry McMullan for the contribution of his time, for his wisdom and support for the work over the past 20 years and wish him God's blessing for the years of retirement.

14. PWA Office Bearers were pleased to meet Judit Agócs, a lecturer at the Faculty of Teacher Training of the Károli Gáspár University of the Hungarian Reformed Church who visited Ireland 13-17 August 2001 to share information and ideas together and to gain an insight into the work of the Faculty.

15. Mrs Margaret Myers, Executive Secretary, made a visit to Kenya 7-17 November and Mrs Maureen Patterson, Central President made a visit, with her husband, to Nepal and India 16 November -7 December.

Finance

16. PWA continues to receive the generous financial support of its branches. The Executive Committee acknowledges, with a deep sense of gratitude, the faithfulness on the part of individual members that enables PWA to meet its financial commitments.

17. PWA supports in part 21 deaconesses, 2 trainee deaconesses and 1 woman worker.

18. A grant of £283,250.00 was given to the Overseas Board to provide financial support, in part, to all missionary personnel.

Birthday Thank Offering Fund

19. The 2000/2001 Birthday Thank Offering amounted to £40,220 and was used to support AIDS orphans in Malawi and to furnish a sitting room in the new Vine Centre, Belfast.

20. The 2001/2002 Birthday Thank Offering to date (March) amounts to £11,936.88. The money raised will be used to supply soft furnishings, fixtures and fittings for Willow Brook, a supported housing project of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to help with outreach work to the Samburu and Turkana peoples in Northern Kenya.

Bequests

21. PWA acknowledges with thanks the following bequests:

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Lilly Hogg | £1,000.00 |
| Clara Robinson | £1,000.00 |
| Nellie Fitzsimons | £10,023.27 |
| Dr M D Faulkner | £94,567.82 |
| Mrs A E McFarland | £1,000.00 |

Wider World

22. Wider World has had another very successful year and has included articles about our Church's work in Ireland and overseas and news of personnel, together with articles which seek to inspire and challenge. The children's page, compiled by Mrs Adrienne Campbell, continues to be informative and of great interest to our younger readers and we thank her for her work. We are grateful to Mr Raphael Sutter who supplies photographs for the magazine covers.

23. Sincere thanks are due to the editor, Mrs Alison McCaughan, and all those who have contributed to the magazine and its wide promotion.

24. Printed quarterly, copies of the magazine are sent to partner Churches on all five continents.

25. Selected extracts from Wider World are now on-line and an edited version of each issue is available on audio-tape for those who are blind, partially sighted or have difficulty holding a magazine.

Young Women's Groups

26. The 2001/2002 theme 'Choice in a Changing World' was shared by YWG and PWA.

27. The YWG annual rally was held in West Church, Ballymena on 18 April 2002. Mrs Phyllis Linton, deaconess in West Church, gave the address.

28. Cheques were handed over to Rev Dr Terry McMullan for China and to Mrs Rosemary Simpson for the Marriage and Family Committee.

29. **Office-Bearers 2002/2003:**

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Chairman: | Mrs Edith Neale |
| Secretary : | Mrs Heather Aiken |
| Treasurer: | Mrs Gwen Wakefield |
| Newsletter Editor: | Mrs Olive Hanna |

30. The YWG Home Project for 2002/2003 will provide funds to help smaller congregations in the South of Ireland provide equipment for the use of young people and mother and toddler groups.

31. The YWG Overseas Project for the year 2002/2003 will have the theme of 'Training for Ministry and Mission and Work with Disadvantaged Children in Brazil', providing scholarships for Brazilian Missionaries training at the Missionary Training Institutes of the IPI and for men and women preparing for ordination.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev R VALLELY
Secretary: Mr N J CHAMBERS

1. *“God calls us to mission as witnesses to Christ through both evangelism and social witness, challenging the values of the world in which we live with the values of God’s kingdom and winning men and women to faith and discipleship.*

2. *This mission is to be pursued among all the people of Ireland and the peoples of the European Community and the whole world; those with whom we feel comfortable, those from whom we feel alienated and those who are in any way distant from us in culture and faith.” (Extract from the Church’s Mission Statement).*

3. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities, which was appointed by the General Assembly 2001 to examine the spending priorities of the Boards of the Church, challenged the Board of Social Witness to redefine its strategic priorities and to prioritise its operational objectives for the next five years. The Board applied itself to a rigorous appraisal of its contribution to the mission of the Church and how it expects to develop this over the next few years. This exercise has been beneficial, both in affirming social witness as a vital dimension of mission, but also in forcing the Board to rearrange its priorities, in the conviction that it must now commit itself more fully to supporting congregations, than hitherto.

4. The Board reiterates its belief that social witness is a function of mission and that social witness activity is complementary to evangelism and teaching; that worship and service are inextricably linked in scripture, as are “salt and light”. Social witness activity in its various forms helps the church to span the divide between it and secular society, by offering practical expression of God’s love, particularly as it affects the welfare of families.

Strategic Priorities

5. The Board has retained the strategic priorities as previously stated in its Business Plan 2001-2003, but has re-ordered these as follows:

- To develop social concern throughout the Church, both for those in congregations and in the wider community.
- To assist congregations in developing their witness in the community by offering advice, education and by providing information about available resources.
- To offer informed comment to the Church on complex social and ethical issues.
- To provide support and rehabilitation for vulnerable people.

6. The re-ordering of the Board’s priorities will have important implications for its work over the next five years. Central to this will be the Board’s relationships with other Boards of the Church, and hopefully a shared understanding of mission and the means of achieving it.

7. The Board wishes to see a more corporate approach to strategic planning across the Church and it will readily make its contribution to partnership arrangements aimed at developing the witness of congregations.

8. The Board has proposed to the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities that a priorities fund be established centrally to which congregations may apply for financial assistance to help them introduce new forms of mission and social witness in their areas. (Such a fund has been introduced by the Church of Scotland.) We trust that the Committee will give serious consideration to such a fund in Ireland.

Funding

9. Total income for the year was derived from the following sources:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Income from services | £3,343,000 |
| United Appeal | 290,000 |
| Donations and Bequests | 256,000 |
| Grants | 125,000 |
| Other | 176,000 |
| Total Income | £4,190,000 |

10. Total expenditure incurred in 2001 was £3,970,000. The breakdown of expenditure was as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Older People | £2,836,000 |
| Addiction and Education Services | 441,000 |
| Ex-Prisoners | 260,000 |
| Student Accommodation | 166,000 |
| Unemployed People | 27,000 |
| Deaf People | 89,000 |
| Relationship Counselling | 11,000 |
| Publications | 6,000 |
| Management Costs | 134,000 |
| Total Expenditure | £3,970,000 |

11. The Board's ability to undertake this range of work is heavily dependent on its allocation from the United Appeal, generous donations and bequests, and grants received from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland. This year the Board received generous financial support from Young Women's Groups, The Presbyterian Women's Association and the Sunday School Project. The Northern Ireland Drugs Co-ordination Unit made a generous grant towards the running of Gray's Court.

12. The Board is grateful for the support it receives from a wide range of partners in the statutory sector, including Health and Social Services Boards and

Trusts, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, and from the Oaklee, Habinteg and Fold Housing Associations respectively.

13. The Board is indebted to the Financial Secretary, the General Secretary's Office and the Personnel Officer for their support and guidance throughout a fairly challenging year.

14. Following the publication in 2001 of **Engaging with the Community: the Challenge of Mission in the 21st Century**, the Board has had discussions with other Boards and agencies of the Church aimed at developing a strategy for assisting congregations which are trying to develop their work, often in adverse circumstances.

Developments

15. The highlights of the year undoubtedly were the official opening in November 2001 by the Moderator, the Right Rev Dr Alistair Dunlop of Tritonville Close, Dublin and in April 2002, Willow Brook, Coleraine. The former is sheltered accommodation for older people, while Willow Brook is our first supported housing project for learning disabled adults.

16. When responsibility passed from the Board of Evangelism to the Board of Social Witness for the Marriage and the Family Committee, targets were set to double the number of relationship counsellors and to obtain suitable counselling rooms, outside of Church House, during the first year. Both were achieved, thanks to the commitment and skill of the Convener, Mrs Rosemary Simpson and our volunteer counsellors. We are grateful for the support received from Christian Guidelines, which provides training and supervision for our counsellors and for the encouragement of Knock Presbyterian Church in making available the Kairos Centre for counselling purposes.

17. The General Assembly 2001 approved a Resolution that the work of the Panel on Remarriage be reviewed. This proved to be a complex and challenging task. The report of the review appears under the report of the Marriage and the Family Committee. Rev Norman Cameron is thanked for his work in drawing together a wide spectrum of opinion on remarriage and related matters.

A Resolution of the Marriage and the Family Committee proposes that this report be sent to Presbyteries for comment, before recommendations to the General Assembly are finalised.

Resignations

18. **Rev Robert Love** The Addiction and Education Services Committee received, with regret, the resignation of Rev Robert Love as Co-Convener of the AES Committee.

19. Mr Love has been associated with Carlisle House since it opened in 1992. During this period he made a unique contribution as Chaplain and, in that capacity, won the trust and respect of many men and women who suffered from addictions.

20. Mr Love was well suited to this task because of his ability to get alongside people, through recreational and other activities. Many visited him privately for counselling and attended services at Duncairn and St Enoch's

Church. Mr Love also provided spiritual support and guidance to staff at Carlisle House and was always generous in making time available to them.

21. We record our grateful appreciation to him for all he has contributed to the work at Carlisle House.

22. **Rev Norman Cameron** completes seven years as Convener of the Social Issues and Resources Committee. During this period Mr Cameron has made a substantive contribution to the church's thinking and understanding of many complex social and ethical issues. Under his expert leadership the Committee has issued a series of resources and other materials to ministers and congregations. Mr Cameron has combined convenership of the Committee with his membership of other demanding positions, including the Marriage and the Family Committee and Convener of the Board's Ad Hoc Child Protection Monitoring Group.

23. Mr Cameron has been well suited to all of this work because of his legal expertise and his ability to apply analytical thinking to complex doctrinal and pastoral concerns.

24. We record our grateful appreciation to him for his work and achievements on the Committee's behalf.

Thanks

25. We record special thanks to our staff at Church House and to our Conveners, Board and Committee members without whom the work of the Board of Social Witness could not be sustained.

26. **Mr Norman Chambers writes:** *"It has been my privilege to serve the Board of Social Witness for the last five years. I have enjoyed that immensely, partly the challenge of relating my personal faith to professional practice, but also learning to relate social witness to the wider mission of the Church. I am indebted to my staff and colleagues at Church House and to Conveners, Board and Committee members for their support and encouragement."*

27. **Rev Roy Vallely writes:** *"It is with much regret that the Board of Social Witness notes the impending retirement of Mr Norman Chambers as Director of Social Service and Secretary to the Board. Norman Chambers came to the Directorship with a breadth of professional experience at central government level within mainstream social service and as a manager within a large national voluntary body. His professionalism, management skills and knowledge have been a steady guiding hand at the helm of our Board's work. His Christian commitment, wisdom, vision and communication skills have steered the work in the calm and in the uncharted waters. His sense of humour, quiet charm and humanity have kept the sails flying through difficult and diverse issues."*

28. *It has been the privilege and pleasure of many of us to know and work with him as a friend and colleague. Our Church gives thanks to Almighty God for the service given by Norman Chambers in the cause of Christ."*

Minister in Recognised Service – (Called by the Board of Social Witness under Code Par 281.3)

Rev Douglas Baker, The Mediation Network for Northern Ireland, reports:

1. In the past year my work has involved mediation in a number of church disputes in various denominations. Reflecting on these, it cannot be stressed often enough that it is good to seek either conflict counselling or conciliation early on in disputes, rather than waiting until too much damage has been done and positions become too rigid. Fortunately, more of my time has been devoted to preventative training with clergy and lay leaders. In recent months this has included day conferences or evenings with several Kirk Sessions on the themes of “Handling Conflict” and “Facilitating Decision-Making.”

2. Mr Joe Campbell, Assistant Director of the Mediation Network, and I continue to serve on the Conciliation Panel and assist with training and supervision.

3. In October 2001 the Mediation Network and the Irish School of Ecumenics launched a new project call “Partners in Transformation.” Dr Cecelia Clegg, co-author of “Moving Beyond Sectarianism” and I serve as co-leaders for this joint initiative. The aim of this project is to “*enhance, nurture and support the capacity of churches and faith communities in their calling to be peace builders and agents of transformation.*” The project, which is scheduled to run for five years, is targeted towards ‘church leaders’, by which we mean both those who hold executive level positions within denominations or are conveners, chairs and members of key boards and committees, as well as local clergy and lay leaders. It is operating by, among other things:

- providing space for leaders to reflect together about issues in peace-building and the challenges these pose to churches as institutions;
- designing and delivering, where possible in partnership with other agencies, training in conflict transformation, peace-building, group facilitation, moving beyond sectarianism, ministry in a divided society and inter-church issues;
- consultancy work with denominational groups engaged in peace-building, and;
- providing networking opportunities for support, encouragement and sharing of information between those working at the promotion of peace-building, within different churches and faith communities.

4. Finally, I continue to serve as Convener of the Peace and Peace Making Committee.

SOCIAL WITNESS AND SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Social Witness Southern Development Committee warmly welcomes the fact that the Board of Social Witness is increasingly committed to helping congregations to develop their social witness. The Board’s statement of priorities, and the thinking behind them, are the *raison d’être* for the existence of this Committee. In keeping with our proactive approach, we have been pursuing ways whereby we can assist congregations in developing their witness in the community. I have consulted with funding agencies here in the Republic of

Ireland to gauge the likely response to approaches from Presbyterian congregations wishing to become involved in social witness activity. I am delighted to report that my overtures were received very favourably and a great deal of goodwill exists towards any initiative by Presbyterians to play a greater role in the life of their communities.

2. The main reason for this is the perception that such initiatives would be cross-community and as such should be encouraged. The Irish government is very keen to promote a multi-cultural, pluralist society. This ethos has permeated the upper echelons of society in this country and there are real benefits to be gained from capitalising on such sentiment. A concrete example of this has been the granting of almost IR£1,000,000 by the Department of Justice and Law Reform to the childcare project of Adelaide Road, Donore, Presbyterian Church.

3. As a committee we are convinced that, if our Church is to make an impact on those who live their lives without reference to God, then we need to be involved at the “nitty-gritty” level in those lives, rather than shouting from the sidelines. We earnestly seek your prayerful support as we endeavour to encourage this involvement, by our congregations, in their local communities.

D BOYD, Convener

THOMPSON HOUSE

1. As one surveys the work in Thompson House throughout 2001, no doubt there were legions of problems and difficulties. But there were definite encouragements, not least our Bible study which some of our residents faithfully supported. One of our past residents, who now lives in a flat convenient to Thompson House, hosted this study group in his comfortable living room – all the members participated in the discussion which concluded with morning coffee.

2. Mr Bryan Marshall leads this study and then most of the men join him in the craft room where he guides and teaches woodwork and art. In this environment some of the discussions are further debated. Mr Marshall has the respect of the men and they appreciate his help and friendship.

3. Thanks are due to the Management Committee for their time, interest and wisdom, especially to the Secretary, Rev Rodney Thompson, Honorary Treasurer, Mr A Henderson and the Property Convener, Mr George Crooks. As a committee we seek to make the hostel a home for the residents but we also seek to care and be sensitive to the needs of the staff.

4. The Committee also notes the dedication and service of the Director, Mr David Farrow, the staff and volunteer. The efficient outreach of this arm of the Board of Social Witness demands of these agents love, patience, sensitivity and sacrificial service. The Committee thanks them sincerely for the effective way they serve the Board. Probably it is only these individuals that bring the awareness of God and His claims to these lost sheep in our society.

5. The Committee works most comfortably with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and with the individual Probation Officers – a mutual trust and understanding is the foundation of our working relationship: Their financial help is appreciated. The Committee and staff are also grateful for the support and

encouragement received from the General Assembly and wider church. The Committee is always happy to share with congregations and other church groups the ethos and mission of Thompson House.

6. Occupancy levels for April 2001 – December 2001 reached 90%; the Probation target is 85%.

7. Thank you for your faithful prayers. The Committee appreciates your continued prayer support.

J C BUICK, Chairperson

PCI ENTERPRISES

1. The year 2001 was one of consolidating the work of PCI Enterprises as relationships with other community organisations in the area were established and developed. The possibility of extending the link with the Methodist project 'First-Step Drop In Centre' into a working partnership is being explored by both management committees. The mutual and practical benefits and the witness of Christian co-operation will bring added value to both organisations.

2. The north Belfast area served by the project continues to be one of great need, a fact compounded by the serious street disorder that occurred on the Limestone Road and Duncairn Gardens interfaces. These factors contributed to an increasing sense of hopelessness and helplessness, culminating in the death of a local youth Glen Brannagh during rioting. PCI Enterprises continues to play its part in addressing issues that will contribute to the rebuilding of communities and the restoring of relationships.

3. Mrs Myna McCullough, PCI Job Shop manager, holds the tensions of resourcing and connecting people to employment in the context of these difficulties. It is not an easy task and, because of staff changes she is frequently working in the area alone. The Committee is actively seeking to redress this situation and asks for your prayers for Mrs McCullough that she will know God's protection and strength.

4. The Job Shop continues to seek to build relationships with relevant statutory agencies ie Training and Employment Agency; Department of Education and Learning and, where necessary, lobby or challenge for the benefit of the local community. It was discovered by the Job Shop that a much publicised new local factory, aimed at assisting the regeneration of the local economy, employed only 7% of local people, the majority of whom were in low paid posts.

5. PCI Enterprises is pursuing avenues of funding that will assist its aspiration to employ personnel to encourage, support and facilitate engagement between congregations and their local communities. It is also hoped that the work of enhancing volunteerism and making connections between organisations needing assistance and those willing to assist will see progress in the months ahead.

6. The work of PCI Enterprises places the church at the heart of a community and touches the lives of people in need, through the services offered. Sharing Christ through the practical social witness of engaging and assisting people is the outworking of the Gospel of Jesus Christ we seek to proclaim.

M GIBSON, Chairperson

COMMITTEE ON LEARNING DISABILITY

1. The Committee continues to meet regularly to encourage the church in our ministry to those with learning disability.

2. Willow Brook, the supported housing project situated in Coleraine, has been the focus of our attention for some time now. The official opening by the Moderator, Dr Alistair Dunlop and Mrs Anne Dunlop took place on Tuesday, 16 April 2002, the first tenants having taken up residence on 11 February. Tenants, who have varying degrees of dependency, are cared for by a dedicated staff of seven. (Four full-time and three part-time), headed by Mrs Ann Campbell, the Project Manager. The opening of Willow Brook has highlighted the very real need for Christian-based supported housing and already enquiries are being received about the possibility of projects in other parts of Ireland.

3. The Committee is very grateful for the financial support of the PWA, the Sunday Schools and many individuals and congregations.

4. The Committee is aware of the need to find ways to help the Church in providing a meaningful ministry to those with learning disability. It is keen to hear about any ways in which congregations have approached this ministry.

5. The Committee thanks the members of the Board and the General Assembly for their interest in, and prayerful support for its work.

W J WARING, Convener

**ADDICTION AND EDUCATION SERVICES
COMMITTEE****CARLISLE HOUSE**

1. The staff at Carlisle House continue to provide professional help and bring hope to those who suffer from addiction to alcohol and/or drugs. Last year there were 106 admissions to the centre. Staff at Carlisle House and Gray's Court provide a practical and effective witness for Christ in a very difficult area of work.

2. Following the resignation of Mrs Helen Harrison, Mr David Cuthbert was appointed as Director of Addiction and Education Services. We thank Mrs Harrison for the tremendous contribution she has made during her nine years at Carlisle House and trust that she and her husband will know the hand of God upon them in the days ahead

3. We also record our thanks to Dr Anne Watts who "stood in the breach" as Acting Director during the initial stages of Mrs Harrison's illness and to Mr David Cuthbert who assumed the responsibilities of Acting Director after Mrs Harrison's brief return to work.

GRAY'S COURT

4. Since Gray's Court opened in June 2000, 21 men and women, who have completed a programme of treatment at Carlisle House have been offered tenancies. In most cases this has been a valuable experience, helping tenants to

develop positive lifestyles without dependence on alcohol or drugs. Mr Jackie Skilling, the Support Worker, is gifted in combining Christian example and positive support for all tenants.

INFORMATION

5. The Committee continues to provide a programme of information and education. Following the closure of The Insight Shop at North Street, Belfast in June 2001, the work was transferred to Carlisle House. Miss Louise Kane, Development Worker, continues to co-ordinate the literature programme and the Alcohol and Drug Education Volunteering Scheme.

6. The Volunteering Scheme is now in its fourth year of operation. There are presently 19 volunteers fulfilling engagements with various church groups and organisations. Another group of volunteers is currently being trained. Prayer is requested for these men and women as they give of their time and effort to serve the church.

7. An 'Information Stand' was located in Ballymena Tower Centre on a Saturday in November 2001. This afforded shoppers the opportunity to talk with volunteers and to receive information. It is hoped that this can be repeated in other towns and shopping centres.

8. Following visits to **Uganda** in 2001, Miss Louise Kane is to take a group of AES volunteers to Kampala for two weeks in July 2002. They will work with street children suffering from drugs and solvent abuse. The group will work in conjunction with a local church. This is an exciting venture and offers an excellent opportunity for our trained volunteers to share their knowledge and experience with Ugandan Christians and people in need. Miss Kane will lead the group along with Rev Ian McDonald and ten other volunteers. The Committee commends the group to the Lord and pray that they will gain from the experience as well as bringing some help to a needy situation.

9. **Vision of Hope** is a prayer initiative in the Ballymena area. During this winter there have been several well attended prayer meetings attended by Christians from different Ballymena churches. The focus is on prayer for those caught by addiction, especially drug addiction, for families affected, for authorities and other agencies. The Carrickfergus Presbytery also held a Vision of Hope prayer time in March. It is hoped that other Presbyteries will show interest, catch the Vision and pray that New Hope will come to those caught in a web of hopelessness.

10. **Class Arts** is a touring theatre group bringing seminars to schools and youth events. Miss Louise Kane has been invited to join with the group in order to share information on addiction and drug abuse. This is again a great opportunity, sharing helpful information and bringing the message of Christ and the word of hope to young people searching for purpose in a dangerous world.

11. The Committee commends all those involved in this work and asks for your prayerful support.

J A BEATTIE, Co-Convener

I K McDONALD, Acting Co-Convener

KINGHAN MISSION COMMITTEE

1. Over 30 years ago the late Very Rev Dr A A Fulton described the Kinghan Mission as a foreign mission at home. This is as true today as it was then. A foreign language - British Sign Language, a different culture and many deaf people in Northern Ireland who have never heard of Jesus.

2. Work with deaf people means learning a different language - a visual language. While there is still stigma attached to the language of sign, deaf people are becoming more proud of their own language and are eager to learn its syntax. Many hearing people now take classes in sign language and are learning to communicate with this often forgotten part of society.

3. There are over 800 families in Northern Ireland with at least one child with a hearing loss. Some of these children will mainstream in their local school; many will attend partially hearing units; 39 attend Jordanstown School and 41 go to schools in England for their education. Few of these children attend any of the recognised churches for the deaf and many young deaf people have never heard of Jesus.

4. The Kinghan Mission is in a unique position to minister to deaf people. It has a central, purpose-built church and uses the most modern visual aids in its weekly services. Teaching is provided on a range of topics on Wednesday nights. Pastoral care is available for those who need support and counselling irrespective of church membership. Exciting and innovative ways are being tried to connect with young people. Interpreting is provided in Christian settings. Deaf awareness is taught throughout the church. Kinghan is involved in Mission.

5. Rev Dr George Grindle, the Superintendent, is due to retire in 2003. In September 2001 Rev Simon Henning was appointed to succeed Dr Grindle. He is currently learning sign language and is becoming involved in all aspects of the mission.

6. Mrs Anne Rodgers, the Lay Assistant, is now in her fourth year of service and is already an experienced worker, who has gained much respect in the deaf community.

7. The Committee is grateful to the large number of friends who regularly support Kinghan Mission by prayer and giving. Without their help and generous support of the United Appeal, it would certainly not be possible to continue this special aspect of the Church's work.

8. This is God's work. He has given us the vision. He calls us to enter a land of good things. The best years of the Kinghan are yet to come. We go forward with Him.

J McCLUNE, Convener

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY COMMITTEE

1. **Marriage and Relationship Counselling** During 2001 the Marriage and the Family Committee agreed to change the name of the counselling service to Marriage and Relationship Counselling because an increasing number of

clients were coming for counselling with relationship problems, as well as those with purely marriage problems. This has expanded our service and the number of enquiries continues to increase. The Committee continues to encourage Ministers to refer clients to the Service at the earliest possible time, as this often leads to a more successful outcome. The Counselling Service is affiliated to the Association of Christian Counsellors.

2. In the Autumn 2001 two new counsellors started working with us, a lady and a gentleman. Both had completed a number of courses before applying to us and after completing the Level One course provided by Christian Guidelines, it was felt they were both qualified to start counselling. Another new counsellor is due to complete her Level Two course at the end of June 2002.

3. A lot of the Counselling now takes place in the Kairos Centre at Knock Presbyterian Church. With convenient parking and three rooms for possible use it gives people more anonymity than is possible at Church House. The Kairos Centre can also be used in the evening. Three counsellors are working at least one evening a week each and often two. This service is especially beneficial to those who cannot leave their work during daytime hours. However, the Counselling room in Church House is still in regular use, especially by those who attend during their lunch break and who work in the city centre.

4. The work of the Panel on Remarriage has been reviewed. The report of the review is appended. The Committee is extremely grateful to those who took part in the review, for their hard work and dedication. The Committee is also very appreciative of the time and dedication given by all those who undertake this important area of Church work.

5. The Committee thanks the Young Women's Groups who made the Marriage and Relationship Counselling Service their Home Service Project for 2001-2002. Several groups were visited to hear about the service. The money will be put towards training.

6. The Marriage and the Family Committee is very appreciative of the hard work, time, dedication and professionalism shown by all the counsellors who willingly and freely devote many hours to this vital Christian service.

R SIMPSON, Convener

Review of the Panel on Remarriage

Remit

1. The General Assembly 2001 approved a resolution from the Marriage and the Family Committee that the Committee "*review the arrangements for interviewing divorced persons who wish to remarry, in the light of experience of the Panel on Remarriage, and report to the next General Assembly.*"

2. A Sub-Group of the Committee was appointed, comprising the Convener Mrs R Simpson, Revs L Carroll and N Cameron, the Director of Social Service Mr N J Chambers, and Mrs O Marshall, former Convener of the Board of Social Witness.

3. Over a period of some years a dedicated group of Panel members has made time available to interview couples. Their work has been a service to

Ministers who have valued a second opinion on complex and private circumstances. As well as suggesting improvements for the future, this review highlights the value of the Panel's work and a commitment to the life and witness of the Church, which relatively few people know about.

4. The Committee felt a review would be helpful as the Panel had been in existence for twenty years and the pattern of referral to it by Ministers appeared to vary greatly, from those who referred couples to it quite frequently, to those who appeared not to use the Panel at all. The Sub-Group also noted that arrangements for the Minister to marry a couple were frequently in place in advance of the Panel interviewing the couple, hence the reason for the referral was at times unclear. It was also felt useful to review the Panel's function in the current climate of the increasing rate of divorce and remarriage.

5. The Panel on Remarriage was set up under the Marriage and the Family Committee to facilitate Par.85(6) of The Code. It reads: "While this Church does not prohibit the marriage of a divorced person or persons, it is strongly recommended that a minister does not join in marriage a person who has been divorced, except in circumstances recognised by the Committee on Marriage and the Family as justifying such action." Three things have emerged in the process of this review concerning this paragraph in the Code. Firstly, although there is a strong recommendation that ministers refer divorcees to the Panel, not all ministers do this. Maybe as many as half of our ministers do not refer to the Panel. Secondly, attitudes to divorce and remarriage within PCI have changed. While there is still a certain wariness in remarrying divorcees, there seems to be a greater willingness to remarry divorcees now than the strong wording of Para. 85(6) would indicate was the position in our Church thirty, or even, twenty years ago. Thirdly, the wording of the Code implies that the Panel has a strong decision-making or vetting function. In practice the Panel has not exercised this function. Rather it has served as a pastoral help to the minister and the couple as they think through the appropriateness of a Christian marriage. Thus, the wording of the Code and the workings in practice of the Panel have led to confusion in the minds of ministers, and even in the minds of Panel members themselves, as to the role of the Panel.

6. This review also refers to the issue of cohabitation prior to marriage. While, strictly speaking, the subject lies outside the remit of this review it is a relevant issue as more and more couples referred to the Panel are cohabiting. Furthermore, the Sub-Group felt that Ministers would appreciate some comment on this issue in light of the increase in cohabitation prior to first marriages.

Methodology

7. The Sub-Group sent a questionnaire to 365 active Ministers and to everyone who had served as a member of the Panel which interviews persons who wish to re-marry. Sixty-two per cent of Ministers and all Panel members returned questionnaires. A summary of responses by Ministers is shown as Appendix 1, together with comments.

Recent Trends

8. Recent trends are as follows:

- Over the last decade, marriage breakdown has increased significantly.
- The number of marriages solemnised by Presbyterian Ministers has reduced by more than 50% in the last 18 years.
- The incidence of cohabitation in society generally has dramatically increased.
- Many couples referred to the Panel by Ministers are cohabiting, with varying degrees of participation and acceptance into congregational life.
- Frequently Ministers are asked to marry couples, at least one of whom is unknown to him/her and, on occasion, neither of the parties has had meaningful contact with the local congregation in recent times.

Doctrinal and Pastoral Considerations

9. Doctrinal and pastoral considerations are as follows:
- (i) The Panel is rarely asked by a Minister to comment on doctrinal aspects of remarriage. It is, nevertheless, evident that some of the circumstances presented to Ministers are testing in terms of doctrinal interpretation and personal judgement as to what is right and appropriate. In reviewing the work of the Panel on Remarriage it has therefore been necessary to examine the doctrinal position of our church on marriage and divorce, as the very existence of the Panel is due to the practical outworking of our Church's theology of marriage.
 - (ii) The Sub-group looked at the main Biblical material, the Confessional Standards, and the Reports of the Doctrine Committee since 1983 on matters of marriage, divorce and cohabitation.
 - (iii) The following points were noted from the Biblical and Confessional material and the comments of the Doctrine Committee upon it:
 - The sanctity of marriage and the Christian ideal of a spouse for life are strongly expressed.
 - Divorce is against God's ideal and greatly saddens Him; this is emphasised in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (Malachi 2:16, Matthew 19:6).
 - Divorce, as a last resort, should only be permitted in two situations – adultery and desertion (Matthew 19:9, 1 Corinthians 7:15). The Sub-Group recognises that there is sometimes “constructive desertion” where the innocent party is forced to leave the marriage in the interests of the safety and welfare of his/her own self and that of his/her children.
 - Our Confessional Standards allow remarriage in the situations of adultery and desertion (*Westminster Confession Ch 24 pars 5-6*).
 - Cohabitation outside of marriage is a falling short of God's ideal for men and women; cohabitation is not the same as marriage (Genesis 2:24).
 - The Christian gospel includes strong themes of repentance, grace and a fresh start. This is very relevant to this area of broken relationships.
 - The Church should avoid having its agenda set by the world and should continue to uphold Biblical standards on marriage, divorce and remarriage.

- There is a tension between Biblical ideals and applying these to the complexity of life.
 - It is not always clear how this tension between the Biblical ideals, and what happens when these are broken, is worked through pastorally.
 - The Church should emphasise the sanctity and permanence of the marriage relationship through education, pre-marriage courses etc.
- (iv) It is clear that ministers are caught very much in this tension of applying Biblical standards in a fallen and sinful world. Ministers would appreciate help in reaching a balanced judgement when dealing with requests for marriage and remarriage. This need is becoming more pressing at a time when both cohabitation prior to marriage and divorce are increasingly common in our society generally, and among Christians.
- (v) Ministers are at pains to apply the Biblical standards conscientiously and to consider each case on its merits. Most have appreciated the affirmation of a second opinion provided by the Panel. Some, however, found that the Panel had no new insights, or they were unclear what doctrinal parameters were followed by the Panel or the criteria used by the Panel in forming a view about applications. Matters of doctrine are implicitly, not explicitly, considered.
- (vi) There may be an expectation that the Panel will offer counselling. This is not, however, possible.
- (vii) The emphasis continues to be on the Minister making the decision and teasing out any tension there is between doctrine and practice, and applying the balance of truth and grace to each situation. The Sub-Group believes that the Minister, rather than the Panel, is best placed to exercise this pastoral function, although the Panel can play a useful role in this process.

Current Practice

10. The Sub-Group noted that, on the basis of the responses received from Ministers to a recent questionnaire, the application of Biblical teaching by Ministers is working out in practice as follows:

- A strong emphasis upon the sanctity of marriage.
- Recognition of cohabitation and divorce as realities in our world.
- An overall recognition that it can be difficult to assess guilt and innocence in divorce and often each party shares some responsibility in the breakdown of the marriage.
- The willingness to offer, in grace, remarriage and a fresh start to divorced persons if they are viewed as the innocent party of adultery or desertion.
- With some Ministers the willingness to offer, in grace, remarriage and a fresh start to a divorced person, even if they are not viewed as the innocent party of adultery or desertion, if the divorcee is approaching remarriage in a 'fitting spirit' – that is, there is evidence of a penitent spirit and a determination to make the next marriage work.
- The Panel has provided affirmation in the past to Ministers following the above practice.

- The willingness to offer, in grace, marriage and a fresh start to cohabitees, where there is a recognition that cohabitation is a falling short of God's ideal and they are making a serious commitment to christian marriage.
- A small minority of Ministers absolutely refuse to marry divorcees or cohabitees.
- Ministers regard the Panel, in general, as a positive experience for couples.
- It is recognised that the Panel emphasises the key role of the Minister and that the final judgement on any application for remarriage must be the Minister's alone.
- There is a growing recognition that the Panel is not best placed to explore guilt or innocence or to provide in depth counselling, but it can help the Minister and the couple to deal with the issues.
- The Panel, in general, has been seen as worthwhile as it shows couples that the issues of marriage, divorce and remarriage are held in high importance by our Church.
- Ministers will sometimes consult with their Kirk Session for help and advice as suggested under The Code par 85(4).

Recommendations

11. The Sub-Group has considered the best way forward for the Panel and for Ministers in adhering to Biblical teaching and providing help in the pastoral expression of those standards in a fallen world. It recommends:

Regarding the Panel

- (i) The Panel should continue to exist under the Marriage and Family Committee as recommended under par 85 (6) of the Code. The Sub Group strongly recommend that ministers refer to the Panel all divorced persons seeking remarriage.
This would satisfy the following needs:
 - the need for consistency of practice throughout our church in the treatment of divorcees approaching ministers for remarriage;
 - the need to provide an opportunity for the couple to explore some sensitive issues in a more anonymous, although caring, environment;
 - the need for ministers to have a second opinion from wise and experienced people as they handle these sensitive issues;
 - the need to communicate to society the high regard in which marriage is held by our church.
- (ii) The Panel membership should consist of people with requisite experience and skill.
- (iii) The Panel should not only deal with remarriage referrals but it should be available to comment on complex cases, including unusual legal circumstances (e.g. foreign divorces, polygamy). The Panel should have access to legal and other professional experience when necessary where complex legal questions arise.

- (iv) The Panel should have in place a clearer framework of Biblical and pastoral guidelines from which to operate.
- (v) The practical arrangements for interviewing couples need to be greatly improved – especially:
 - improved interviewing and waiting room facilities
 - improved communication of information between the Panel and Ministers and vice versa, before and after interviews.
 - improved communication of information from the minister to the couple on the role of the Panel and who ultimately makes the final decision.
- (vi) The Panel should ensure Ministers are better informed as to the role of the Panel and the criteria it applies in interviewing couples. *It should be made clear that the Panel does not exercise a vetting function; rather it is there to help the minister and the couple decide on the appropriateness of a Christian wedding, or advise if further counselling is necessary.*

Regarding Ministers

- (vii) Forms of referral should be redrafted to elicit more specific information from Ministers.
- (viii) The primary responsibility of Ministers in this process should be recognised. Specific guidelines should be made available to assist them when they are consulted regarding the remarriage of a divorced person, and perhaps also for the marriage of cohabitants.
- (ix) The teaching of the church on the sanctity of marriage should be more widely known and be actively promoted by Ministers and other church leaders.
- (x) It should be a precondition of a Minister marrying a couple that the couple attends a pre-marriage preparation course run by the Minister, Presbytery, or some other Christian agency.
- (xi) Where remarriage is sought and one, or both, of the persons is divorced, pre-marriage preparation is still necessary and should be undertaken with sensitivity to the circumstances of the couple.
- (xii) It is recommended that Presbyteries encourage Ministers to seek advice and assistance informally from colleagues in difficult situations.
- (xiii) Ministers should be reminded of the Biblical principle of conscience in this area and that they are permitted to ask another colleague to conduct a wedding on grounds of conscience (Acts 24:16, 2 Corinthians 1:12).

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES BY MINISTERS

| | | YES | NO | |
|------|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Q1 | In principle, are you willing to marry couples where one of them has previously been divorced? | 204 | 9 | |
| | | ALWAYS S | S'TIMES S | NEVER |
| Q2 | Do you refer couples to the Panel, where one of them has been divorced? | 103 | 62 | 34 |
| | | YES | NO | |
| Q3.1 | It is a recommendation of the Code Par (85(6)) of the General Assembly | 137 | | |
| Q3.2 | It is an expectation of the Presbytery | 14 | | |
| Q3.3 | I need, or value, a second opinion | 153 | | |
| Q3.4 | Sometimes I do not have sufficient information to make a decision | 67 | | |
| Q3.5 | Couples find the experience helpful | 80 | | |
| Q3.6 | Sometimes there are sensitive issues, which it is easier for the Panel to explore | 105 | | |
| Q3.7 | I do not have sufficient experience to make a decision to marry a couple, one of whom has been divorced | 29 | | |

| | | YES | NO | |
|------|---|-----|----|--|
| Q3.8 | It is vitally important that couples wishing to remarry are vetted by the Panel | 55 | | |
| Q3.9 | On at least one occasion my decision has been influenced by a recommendation of the Panel | 17 | | |
| Q4.1 | It is my responsibility to decide whether to marry a couple | 51 | | |
| Q4.2 | If I have doubts, I would tend to seek a second opinion elsewhere | 23 | | |
| Q4.3 | Couples find the prospect of a Panel interview to be intimidating | 43 | | |
| Q4.4 | Some couples find the prospect off-putting, and decide not to have a church wedding | 13 | | |
| Q4.5 | The Panel is unnecessary, other than in exceptional cases | 17 | | |
| Q4.6 | I am unclear about the function of the Panel | 22 | | |
| Q4.7 | I am unclear about the values or the criteria used by the Panel | 38 | | |
| Q4.8 | Couples often come with wedding arrangements already made | 12 | | |
| Q4.9 | I am unwilling to remarry persons who are divorced | 3 | | |

| | | YES | NO | |
|------|---|-----|-----|--|
| Q5.1 | Are you clear about the standards/criteria that are used by the Panel in reaching its decision? | 70 | 137 | |
| Q5.2 | Should ministers refer couples to the Panel, where they have already decided to marry them? | 101 | 88 | |
| Q5.3 | Would you welcome more specific guidance and/or support on remarriage issues? | 157 | 41 | |
| Q5.4 | Do you think that the function of the Panel on Remarriage should be modified? | 36 | 52 | |

Responses to Questionnaires completed by Ministers

1. In principle, are you willing to marry a couple, one of whom has been divorced?

Ninety-five percent of respondents would be willing to marry divorcees. Most Ministers commented that their decision would be made after consideration of the circumstances of the divorce, with many stressing the Biblical grounds of sexual infidelity and desertion. Many would remarry only an “innocent party” and others only if the divorced applicant had not committed adultery. While the vast majority hold to these views, others acknowledged that it is often impossible to distinguish those who should be accepted on Biblical grounds for Christian marriage. Nevertheless, these uncertainties result in only 5% refusing to marry divorcees. At the other end of the spectrum was the view, “*Why not - if I don't they may well be lost to the Church for all time and they certainly won't seek baptism for their offspring.*”

2. Do you refer couples to the Panel, where one of them has been divorced?

The responses to this question were as follows:

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Always | 52% |
| Sometimes | 31% |
| Never | 17% |

It is interesting that just over 50% of Ministers always refer couples to the Panel. Less than one third use the Panel selectively. Despite the increasing frequency of remarriage, a significant number of Ministers had never been asked to remarry someone who was divorced.

3. The most frequent reason for referral to the Panel given by respondents was that they need or value a second opinion (93%). This was

followed by the fact that it is a recommendation of the General Assembly (Code Paragraph 85(6)) that couples wishing to remarry be referred to the Panel (83%). The opportunity for sensitive issues to be explored accounted for 64% of the reasons for referral. Forty-eight per cent of respondents stated that couples found the experience helpful. Twenty-six per cent stated that couples find the experience of meeting the Panel to be intimidating.

4. Forty per cent of respondents stated that their reason for using the Panel included the fact that sometimes they do not have sufficient information to make a decision about a couple's application for marriage. This rationale implies that the Panel has access to information in addition to that available to the Minister.

5. It was clear from additional comments made by Ministers that some see referral to the Panel to be a test of a couple's commitment to Christian marriage, while others mentioned the need for consistency in referring all couples, or none. *"The Panel experience smokes out those who are serious about a second marriage, or not"*. Some Ministers stated that if a second opinion were needed they would discuss the application with their Kirk Session.

6. A small number expressed dissatisfaction, or a lack of confidence in the Panel. Some perceive the Panel to be a judicial forum and consider that to be inappropriate. Others stated that the decision whether or not to marry a couple is essentially a pastoral one, noting that the Panel is distant from the situation and therefore has little to add to what a Minister has learned in the course of interviewing a couple on a number of occasions. Some criticism of the Panel was expressed regarding its formality and approach to couples. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that couples meet three strangers to discuss intimate matters, without the opportunity of any introduction by someone known to them. Others noted that the Panel meets only in Belfast and that it can be impracticable for people to travel there, particularly if one of them is living abroad.

There is no evidence that the decision of any Panel has resulted in a Minister's decision being reversed. Comments, however, do indicate that some Ministers find the decision of the Panel to be reassuring. A frequent comment was that referral to the Panel reflects a high view of marriage.

7. This review did not attempt to obtain the views of couples who had been interviewed by the Panel. Some respondents, however, stated that couples had found the experience to be helpful, while others that couples could not see the point in it. Clearly some Ministers share that view.

8. Are you clear about the standards/criteria that are used by the Panel in reaching its decision?

Sixty-four per cent of respondents stated that they were not clear about the standards/criteria used by the Panel, with 33% indicating that they were clear.

Comments made by Ministers indicated a need for clarification about the purpose of the Panel on Remarriage and the criteria used by them when interviewing couples. Many questioned what Biblical parameters the Panel uses. Some respondents helpfully suggested criteria that should be used by the Panel including:

Have the children of previous unions been cared for?

Has anyone coming out of previous marriage learned from it?

9. Forty-one per cent of respondents stated that Ministers should refer couples to the Panel, even when they have decided to marry them. Forty-seven per cent took the opposite view. The vast majority who favour referring all couples to the Panel believe that its decision provides a valuable second opinion and affirms the Minister's decision.

10. Some respondents find reassurance that legalities have been double checked, and a significant number appear to be under the misapprehension that the Panel's approval is required before they can agree to marry a divorced person.

11. While a number of Ministers appeared to question the competence of the Panel, many vest considerable confidence in its ability to examine the circumstances of divorce and to offer authoritative guidance. Some comments, however, suggest that Ministers may overestimate the time available for the Panel to explore matters that have not been identified in the Minister's referral form and other issues that may need to be probed sensitively in the context of a pastoral relationship.

12. Twenty-four per cent of respondents stated that the function of the Panel should not be modified.

PRESBYTERIAN RESIDENTIAL TRUST COMMITTEE

1. The Committee rejoiced in the opening of the extension at Tritonville Close Sheltered Housing, Dublin by the Moderator, the Right Rev Dr H A Dunlop, in November 2001. The completion of these fine facilities consisting of 18 flats, common room and communal laundry was the result of visionary leadership by the Project Team, tenacity by the Tritonville Committee, skilful work by the Design Team, and financial partnership with Frazer House Trustees. To all involved we extend our thankful appreciation and trust that the extended facilities will soon be fully utilised.

2. In partnership with Oaklee Housing Association, a suitable site to replace Corkey House, Belfast has been secured and it is anticipated that the construction will be started before the summer. However, we continue in our search for a new site for Sunnyside House in the Bangor/North Down area and until then design plans cannot be finalised. The Committee has also entered into discussions with a Housing Association regarding the future of St Andrew bungalows and Denegarh House, Mallusk.

3. Even with the introduction of our policy of 'top-up' fees, we continue to face significant challenges in the revenue accounts. We continue to press the appropriate agencies to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the long term care of the elderly.

4. The Committee acknowledges the professionalism and dedication of staff in all our homes, which is frequently spoken of by residents and their relatives, and usually referred to in Registration and Inspection Unit reports. We welcome Mrs Irene Bowman as Head of Home at Adelaide House and thank

those who carried on the running of the Home so efficiently during a long vacancy.

5. The Committee recognises the diligent management of our work by Mrs Linda Wray and Mrs May Gordon, Mr Richard Gamble and all of the Office Staff; each one contributes significantly to our ministry of care to those who in later years can often feel isolated and vulnerable.

T J McCORMICK, Convener

SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Social Issues and Resources Committee continues to provide resources for our church on a variety of complex issues. It has also presented the Presbyterian Church's position on various issues in the media.

2. The Committee has compiled a helpful resource pack for those who struggle with eating disorders. This pack is for sufferers and carers and is available in the Board Office. Our thanks to Mrs Linda Wray and the Sub-group, who put a lot of work into producing this resource for our church, and in highlighting the problem in the publications of our church. The work of this Sub-group is now complete.

3. The Committee has been following with interest the recent application by the Family Planning Association for a Judicial Review of Departmental guidance on abortion in Northern Ireland.

4. The FPA application is based on two main grounds: on the ground of clarifying the law and the ground of the inequality between access to abortion in Northern Ireland, compared with the rest of the United Kingdom. At present our view on the first ground is that the legal position is clear and that any attempt to "clarify" the law would pave the way for the liberalisation of abortion legislation in Northern Ireland.

5. Regarding alleged inequality, our argument is that abortion, except under the most extreme circumstances, is wrong and is not in the best interests of the child or the woman. On the question of rights, we argue that the child has a right to live. The law, as it stands in the rest of the UK, is biased very much against the right to life of the child. The Committee maintain that the Northern Ireland jurisdiction is more of a jurisdiction of equality than the rest of the UK, when the rights of mother *and* child are considered.

6. The Committee commends the work of Care (NI) and Life (NI) who are involved in care and counsel of mothers in situations of unwanted pregnancy. These groups are also actively involved in opposing the FPA application for Judicial Review and we are in close contact with them in the progress of the case.

7. The booklet *Engaging with the Community: the Challenge of Mission in the 21st Century* published at last year's General Assembly has been well received. The Committee is currently engaging in dialogue with other Boards of our church to see how the theory can be put into practice. In our recent review of priorities at Standing Committee level we considered that a new emphasis needs to be placed on resourcing congregations at a local level. It is

hoped that the discussion with the other Boards will be the catalyst for a creative and exciting initiative to help congregations engage meaningfully with their local communities in social witness.

8. The Committee recognises that suicide, especially among younger people, is a growing problem in our land. A member of the Committee, Mrs May Anderson, has contributed to a pastoral booklet being produced by the Methodist Church on this subject.

9. The Committee is aware that much has been happening in the field of genetics and particularly in the areas of reproductive and therapeutic cloning. This is a complex area and few, if any, on the Committee claim expertise. However, the Committee feels that the Church should make comment on these important developments. Attached, as an Appendix to this report, is a position paper on cloning giving some background information and definitions to guide the General Assembly's thinking on this matter. It also provides some tentative conclusions, stating the Committee's current thinking on this important issue.

10. The Committee is currently working on the third Bible Study booklet in the "*Challenging Issues*" series. This will look at the question of the family in an age when the traditional family is less common. What does God mean by family? Do people have to be married to head up a family? The Committee believes that this study will help people to think through the subject from a Biblical perspective and challenge us as to how to relate to different social situations.

11. I have come to the end of my seven-year term as Convener of the Committee. This has been a stimulating and enjoyable experience for me personally, and I wish to thank the Committee for their help and wisdom over the years.

N A L CAMERON, Convener

APPENDIX

CLONING

1. What is Cloning?

There is some confusion due to the different uses of the word 'cloning'. Most people understand it as meaning 'the creation of a human being(s) who is/are genetically identical to one another'. However there are two types.

Therapeutic Cloning: using cloning techniques to create new cells, tissues or organs for medical treatment and research purposes.

Human Reproductive Cloning: the creation of a new person with the same genetic make up as someone who is alive or has lived.

2. How does it occur?

Embryo splitting: similar to the natural process that creates identical twins. The embryo's cells are separated at a very early stage.

Nuclear replacement: take a cell nucleus from one person and put it into the egg of another whose nucleus has been removed. The egg is stimulated electronically to divide and starts the growth of an embryo (e.g. Dolly – 1996).

3. Why clone?

- To produce cells or tissues to help repair a damaged organ or an organ for transplantation without the complication of them being rejected.
- To overcome fertility problems.
- To produce a sibling who could donate tissue to an existing unwell individual.
- To replace a dead baby or child.
- To enable homosexual couples to have children that are genetically related to at least one of the partners.
- To duplicate a particularly talented individual.

4. Therapeutic cloning using embryos – some concerns?

- The embryos need to be destroyed to obtain the stem cells (embryonic stem cells) in order to create tissues. There will not be enough 'spare' embryos from current fertility treatments therefore embryos will be being created for the *sole* purpose of research to develop this technology and to be destroyed.
- Using a human embryo as a 'thing' to be used to benefit another. There is little or no moral status afforded to the embryo.
- What if human life begins at conception? If there is any possibility that embryos could be persons, we have a duty to protect them from experiments that would destroy them.
- Created to supply body parts. Could that lead to 'trading' in these?
- It will inevitably lead to human reproductive cloning (the slippery slope). At present the law which bans implantation of cloned embryos into human wombs has many loop-holes, not least that it will be hard to police.
- There is ongoing research into other more ethical ways of getting stem cells – using stem cells from the patient themselves (adult stem cells) from eg bone marrow, nerve tissue etc.

5. Relevant Biblical principles

- God is creator and designer of life.
- We are made in God's image and are unique.
- All human beings, regardless of age or disability, have infinite worth in His sight because they are made in His image.
- Being human requires us to be in relationship with other people who are necessarily different from ourselves. Human diversity is part of His sovereign design.
- Children should be produced within marriage/families.
- The end does not always justify the means – Romans 3:18.
- Protection of the weak, vulnerable and disadvantaged.
- Love for our neighbour – we need to treat people as individuals in their own right.
- God's sovereignty and suffering - Suffering (eg illness or disability), though not to be sought, can be used by God for His glory and our good.

6. Why does God allow illness, disability or genetic anomaly?

- We live in a fallen world and experience the results of the fall.
- To show us our brokenness and need of his grace.
- To make us more dependent on each other and on God (2 Cor 12:9)
- To encourage us to serve each other in love
- Increase our desire for heaven (Rev 21:3-4)
- In the providence of God suffering can build Christian character and work out God's purposes for His glory (Jn 9:1-3; Is 48:10-11; Rom 11:33-36)

Some relevant Bible passages:

Gen 1-3; 9:6-7

Exodus 4:11

Psalm 139:13-16

Job

Isaiah 45:5-9

Romans 3:18; 8:21-22; 14:7-8:12

Formulating a Church Response to Cloning

As the church seeks to formulate a response to the developments of recent years in this area we believe that there are certain challenges facing us.

1. We do need to be better informed about developments, but we recognise that this is a complicated area and the pace of development is increasing.

2. Few of us claim to be expert in these matters and we also struggle to apply the Bible to this area.

3. We need to resist the temptation to make emotional cheap shots, for instance by illusions to Frankenstein babies etc. Passion is good but distortion is not.

4. We need to resist the temptation to close the door completely on all genetic research, as it does appear to potentially hold benefits for humankind.

5. We need to explore morally appropriate ways of using gene technology.

6. We need to speak with reason and love, for we are representing God in this debate.

7. We need to show compassion for those for whom these developments seem to be the answer to their problem (infertility, those who have an ill child who might be helped, or one who has died or for those who have an incurable disease eg Parkinson's, Alzheimer's diseases).

As we try and apply biblical principles to this area we can perhaps make the following tentative conclusions at this stage.

1. We believe that the deliberate creation of genetically identical human beings (Human Reproductive Cloning) contravenes the Biblical principle that God alone is the creator of individuals.

2. Each individual is unique and cloning goes against this principle. The natural occurrence of 3-4 twins per 1000 births does not for us condone the practice of scientists trying to create identical human beings.

3. Reproductive cloning runs counter to the principle that children should be the result of the genetic inheritance of both a man and a woman. Cloning promotes a sexual reproduction using a single cell and separates procreation from reproduction.

4. Cloning means it is more likely that children would be created outside of the marriage bond.

5. Reproductive cloning can encourage the tendency to view human life as a product or commodity, thus undermining the dignity of each individual.

6. We are concerned about the health implications of this new technology. Recent evidence indicates that Dolly the sheep may be ageing prematurely.

7. Reproductive cloning is likely to involve the creation of numerous spare embryos. As a church we believe in the sanctity of life from conception. What happens to these spare embryos? Creation of spare embryos creates ethical dilemmas.

8. With regard to therapeutic cloning we have less difficulty with the principle. However in practice we are against embryos being created solely to provide stem cells. The end does not justify the means. Should individuals be created to be used rather than as an end in themselves?

9. We believe further research could be undertaken to harvest stem cells from bone marrow, living human tissue or other adult stem cells.

10. We believe that therapeutic cloning may be ethically acceptable to heal, restore or repair, but we would have more difficulty with genetic enhancement to create “designer babies”.

CHILD PROTECTION MONITORING GROUP

1. This has been an important year as the Group has issued the Second Edition of the Child Protection Guidelines. The second edition does not introduce any major changes to previous guidance but it does incorporate all the explanatory notes and other notes of clarification issued by the Monitoring Group over the past five years.

2. The Appendices to the Guidelines have been improved and expanded and we trust that Ministers, Designated Persons and leaders-in-charge of youth organisations will find the new guidelines helpful.

3. The Committee has published a smaller leaflet, a Child Protection Factsheet, which presents the essential core material of the Guidelines for all leaders and helpers in a more accessible format. This Factsheet is available in the Board Office and it is recommended that youth organisation leaders use these leaflets, preferably in the context of training.

4. The Committee informed last year’s Assembly, that it would bring an Overture to the Assembly this year recommending that all those in ministry positions in the Church disclose any police investigation of a serious matter to the Clerk of Assembly, promptly and in confidence.

5. The Clerk of Assembly continues to be available for guidance on matters of church law and practice. On matters of sensitivity, particularly as they

relate to child protection, the Monitoring Group recommends that there should be a Designated Person at Church House/General Assembly level who will be available to advise on procedures, and who will consult with the Clerk of Assembly on any matters that may be referred to him/her. It is recommended, that in the first instance the Designated Person should be Mr Norman Chambers. A resolution is appended.

6. In addition to the Designated Person, other specialist advisers will be available to the Clerk, the Convener of the Child Protection Monitoring Group and the General Assembly's Solicitor. At least one of the foregoing advisers will normally be consulted by the Clerk on receipt of any report of a matter of concern. All involved will maintain strict confidentiality.

7. Clerks of Presbytery should note that, in the event of a child protection issue arising concerning a minister or a person in a paid post of mission or ministry, the final decision for action to be taken, if any, rests with the appropriate court of the Church in consultation with the statutory child protection agency.

8. Trainers in child protection continue to be available to help presbyteries and congregations. The Committee thanks them for their hard work throughout the past year.

9. The Child Protection Monitoring Group has operated as an ad hoc group under the Board of Social Witness since 1996. While the Committee does not propose to give the Group the status of a full Assembly Committee, it believes that the Group should have a more permanent basis. Accordingly, the Board of Social Witness has established the Child Protection Monitoring Committee as one of its Committees, the membership of the Committee to be appointed annually by the Board.

10. The Committee thanks Mr Norman Chambers, the Clerk, and the Monitoring Group for their help throughout the year in this sensitive and very important area of our church's work. The staff of the Board office are also thanked for their patience and help in the preparation of the Second Edition of the Guidelines.

N A L CAMERON, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN WAR MEMORIAL HOSTEL COMMITTEE

1. Derryvolgie Hall continues to provide 'a home' for 88 young people, mainly students studying at Queen's University, Belfast. Application for available places remains very high.

2. The Committee pays tribute to the work of Rev Steve Stockman and his dedicated staff at Derryvolgie Hall, who seek to make it a place which is not only home, but also a centre where the truths and lifestyle of Biblical faith are explored, thought through and lived out in a secular world.

3. The work at Derryvolgie has now been combined with the role of chaplain to Queen's University and the aim is that over time the wider chaplaincy work will be one entity operating in the two locations. The

Committee continues to investigate ideas with the possibility of expanding the work at Derryvolgie or elsewhere in the vicinity.

4. The programmes are wide and varied, and whether it is sport, art, music or the worship and study/prayer events, they are all well attended. It is hoped that a second trip to Cape Town will take place this summer, when about fifty young people will help to build houses on a Township for Habitat for Humanity.

J H MARTIN, Convener

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

1. The Directors report that during the last financial year, which ended 31 December 2001, 124 beneficiaries (32 in the Old Age Fund, 71 in the Women's Fund and 21 in the Indigent Ladies Fund) received grants.

2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

| Beneficiaries receiving | Old | Presbyterian | Indigent | |
|---|------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Quarterly Grant | Age | Women's | Ladies | TOTAL |
| | Fund | Fund | Fund | |
| At 1 st January 2001 | 27 | 66 | 20 | 113 |
| New Grants provided | 4 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| Deaths | (5) | (3) | (2) | (10) |
| Grants no longer required | (1) | (5) | (1) | (7) |
| At 31 st December 2001 | 25 | 61 | 18 | 104 |
| Beneficiaries receiving one-of donation | 1 | 2 | - | 3 |
| Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above) | 6 | 8 | 3 | 17 |
| No. of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year | 32 | 71 | 21 | 124 |

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £76,516 (£17,695 from the Old Age Fund, £45,510 from the Women's Fund and £13,311 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. A 'Special Gift' of £150 (2000: £140) was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

5. 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.

6. The Directors assure the Church that all monies that come to the Funds are carefully and wisely spent.

7. 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.

8. 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.

W P H ERSKINE, Hon Sec

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the retirement of Mr Norman Chambers as Director of Social Service and Secretary of the Board of Social Witness be accepted as from 31 August, 2002, and that the best thanks of the Assembly be given to Mr Chambers for his faithful service.
3. That the resignation of Rev Robert Love as Co-Convener of the Addiction and Education Services Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Rev Ian McDonald be appointed in his place.
4. That the Report of the Review of the Panel on Remarriage be sent to Presbyteries for study, comments on its recommendations to be sent to the Secretary of the Board of Social Witness by 31 December, 2002.
5. That the General Assembly oppose the deliberate creation of genetically identical human beings.
6. That the General Assembly believe that reproductive cloning runs counter to the principle that children should be the direct result of the genetic inheritance of both a man and a woman.
7. That the General Assembly are not against therapeutic cloning in principle but oppose the practice of embryos being created to provide stem cells. However, the Assembly encourage further research to harvest stem cells from bone marrow, living human tissue or other adult stem cells.
8. That the resignation of Rev Norman Cameron as Convener of the Social Issues and Resources Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that be appointed in his place.
9. That Mr Norman Chambers be appointed as the Designated Person for Child Protection at Church House and General Assembly level.
10. That the Child Protection Monitoring Group be given the status of a Working Committee under the Board of Social Witness, the membership to be appointed annually by the Board.
11. That the customary grant made by the Social Issues and Resources Committee up to a total of £3,000 be met from the Incidental Fund.
12. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 281 of the Code as follows:-

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 132 of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 132 of the Code a new sub-paragraph (4) be inserted as follows:

“(4) Ministers, licentiates, accepted students for the ministry, deaconesses and all appointed to, or training for, posts of ministry or mission shall disclose promptly to the Clerk of the General Assembly, in confidence, any police investigation, summons, or conviction for offences against children, offences involving dishonesty, sexual misconduct, indecency, violence, alcohol or drugs, or any other serious offence.

And that sub-paragraphs (4) (5) (6) and (7) be renumbered as (5) (6) (7) and (8) respectively.

N A L CAMERON

SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev J S DALLAS

Superintendent: Rev W M CAMPBELL

1. The business of the Shankill Road Mission (SRM) is URBAN MISSION.

2. In the current climate of paramilitary tension, social exclusion, economic deprivation and spiritual hardness we are faced with a daunting task. At times this seems insurmountable given the limited resources at our disposal, the lack of outside funding and the distinct feeling of isolation which makes us wonder if we are part of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

3. Yet all at SRM strive to fulfil our mandate as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, using social, philanthropic and evangelistic means to reach out to the whole Shankill community.

Café @ SRM

4. Rosalind Wilson has created a little oasis of calm for people coming into the café. It is a smoke-free zone and the variety of choice on the menu, from tasty snack to full meal, is very acceptable. There is a decidedly Christian ambience, helped by the music playing through the sound system, the modern Christian literature available on the tables and the little team of volunteers who engage in a "Listening Ministry" supporting the Mission Worker.

5. A wide range of people use the café during the week, business men having a working lunch, District Nurses, Social Workers, Leisure Centre workers, pensioners, mothers with children, people shopping. Over 700 customers use the café in a normal week, and more at special seasons such as Christmas. All are guaranteed a warm welcome and a well-presented, well-cooked meal at very reasonable prices.

Charity Shops @SRM

6. The Clothing Shops for Men, Women and Children still meet a genuine need for those whose budgets are small. Through the continuing generosity of Mission supporters, a useful service is being provided, but more clothes are needed as demand increases.

Mission Worker @ SRM

7. Mr Albert Lofthouse has had a busy and challenging 2001. The Children's Work has expanded beyond the Thursday Good News Club, when 15-16 children come weekly. An Afternoon Sunday School attracts 8-10 children from the Lower Shankill Estate. Mr Lofthouse collects these children on foot and brings them home after the meeting, giving him an opportunity to speak to parents.

8. The Men's Group meets formally on a Monday afternoon, when 12-15 men come to an organised programme, including a short epilogue. Mr Lofthouse meets informally with small numbers of these men in the Café and Games Room during the other days of the week, developing friendships and fellowship with what is a largely unchurched group.

9. Door to Door Visitation continues in the Lower Shankill through a small team led by Mr Lofthouse. Modern Christian tracts are left in every home as well as an invitation to come over to Mission activities. Over 800 homes were visited in 2001 and some valuable spiritual conversations and contacts were made.

10. In the Summer Holiday Bible Clubs were organised during July and August. These were well supported by the children, 40-45 came during the three weeks. Mr Lofthouse was ably supported by volunteer members of SRM Congregation.

11. Congregational Prayer Cells and the Mid-Week Prayer Fellowship supported Mr Lofhouses work throughout the year, giving further encouragement in a work which continues to face general spiritual hardness of heart, apathy, indifference and sometimes veiled hostility.

Appointment of New Honorary Treasurer

12. It was a great pleasure for the Commission to appoint Mr Ivor Spence, a member of Legacurry Congregation, to the position of Honorary Treasurer. Mr Spence comes to the work after a career in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. He brings a wealth of practical experience and common sense, and has settled well into this new sphere of service.

Appointment of Trustees

13. The General Assembly, in 1998, resolved to appoint office-holders for the time being as Trustees of the Shankill Road Mission, for example, the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being.

This has proved unacceptable to the Registrar and it will be necessary to ask the 2003 General Assembly to rescind the decision relating to the appointment of Trustees by office and to appoint new Trustees. The Assembly of 2002 will be asked to receive Notice of Motion to rescind the 1998 decision.

Thanks

14. The Commission would wish to place on record again its sincere thanks to Miss Beth Morrow and Mrs Marilyn Caswell in the Mission office for their dedication and enthusiasm over another busy year.

15. The Commission is indebted to all those congregations, organisations within congregations and individual members who support the ongoing work of the Mission by their prayers and practical giving. This positive expression of goodwill and spiritual solidarity is of great encouragement to us when times are difficult.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That Mr Albert Lofthouse be commended to the prayers of the General Assembly as he continues to work in the lower Shankill.
3. That Mr Ivor Spence be commended to the prayers of the General Assembly as he undertakes the role of Honorary Treasurer.
4. That the Shankill Road Mission Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 129 of the Code as follows:

NOTICE OF MOTION

That notice of motion be received to rescind the decision of 1998 to appoint, as Trustees of the Shankill Road Mission, the following office-holders provided that such office-holders are for the time being members in full communion of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland:-

The Superintendent of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Honorary Treasurer of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Conveners of Commission of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being;

The Financial Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being;

The General Assembly's Solicitor of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being.

R F S POOTS

YOUTH BOARD

Rev R JAMES HYNDMAN, Convener
Miss ROSALIND STIRLING, Youth Officer

1. The Youth Board is responsible for the Church's witness to, and work for, young people and the service that they in turn will render. The Youth Board aims to fulfil this remit by supporting and serving congregations in

- Developing strategies for youth ministry;
- Training of volunteer and full time youth leaders;
- Developing programme materials for congregational youth ministry;
- Creating church wide opportunities for Presbyterian young people to participate in evangelism, discipleship, fellowship and worship;
- Providing support for local congregations through the expertise of trained professional staff;
- Creating opportunities for volunteers to serve the church through the ministry of the Board.

In this way the Youth Board contributes to the church's covenantal responsibility to pass on to the next generation "the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." (Psalm 78 v 4). In a fast changing world the church is perceived by many young people to be increasingly peripheral to living, and a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ irrelevant. The Board realises the difficulties and problems faced by youth leaders working with post-modern young people in a post-Christian society, but there are many opportunities for outreach and discipleship too. To find out more about the work of the Board, look up the website (www.pciyouth.org) or contact the Youth Office staff.

2. The Board wishes to record its gratitude to the vast number of volunteer youth leaders and paid youth workers in local congregations for the excellent work that they do. Working many antisocial hours with sometimes little thanks is a sacrifice that is often overlooked. Without their dedication and perseverance the development of effective youth ministry would not be possible.

3. The Board is deeply grateful to those who are employed on their behalf to serve the church through the Youth Office. Miss Roz Stirling, Youth Officer, and the team of efficient administrative staff, Miss Lois McIlrath, Mrs Claire Child, Miss Pamela Patton, Mrs Helen Bruce and Mrs Marianne Trueman ensure that the growing work of the Board is effectively planned and competently executed. The Board is indebted also to Mr David Pattison for his expertise in organising and compiling the Board finances.

4. Many congregations have benefited from the support and training of the Youth Development Officer for Northern Ireland and the Regional Youth and Support Worker in Donegal and Monaghan Presbyteries. We extend our gratitude to Mr Graeme Thompson and Mr Richard Houston for the insight, vision and enthusiasm they have brought to their work. The Board would encourage Kirk Sessions and congregations to make use of the training, resources and advice they offer. The Board continues to seek the appointment of a Youth Development Officer for the Dublin and Munster region.

5. Mr Maurice Kennedy continues, through his role as Youth Board Development Officer, to be a considerable asset to our work. His tireless work in searching out sources of financial support for the work of the Youth Board is deeply appreciated.

6. The Nexus Ireland project continues to enjoy capital support from the United States. The Board also wishes to record its gratitude to Mrs Helen Kennedy for her support of the Nexus project through her role as secretary.

7. The Youth Board wishes to thank all those who supported the 'Building Hope' Youth and Sunday School project 2001/2002.

8. The Board welcomes the implementation of a new strategic plan by Youth Link NI. The member churches are confident that it will continue to bear good fruit.

9. The Board welcomes the appointment of Mr David Smith as the Programme Officer for the 'Preparing Youth For Peace' programme. This single identity programme assists leaders and young people in exploring the issues of citizenship.

10. The Youth Board continues to be indebted to our Church for the finance received through our United Appeal allocation permitting our work to continue. We deeply appreciate the effort required by congregations to meet their allocations and record our gratitude. The Board continues to seek to use this financial assistance with great prudence.

11. The Youth Board also records its sincere gratitude to the Rev Philip McConnell for his commitment to the work of the Youth Events Committee. We thank him for his wisdom, guidance and leadership and wish him and his family well in the future.

YOUTH HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

Summer Outreach

1. Summer Outreach continues to provide an opportunity for people from 16 years upwards to serve God, people of all ages to be reached with the Gospel and congregations to be assisted in their work for a short period each year.

2. The interest shown by congregations in receiving a team continues to be an encouragement. The Working Group oversees the assessing of the usefulness of existing teams and the assigning of new teams so that the effectiveness of limited human resources can be maximised.

3. Congregations wishing to apply for teams are reminded that they should do so by March in the year prior to a team commencing work, eg application for a team commencing in July 2004 should have an application with the Youth Office no later than 31 March 2003.

4. Summer Outreach teams are not just for young people but are open to everyone over the age of 16. Congregations are encouraged to recommend people of all ages to serve God on summer outreach teams.

Year Team

5. The Year Team continues to play an important role in the congregations in which they have been placed. They help in many ways, as deemed necessary, under the direction of each Kirk Session, with advice and guidance from the Year Team Working Group.

6. Members of the Team continue to benefit greatly from their work, developing their spheres of service both as individuals and as a team.

7. Work is already well underway to establish a team for the year from September 2002 as well as from September 2003. Congregations are encouraged to recommend young people to serve on the Year Team as well as considering having the Year Team placed within their boundaries.

General

8. The Committee wishes to express thanks to the Working Groups, chairpersons (Revs P Dickinson and J Flaherty), Youth Officer and Youth Office staff for all their hard work and dedication, often beyond the call of duty.

9. The prayerful support of all our members is sought that God might continue to use our efforts in His service and that His blessings might continue to flow upon us.

D J PAUL, Convener

YOUTH OVERSEAS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee was encouraged by the feedback received from the teams that travelled to Thailand and France in summer 2001. The young people enjoyed the overseas exposure and gained spiritual insight and experience from their visits. It was a particular joy to hear of an excellent work done in Wembley. This team has struggled in its profile and size in recent years; indeed sometimes it has been difficult to gather one together. In 2001, however, we saw a maximum capacity team travelling to London and exercising a great ministry among the children.

2. Plans to send teams in 2002 have encountered problems and further investigations into other possibilities proved to be difficult. This was a catalyst for the Committee to take the decision not to operate teams outside the UK in 2002, Wembley being the only team organised. In addition, due to difficulties in partner churches overseas, plans for visiting teams have also fallen through. The Committee has, therefore, decided in the year ahead to make an appraisal of the operation of overseas teams.

3. It is hoped to send two volunteers to set up and develop a Library and Learning Project, a Ministry of PCEA, Zombe Community Development Programme. This is in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Board of Social Responsibility and associated with the work of Andrew Clenaghan. We hope to send two volunteers to Kenya for up to one year to initiate this programme.

4. Those who serve on the committee are passionate to see this area of our church's work continue to be the blessing it has been to so many young

people over the years. We pray that under God's guidance many more young people will be enthused with a passion for serving and partnering our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

P C LYLE, Convener

YOUTH CENTRES COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Centres Committee continues to be encouraged by the activities held each year in our various centres in Guysmere (Castlerock), Lucan (Co Dublin) and Rostrevor (Co Down), and are pleased to report that during the past year a large number of young people and leaders have benefited from the facilities.

2. It is the constant prayer and aim of the Committee to seek to develop our facilities where young people can be challenged by the claims of the gospel, taught in the Word of God and instructed in how to use the gifts and talents God has given them for the benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ and their fellow citizens throughout the length and breadth of the land and further afield.

3. Our centre at Lucan continues to provide a base for many young people both north and south of the border. Like all property, after a period of time, refurbishment at various levels is necessary. Wear and tear displays usage, and over the next period of time we hope to attend to areas where constant usage has taken its toll. The aims and objectives of the centre continue to be promoted enthusiastically by the manager, Reuben McCormick, his staff and volunteers; together they continue to give of their service for the benefit of the young people, the centre and the promotion of its aims.

4. As in past years, our centres continue to be used to facilitate various camps in keeping with our objectives as centres of ministry. Rostrevor continues as a weekend centre for youth groups. The Lucan and Guysmere centres, with their sports halls, provide adequate facilities for weekend groups and additional opportunities during the week for local groups to use the facilities. The Youth Centres Committee is encouraging the development of the centres in order that they may be used as bases for local witness within their surrounding communities.

5. The summer activities for 2002 begin with the Surf the Rock Camp being held at Guysmere, Castlerock from 28 June – 1 July for boys and girls. Guysmere Boys Camp will be running from 5 – 13 July and the Girls Camp will take place from 27 July – 3 August. These camps are for boys and girls respectively aged 12 and over. The Lucan Soccer Camp from 28 July – 2 August is aimed at 11-15 year old boys and girls. The Adventure Camp held at Bushmills will take place from 28 July - 2 August for 14-16 year old boys and girls. Lucan Senior Summer Camp is from 3 – 7 July and geared towards 16 – 18 year old boys and girls. The Castlerock and Ballymoney Soccer Camp (non residential) is again for boys and girls and will be from 3 - 10 August for 8-16 year olds and finally Lucan Summer Camp for 12-15 year old boys and girls will take place 12-17 August. An additional extra camp this year is the Creative Arts Camp which is also for both boys and girls and will take place at Rostrevor Youth Centre from 4 – 10 August.

6. Mr Maurice Kennedy, our Youth Board Development Officer, continues to focus his attention on developing and expanding the work of our centres at Guysmere and Rostrevor, and as a Committee we place on record our appreciation to him and his wife Helen for all the energy expended in respect of the work.

7. It is the Committee's desire to continue to develop high standards of service to young people through our three centres. We thank God for the facilities that we have and for those who over the past year have come to faith and for young Christians who have been challenged into further avenues of service as a result of ministries within the centres.

8. Thanks are extended to individual members at local level who serve on the Guysmere, Rostrevor and Lucan Management Committees, and also to the staff of the Youth Office for their willingness to promote the work with graciousness, competence and enthusiasm.

D I J McNIE, Convener

YOUTH TRAINING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee gives thanks to our Heavenly Father for His guiding hand in the work carried out through its Working Groups. This Committee provides training, developing of resources and other opportunities to encourage local church youth leaders to be effective in reaching, nurturing, equipping and challenging young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ within the context of Ireland.

Certificate in Youth Ministry Course

2. This certificate course continues to equip those involved with young people and provides a challenging introduction to the theory and practice of youth ministry. Courses were offered in Belfast on two separate evenings with 60 students attending the course over both Tuesday and Thursday nights. Discussions are continuing regarding the development of a Diploma Course or advanced certificate level with a hope of a start date of January 2003.

Training Trevor

3. There was no Training Trevor event in 2001 although plans are well underway to hold an event in June 2003.

Youth Link: NI

4. Youth Link seeks to help support and complement the work of the Youth Board. This year Youth Link has given much support to the 'Preparing Youth For Peace' programme. The Rev David Stanfield, former Convener of the Youth Training and Resources Committee, is now working for Youth Link.

Resources

5. The Resources Working Group continues to keep ministers and youth leaders informed of the current resources that are available. They are seeking to increase the awareness of resources through the web site, various mailings and publications and are endeavouring to create a database of e-mail addresses of youth leaders and ministers. Included in a recent Youth Board mailing was 'A Quick Flick' information leaflet that provided reviews on resources available for youth fellowships and youth work as well as a list of useful web sites. Ministers received the first chapter of 'Essential Youth' by Andy Hickford, and a generous discount was available through Family Books if they wanted to purchase the book.

Web Site (www.pciyouth.org)

6. The web site grows from strength to strength with many young people, leaders and ministers making use of the forums to air issues and exchange news. Due to the increasing importance and work involved in the web site a Working Group has been set up. A revamp of the web site is planned in the near future.

Preparing Youth For Peace

7. During 2001, David Smith was appointed as the Programme Officer for the 'Preparing Youth For Peace' programme. Six pilot programmes have been completed with different groups which has been extremely beneficial and encouraging. Facilitators are currently being trained to deliver future programmes.

J MOXEN, Convener

YOUTH EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Events Committee continues to plan four major events each year. Two Youth Nights take place in June at the end of the Annual General Assembly meetings. A Bible Conference for young adults (aged 17+) is held in August, the 'MAD' weekend in October and TGI Christmas in December.

Youth Night

2. At Youth Night 2001, Mark Oestriecher (Vice-President of Ministry Resources at Youth Specialities) addressed two large gatherings of young people on the theme 'Finders, Weepers, Losers, Keepers' (Matthew 10 v 39). On 14th and 15th June 2002 we look forward to Rev Dr Gary Millar, Minister of Howth and Malahide, who will address the theme of 'When Love Hurts'. The Newcastle (England) based band 'Yfriday' will be performing and leading worship during the programme. Gus Petterson (USA) will present dramatic arts to highlight the evening's theme.

Route 66

3. The committee is pleased to report that the Route 66 Bible conference, held at Loughry College, continues to provide a high quality and relevant teaching programme for young people who are seriously pursuing Christ. The name 'Route 66' is borrowed from the Route 66 in the United States of America reaching from coast to coast. It reflects the conference aims to assist young people make the journey from cover to cover through the sixty-six books of the Bible. In August 2001 the main conference speakers were Dr Gordon Hugenberger (Gordon Conwell Seminary and Park Street Church, Boston) and Rev Dr William Crawley (University of Ulster Chaplain). In August 2002 the main speakers will be Andy Hickford (Pastor of Maybridge Christian Fellowship, Worthing) and Rev Andrew Smith (Minister of Dun Laoghaire).

MAD

4. The third Mad weekend, held on 26 - 28 October 2001, built upon the success of the second. The keynote speaker was the Rev Jonathan Moxen (Minister of Ballynure). The initiation and consolidation of relationships among young people remains a key factor in ministry. One aim of the MAD weekend is to relieve leaders of much of the responsibility of planning a youth weekend, thereby enabling them to have quality time for meaningful interaction with their own young people. The overwhelming demand for places at this weekend event, held in the University of Ulster at Coleraine, is indicative of the high quality programme of spiritual, social and recreational activities on offer. It was again very encouraging to see so many Presbyterian young people fill the University area as they united in times of worship, teaching, and recreation. The next Mad weekend will take place at the same venue from 25-27 October 2002, when we look forward to a return visit from Mark Oestriecher.

TGI Christmas

5. This pre-Christmas event took place in 2001. While this event differs slightly in style from other youth events, the strong Christian ethos clearly presents young people with the reality of God incarnate and the implications of the Christmas message. This is a pre-evangelistic event which particularly targets non-churched young people. The next TGI Christmas will be held in December 2003.

J W P McCONNELL, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Revs R J Hyndman, Dr William Crawley, John Peacock and Mr Trevor Long be appointed as representatives on the Youth Link NI Council and the Board of Management of the Churches Youth Service Council.
3. That the following grant be paid from the Incidental Fund:
 - Youth Link NI - £6500

4. That the resignation of the Rev Philip McConnell as Convener of the Youth Events Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that be appointed in his place.

5. That the Youth Board, with its associated working committees, for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 283 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev JAMES McALLISTER, OBE
Secretary: Rev Dr R F S POOTS, OBE

1. In a year of much significance in Education in Northern Ireland, perhaps that which has the most practical significance for this Assembly is the retirement of the Deputy Clerk, which consequentially means his retirement from the post of Secretary of the Education Board. During his 12 years in office there have been quantum changes in the delivery of State Education, its administration, its curricula, its provision, its expansion etc. Added to the ordinary requirements of a full education programme with a Christian basis, there was called for encyclopaedic knowledge, clear thinking, careful research, wise judgement, alert debating skills, diplomacy, as well as the deep conviction and concerned Christian sympathies that a minister of the gospel and a church administrator would be expected to have.

2. Under God our Church has had the opportunity to have the Rev Dr Derek Poots in that office. Not least of his tasks has been his membership of the Transferors Representative Council, which has been playing an important role in safeguarding the vital interests of the transferor Churches. We have therefore asked him to remain as Convener of the State Education Committee for the ensuing year.

3. More tributes will be paid to him, but the Board records its sincere thanks to him for his work for Education.

4. The Assembly will know now that the new Deputy Clerk will not have “Education” as one of his roles. We propose that the Clerk Designate undertake the task of Secretary to the Education Board for one year. This will allow a year to examine the structures within “Education” which we think will increase in importance, and not diminish.

5. The “Burns” Report which takes up part of the Report will be with us for some time to come, so we are very consciously keeping our membership of the Transferor Representatives’ Council strong so that our insights can be well presented.

Recognised Ministries

Rev David Bruce, General Secretary of Scripture Union (Northern Ireland) reports:

1. The patterns of secular spread in Ireland have been well documented. The effects of the shortening shadow of the steeple in Irish society have included distrust of institutions, ignorance of biblical narrative, fluidity in moral frameworks and decline in numbers affiliated to the churches. What can be done?

2. Scripture Union recognises that its ministry is part of a much larger strategy to address the catastrophe of the denominational melt-down we are witnessing. Few young people go to church, but all of them go to school. Clearly

the mission field in our schools requires a concerted effort to reach. A recent development in Northern Ireland has been a series of partnerships between SU and local churches to employ bridge-building staff to make connections between congregations and schools. The Lisburn district and East Belfast already have staff in place. North Down and the North West are in development. The potential exists for twelve districts Province-wide to help churches and schools make missionary connections, and the strategy of the Northern Ireland SU Council is to have these in place over the next three years. I commend this approach to the Assembly, and pray for the support of congregations in helping to extend the influence of the churches in schools.

3. I am delighted to report that this summer, SU will run 35 separate CSSM and Camp activities across Northern Ireland, involving thousands of children and young people, and about 750 volunteers. We thank God for the tremendous openness of today's children and young people to the gospel, and pray that many will respond in a life-changing way to the good news this year. Pray for us.

STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The State Education Committee has continued to engage with educational interests at all levels, often jointly with the other major Churches through the Transferor Representatives' Council, to ensure that the voice of the Church continues to be heard, particularly at a time of on-going change which will have significant results for education in Northern Ireland.

General Teaching Council

2. The preparatory work for the setting up of this new Council is almost complete and it will be constituted in the near future. A representative of the TRC will be appointed to serve as a member.

Reconstitution of Boards

3. The five Education and Library Boards were reconstituted last July. The representatives of the Presbyterian Church are as follows:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Belfast Board: | Mr W J Caves, OBE |
| North-Eastern: | Rev D S Graham |
| | Rev R B Savage |
| | Mrs C M Poots |
| South Eastern: | Mrs M Robinson |
| | Rev Dr R A Russell |
| | Rev Dr D J Watts |
| Southern: | Rev C D McClure |
| Western: | Rev R Herron |

4. The reconstitution of the Boards of Governors of schools should be completed by the time the Assembly meets. The requirement for the governors of secondary schools to be nominated from the serving governors of primary schools has, again, created difficulties due to the time pressure of having to be

on the boards of two schools. The TRC is following up proposals, already discussed with the Minister of Education, for changes in legislation in order to solve what has become an almost insoluble problem. However, the Department of Education is proposing to review the whole system of governance which could lead to considerable change being introduced.

5. The Church is indebted to all those who have agreed to represent the transferor interest on both the area and the local Boards, an increasingly demanding and important task.

6. The Education Board would wish to thank, in the warmest terms, former transferor representatives on the area and school Boards whose committed service contributed to the maintenance of a Christian ethos in schools and to the well-being of pupils and students as a result of a high standard of educational administration.

Review of the RE Core Syllabus

7. As reported last year, the Minister of Education indicated to the four Church Leaders that it would be appropriate to review the RE Core Syllabus which was produced by the Churches some eleven years ago. He has subsequently written to the Church Leaders saying that it will be appropriate to include the teaching of world faiths other than Christianity within the Core and that representatives of other faiths should be invited to serve on the review working group.

8. The initial response from the Churches was to set up a Review Group made up of senior Church representatives, which will guide and control the review. The Review Group, in turn, has set up a Working Group made up of teachers, area board advisers and college lecturers. This group of twenty-two, equally representative of the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, will be jointly chaired by Dr Aidan Donaldson and Mr T H Shaw, formerly Senior Chief Inspector at the Department of Education.

9. The Church Leaders responded to the Minister's concerns about other world faiths with a proposal to include two other than Christianity faiths, one of which might be Judaism within the Core from Key Stage 3 but on the understanding that RE will continue to be approached from the Christian perspective. In terms of procedures a sub-group would be constituted to confer as necessary, with representatives of other faith groups and produce core materials which would be presented to the Working Group. Miss Daphne Gilmour, former RE Adviser to the Southern Board, has agreed to chair the sub-group. A recent meeting with senior representatives of DENI has confirmed that these proposals are acceptable.

10. The Church Leaders' letter to the Minister emphasised that the Churches reserve the right to approve the revised syllabus. In order to expedite the process it may be necessary to seek the approval of the Presbyterian Church before a meeting of the General Assembly. A resolution is appended to grant authority to the General Board to give the necessary approval.

Education for the 21st Century (The Burns Report)

11. The report of the Post-Primary Review Body on the current selective system has opened a consultation process whose outcome could result in what would, arguably, be the most radical changes to the education system in Northern Ireland for the past fifty years.

12. The Minister has extended the consultation period to the end of June and has stated publicly that he wants to hear everyone's opinions. The State Education Committee would encourage everyone to study this important document in detail and to make their views known to the Minister.

13. The Education Boards of the three main Protestant Churches produced separate reports. These have now been incorporated in one report, still in draft form, which, when finalised, will be forwarded to the Minister by the TRC. The Draft Report is printed as an Appendix to the Report of the Education Board.

14. The TRC Executive plans to consult further with the whole TRC which is made up of the Executive and the transferor representatives on the five Education and Library Boards. It may be necessary to present a supplementary report to the Assembly through the Daily Minutes.

Teacher Fair Employment Exemption

15. Representatives of the three main Churches have been consulted about the 'teacher exemption' as part of a study by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. They advanced the view that the Churches believe in fair employment and would not object, in principle, to the withdrawal of the exception provided it was applied to all sectors in education. They also stated that the Churches would wish to maintain the controlled schools' sector ethos.

Kilcoan Presbyterian Maintained Primary School

16. The North-Eastern Education and Library Board consulted the Board of Education about a proposal to join Kilcoan with two other local primary schools and to provide a new school building on a greenfield site.

17. The Board adopted the view that this development would enhance primary educational provision, but would hope that, within the statute, consideration could be given to a higher number of governors nominated by 1st Islandmagee.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**Primary Schools**

Rev J S B Drennan, Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

1. Change continues to be the name of the game in our primary schools. The Department of Education and Science continues to implement the Education Act with demands for a whole range of policy decisions. Some of them I indicate below:

Safety in school
 Stay Safe
 Admissions policy
 Statement of Ethos
 Child Abuse etc

2. Some have said that soon the school walls will be covered with this or that statement instead of the children's work!
3. This year there have been decisions worthy of praise and mention but some of them do provide their own challenges:
 - The total financial allocation from the DES is _5.4billion;
 - Capital expenditure for 1st and 2nd levels is to be _67.83million;
 - There is funding for an extra 350 teachers;
 - The local contribution [set at 25% in 1975 and reduced to £2 per pupil in 2001] has now been completely abolished;
 - The per capita grant increased by another _10 with a promise of more to come.
4. This, however, raises the challenge of replacing the local contribution for the daily running expenses. A look at the balance sheet of Boards at the end of December 2001 will show very healthy bottom lines but we have to remember that this income includes a plethora of grants which have been earmarked for specific things and cannot be used for ongoing general expenses.
5. Other changes include extra time for non Irish qualified teachers to get the necessary qualification, money for supervision and training for Boards of Management.
6. There are 17 schools which claim to be Presbyterian, but three of them have named patrons outside of Presbytery and one whose patron is outside the state and not under the care of this Synod.
7. It is quite apparent to anyone taking even a cursory look that the work of managing a school takes time and commitment. Thanks are due to all teachers and Board of Management members in all their efforts and wish them God's blessing for the days to come.

Secondary Schools

Mr B Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

1. The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a body comprising representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Religious Society of Friends. PCI is represented by Brian Duffy and Rev Mary Hunter on the SEC.
2. In the school year 2000/2001 SEC grants to families with children attending schools under Protestant management totalled IR£3,012,500. The Department has maintained a welcome increase in the block grant and this has again meant an increase in the level of the grants allocated.
3. The overall enrolment in the schools continues to show an upward trend but the drop in grant applications is a matter of concern. The Committee is

endeavouring to make the scheme more widely known and has circulated information leaflets to national schools, independent junior schools and clergy.

Educational Legislation

4. Principals and Governors have to review policies and procedures at regular intervals to ensure that all is in compliance with both educational and equality legislation. The speed with which the Government has initiated legislation has meant that the Department of Education and Science has been unable to keep pace in providing the supporting structures. Delays in implementing some legislation, while welcome, also create difficulties for all involved in education.

5. The promised Education (Disabilities) Bill, while correctly recognising the rights of those with special needs, will merely be a further burden on schools if sufficient resources are not put in place.

Junior Certificate Religious Education Examination

6. The support service for the Religious Education programme held a briefing session for Church representatives outlining the developing resources. www.logos.ie is the website supporting this programme.

Industrial Action

7. The Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI) conducted a campaign of industrial action during the last school year which closed schools for many days. This campaign has recently been reactivated with the withdrawal of substitution and supervision cover. Schools are recruiting other personnel to provide these services but the damage to the overall professional relationship between teachers, school managers, pupils and parents may be significant if a conclusion is not soon brought to this long-running dispute between the government and the ASTI.

Comprehensive Schools

8. There are ongoing discussions regarding the expansion of boards of management in the Comprehensive Schools and PCI should support the proposals agreed by the schools and the Patrons.

Committee on Management

9. This is a sub-committee of the SEC which incorporates representatives of Principals, Governors and Parents. The Committee is preparing a handbook containing templates on admission and codes of behaviour. Work has also been undertaken to assist schools in articulating and maintaining their ethos or characteristic spirit. The committee will also address in the near future the need for careful selection, training, induction and development of school principals, in view of the decline in the number of those seeking the position.

Rev Patricia McBride, Chaplain at the Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe, Donegal, reports:

1. I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to minister as school chaplain in the Royal and Prior School. As a minister, it is good to be able to meet young people in their own school setting, thus conveying a message that the church and the school believe that Christian Spiritual Development is an important part of full education.

2. Daily year-group assemblies provide a regular short time of worship, and special services to mark the start of the academic year, and to ask God's blessing on our Leaving Certificate students, as well as the annual Carol Service are further opportunities to worship as a school community. A team of leaders from Scripture Union led our Start of Year services this academic year, and students responded well to them.

3. The same team of leaders also gave our Scripture Union meetings a special start this year. Throughout the year, a number of teachers and pupils gather weekly for times of informal Bible Study, learning about various forms of Christian ministry through visiting speakers, and prayer together.

4. A few hours per week teaching other subjects, and work with the pastoral-care team facilitates continuous development of relationships with students, staff and parents.

5. The pastoral care of students and staff is an important on-going part of my role as chaplain.

6. I very much value the continued prayers of the Assembly in my ministry.

R F S POOTS, Convener

APPENDIX

TRANSFEROR REPRESENTATIVES' COUNCIL

Draft Response To The Review of Post Primary Education - Burns Report

INTRODUCTION

The TRC believes strongly that there is a duty to ensure that all pupils are catered for fully and that this report on 'Education for the 21st Century' can be the catalyst for reform that is long overdue

- We welcome the recommendation that the present system of selection should be abolished. Whilst this system has enabled a minority of pupils to achieve high standards of academic excellence, it has been at the expense of a huge loss of the self-esteem of a greater number of pupils who have felt the stigma of being considered 'failures'. The present system also makes little allowance for the range of levels and stages of maturation of pupils, and little thought to their full variety of talents, aptitudes and learning abilities.
- We acknowledge that across the province, there are unequal opportunities for admission to Grammar schools - some fill their

places with pupils graded C and D, whereas, in another area, only a grade A is accepted.

- We whole-heartedly support the guiding principles, especially that it is of paramount importance that each child should be valued equally. It is also important that each child is facilitated to find the most appropriate educational pathway, and that there should be adequate provision and opportunity for pupils to change pathways.
- We agree strongly that there should be parity of esteem of vocational and academic opportunities. There is an ongoing need for children to be equipped with the values, skills and training to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society, in which the use of information technology and associated skills are constantly developing.

Education has the difficult task of preparing young people for the anticipated needs of society while at the same time encouraging the development of an all-rounded person, including the intellectual, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, physical, emotional and creative aspects of the individual.

We wish to make comments in particular, on the three main proposals outlined in the report, followed by concluding comments and recommendations.

1. Use of a pupil profile
2. Abolition of transfer tests and academic selection and the priority placed on parental choice.
3. The collegiate system.

1. Use of a Pupil Profile

We consider that carefully-devised profiles should offer a fairer way forward and will hopefully be more tailored to individual's needs and strengths. However we have the following concerns:

1.1 It would be vital for profiles to be composed in a uniform way across all primary schools, and for teachers to be provided with appropriate training in their construction.

1.2 It would be essential to have a process of moderation of profiles to ensure that there is parity of value and reliability of information included. Meaningful pupil profiles must also have some elements of objective assessment.

1.3 Resources should be provided to ensure that primary schools enable pupils to correct deficiencies in their profiles which could lead to underachievement continuing at post-primary level. It is therefore essential that, as early as possible in a pupil's education, areas of weakness and deficiency are properly and expertly diagnosed and that then there is immediate and adequate provision of professional help and resources.

1.4 This priority, highlighted in (1.3), is further supported by the 'Northern Ireland Audit Report' which found that 10% of pupils in the Belfast Board and 6% of pupils across the province are leaving without any GCSE qualifications. Also at Key Stage 3 the Department of Education's stated target is that 72% of pupils should be working at level five or above in English and Mathematics. However, in 1999/2000 only 53% of pupils in Northern Ireland were found to be at level five or above in English and only 50% in Maths.

1.5 We are concerned that while the intention of Pupil Profiles may be to help parents, pupils and teachers, they may result in Parent/Teacher conflict and disagreement over what is considered to be in the pupil's best interests.

1.6 We are concerned about the extra workload the new process will place upon Primary Principals.

1.7 We believe that the actual Pupil Profile should be professionally compiled by the school without parental influence.

1.8 We draw attention to 8.23 of the report and the use of pupil profiles in connection with 'the educational provision within Collegiates which would match well with the parents' aspirations and the child's preferred learning and career pathways.' For this to be effective, there would need to be impartial, honest and effective information about the types and nature of the educational/vocational provision that is available and an effective means by which such information can be shared.

1.9 We believe that parents would value the advice of an experienced post-primary school principal in considering an appropriate pathway for their child. In order for a more fully informed choice to be made, we suggest that a means is found for the pupil profile to be shared with the proposed receiving schools without being used as a criterion for selection.

1.10 We refer to 8.26 where there is recognition that 'as a child matures, his/her ability to engage in self-review strengthens.' We are concerned that very often at the age of 11 this ability is not sufficiently developed and so it is important that the post-primary educational path into which the pupil enters is such that during and at the end of KS3, the curriculum enables the pupil to transfer to a school that is better suited to his/her strengths and abilities without jeopardising his/her opportunities. In short, all choices should be kept open as long as possible although we recognise that, for some pupils, certain pathways may be unrealistic. We suggest that a common-core curriculum should be delivered in all post primary schools until the end of KS3, when decisions regarding the appropriate pathway could be made.

2. Abolition of Transfer tests and academic selection and the priority placed on parental choice.

2.1 The assumption that parental choice should be the dominant criterion in the admission of children to schools is challenged. Parental choice is one of a number of factors which should be considered at transfer. A new way forward might be to devise a system whereby a range of suitably weighted factors and evaluations would be brought together in a points system to determine an appropriate outcome at transfer.

2.2 We note that the report acknowledges in 9.25 that 'it is a natural feature of the Open Enrolment system that some schools will be more or less popular than others..' Perceived 'successful' schools will receive many more first preference choices than can ever be accommodated. We are concerned that the application of the proposed admissions criteria will quickly result in admission mainly by proximity to the school. This and the proposed collegiate system will rule out the traditional large catchment areas of many schools in the urban areas and elsewhere.

2.3 With reference to 9.25 we quote 'It is a natural feature of the Open Enrolment system that some schools will be more or less popular than others ...' In the light of this we believe that strenuous efforts need to be made to ensure parity of esteem among schools, including a curriculum provision which recognises the differing needs of academically and non academically gifted children.

2.4 In order to provide a good range of vocational and technological education, it is important that schools, especially from the end of KS3, are adequately resourced in terms of finance, staff and facilities.

2.5 Closely allied to these points is the urgent need to put adequate resources into schools whose pupils demonstrate educational deprivation. This should not be done by the inequitable method of previous TSN schemes. It is important that the funding provided should be additional.

2.6 Regarding the criteria set out in 9.30 we express concern that the principle 'that each young person should be valued equally' appears to be set aside by the criteria 'that children of staff at the school' be given preference over other children.

2.7 We envisage transport problems arising particularly on boundary areas where parents choose a school in a collegiate, which is not in their grouping. Careful local consultation will be necessary to establish that the groupings reflect traditional feeder routes.

2.8 While acknowledging that the process is driven by parental choice, we are concerned that in reality, given the groupings, geography, and community divisions, there is likely to be little choice for many parents

2.9 It would be helpful to know the grounds and procedures for any process of appeal. This is particularly important for pupils deprived of a place at the school of their parents' preference through not living near enough to the school.

3. The Collegiate System

3.1 We welcome the concept of co-operation and co-ordination as against competition, but express concern at the practicalities of delivering these objectives.

3.2 We refer to para 48 (page 22): 'We are convinced that a Collegial system of post-primary education would provide the structure and opportunity for schools to co-exist and work together to best serve the educational needs and abilities of all their pupils.' We consider that to facilitate such levels of co-operation, funding of schools should no longer be based chiefly on pupil numbers but on pupil need.

3.3 The planning, management and support systems proposed appear unnecessarily complicated and seem to be creating layer upon layer of bureaucracy. We would be concerned that resources, which should be targeted at improving the delivery of education in the classroom, will be spent on administration.

3.4 We would envisage principals being presented with frequent and impossible dilemmas within the Board of Principals regarding what is best for their school and the demands of Collegiate policy.

3.5 We are of the view that centres of learning excellence are engendered, not manufactured.

3.6 Given the proposal to share resources between schools in a collegiate, we are concerned at the safety of pupils moving around between schools. Who will have ownership of these children and be responsible for their protection, safety, pastoral care etc?

3.7 We foresee difficulties arising regarding contracts of staff members who may be relocated to other schools and issues regarding discipline and management of staff.

3.8 We are unsure where the role of Area Boards comes into this system. We also have concerns regarding the responsibility of Boards of Governors. In any new proposals the rights and interests of Transferors should be fully protected.

3.9 There are also considerable financial implications, so we question if there will be sufficient positive outcomes to merit all the angst generated in managing a collegial system. We, therefore, express concern as to the benefits and effectiveness of a collegiate system in practice.

3.10 We believe that schools are living communities which generate loyalties and promote a sense of ownership among parents and pupils. This may well be lost in a Collegiate.

3.11 There is a concern, that, in implementing the collegiate system, education is not reduced to 'a screen and a keyboard' and the ethos of schools dissipated.

3.12 We consider that the collegiate system as proposed would be unworkable. Smaller clusters of schools, co-operating on a voluntary basis, might be more realistic. We could foresee co-operation developing naturally through appropriately funded and imaginative projects.

Concluding Comments

While welcoming the intention to abolish the present method of selection we are very concerned that all possible steps are taken to ensure that the process of change is introduced in a manner that will obtain the maximum possible community support and confidence. Incremental change is therefore important.

- We express deep concern that the proposed criteria for admissions will not, in practice, achieve the objectives as stated in 9.25: 'It is essential that these criteria should be equitable and designed to provide equality of opportunity in support of the best interests of the pupil.'
- In our considered view, there are great difficulties surrounding the effective working of a collegiate system that would need to be resolved before such a proposal could be given a greater measure of support.
- We are also aware of the danger of introducing a system that changes what is already good and care must be taken to encourage and maintain excellence.
- While we have welcomed the intention to abolish the present method of selection, we are very concerned that the proposed replacement should have the maximum possible support from both the general community and those directly involved in education. We consider the proposed changes

highly risky given that the proposals are untried and do not follow the customary piloting procedure.

- We are concerned about the short time scale for the proposals to be implemented and are of the view that it is more important to get it right than to get it soon.

Recommendations

- We consider that the end of KS3 is a more appropriate age for informed decisions to be made about the future of educational pathways for a child. (cf Report, 8.26)
- We consider the continuing development of the pupil profile throughout KS3 to be important to facilitate the choice of the most suitable pathway for each pupil. During or at the end of KS3 the pupil should be enabled to transfer to the pathway that is best suited to his/her strengths, abilities and gifts.
- To enable this to function more smoothly we suggest that a common-core curriculum be delivered in all post-primary schools until the end of KS3.
- We believe that, with all urgency, every effort should be made to improve and enhance the ethos and standing of schools that are perceived to be 'less successful' within the system.

CHURCH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The Sunday School Organiser continued to lead training classes for Sunday School teachers, Bible Class leaders, Holiday Bible Club leaders and Children's Church leaders at congregational and at Presbytery level.

2. Training in the use of the new Sunday School Teacher Training Manual has been given and is still available at Presbytery level.

3. The Sunday School Organiser delivered a series of five lectures on Christian Education to ministerial students, during the second semester, in Union Theological College.

4. Other events taken by the Sunday School Organiser during the year included children's and youth leaders dedication services, services based on the theme of Christian Education and many children's and youth services.

5. There are now eight Teachers' Guides and Worksheets with a 'Presbyterian flavour' available in book form: Baptism, Communion, Leadership, Children and Young People, Evangelism, Mission, Our Church and Worship. These are available from Familybooks.

6. The Same Sky Sunday School and Youth Project 2000/2001 raised the magnificent sum of £90,584.76. After expenses, the amount to be dispersed was £85,142.66 as follows:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Children & Youth Centre in Kenya | £51,120.86 |
| PHAB Club and Play Group (174 Trust) | £17,010.90 |
| Monaghan Presbytery Youth Movement (the Loft) | £17,010.90 |

7. The current *Building Hope* Sunday School and Youth Project for 2001/2002 is going well, and has a twofold focus – assisting in the rebuilding

and refurbishment of a Mission Girl's School in Rajkot, Gujarat, India, and supporting the Willowbrook housing scheme in Coleraine for people with a learning disability. This project closes on 2 September 2002. A slide set with taped commentary together with a quiz; Power Point presentation; very short video of Rajkot School and 2 slide projectors are available for free hire.

8. The new Sunday School and Youth Project 2002/2003 has a two fold focus. The overseas part to the project involves the provision of transport (bicycles or scooters) for church workers in India, Pakistan, Kenya and Malawi. The home part of the project focuses on the refurbishment of the Rostrevor Youth Centre.

9. While plans were in place for the Fun Day at Cultra in May 2001, at a late stage the event had to be cancelled due to the Foot and Mouth crisis. The co-operation of many organisations and individuals, not least the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra, ensured that financial liabilities were minimal. Plans are at an advanced stage for this year's Fun Day to be held at the same venue on Saturday 11 May - the *Building Hope* Sunday School and Youth Project 2001/2002 being the beneficiary.

10. The Sunday School organiser visited the Hospice near Prague in the Czech Republic which the recent MAD Project supported and brought the good wishes of Sunday School and Youth Groups. He also attended a very beneficial Children's Ministry Conference in Eastbourne in January 2002.

11. A Conference for Presbytery Sunday School Agents was held in January, which it is hoped was to the benefit of all who attended.

12. A submission was made regarding the Consultation on the appointment of a Children's Commissioner for N Ireland.

13. A submission was made regarding the Consultation document on Physical Punishment in the home.

14. The Committee expresses thanks to the administrators of the Local Bible Fund for enabling it to make the following awards of Bibles during the year:

15 teachers with 30 years or more service

53 children with 5 years or more unbroken attendance

1 child for repeating the Shorter Catechism

15. The Committee expresses thanks to Mrs Donna Thompson and Mrs Valerie Moore, for the efficient running of the Sunday School Office and the pleasant manner in which they serve our church.

16. The Education Board, in partnership with Union College continues to provide in-depth training over a ten week period, for those who are working with children - in the Autumn of 2001 in Dungannon (attended by 35 people), and in the Spring of 2002 at Union College (attended by 20 people). Certificates were presented by the College Principal at a special ceremony on the 17 May, 2002, at which the Moderator was the special speaker.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. This has been an exciting year for the work of the University Education Committee, particularly with the Joint Chaplaincy initiative in the Dublin area in association with the Methodist church commencing in September 2001. In addition during the year the Chaplaincy effort in the Queen's University area of Belfast has been redefined in light of the changing pattern of student life.

2. In Dublin some years of preparative work finally came to fruition when during the month of September four joint Methodist/Presbyterian chaplains were appointed to the main Dublin institutions of third level education. **Rev Katherine P Meyer** (who had previously served as chaplain in the Dublin area in a part time capacity) was appointed to Trinity College Dublin; **Rev William McLaren** was appointed to the post at Dublin City University and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; **Rev Stephen Skuce** was appointed to University College Dublin; and **Mr P Baird Lewis** was appointed to the Dublin Institute of Technology.

3. Though the Committee is delighted that these Chaplains are currently in post, and have been pleased to receive reports of how their work is progressing, further developments in the Chaplaincy situation in these colleges and in the general Dublin area continue to be investigated between representatives of the Methodist Church and ourselves.

4. As a result of the resignation of Rev Noel Williamson as Chaplain at Queen's University, Belfast, Rev Steve Stockman the Dean of Residence at Derryvolgie Halls was appointed to act as Chaplain in the interim.

Mr Williamson ministered at Queen's for some 21 years. During his time there he helped to steer students and university staff through changes in employment terms, financial and difficult personal insecurity which increased the pressures on the university community.

Opportunities within the Chaplaincy increased with the development of Derryvolgie Hall by the War Memorial Hostel Committee and the appointment of a Dean of Residence with Chaplaincy Duties. The nature of Chaplaincy work took a different turn when the old Chaplaincy Centre was sold off and the Bush Drop-in Centre developed.

Mr Williamson brought unique gifts to the task and was well known within the student body and the totality of the university staff as a friend of all. He was no less renowned for his co-operation with the other denominational chaplains.

5. Following considerable discussion between representatives of this Committee and representatives of the War Memorial Hostel Committee on the changing role of the Chaplain and the need to develop a much more unified approach to the efforts at ministry and outreach in both Derryvolgie Halls of Residence and the Bush Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue, a revised job description for a new post of Chaplain in Residence was completed. The Rev Steve Stockman will take up this appointment in the summer.

6. Further adjustments to the composition of the chaplaincy team at Queen's will be ongoing as this exciting development progresses.

7. The Chaplaincy team working at the various campuses of the University of Ulster (Rev Dr William Crawley, U U Jordanstown; Rev Peter

Lyle, U U Coleraine; Rev Joe McCormick, U U Magee) continue their good work of ministering to the needs of both students and staff.

8. The development of the new Springvale Campus in West Belfast while progressing has not yet resulted in the presence of a student body, therefore the need for the provision of a chaplain has not yet arisen, though it is foreseen that this situation may change in the future and the Committee would wish to be fully prepared to meet the need for appropriate chaplaincy provision when that arises.

9. Following a preliminary inquiry, the Committee is seeking to ensure that adequate Chaplaincy arrangements are in place for those students studying at Agricultural Colleges in N Ireland.

10. Our Committee wishes to express its thanks to those parish ministers who seek to provide Chaplaincy support to staff and students in those institutions of third level education throughout Ireland where we cannot provide an official Presbyterian Chaplain.

11. We commend all those involved in providing Chaplaincy support to the prayers of the Church, particularly the new appointees in Dublin and the team in the Queen's area, that their efforts for the advancement of Christ's kingdom amongst both staff and students will be blessed for His glory.

Queen's University

Rev Steve Stockman reports from Queen's University:

1. This has very much been a year of experimentation at Queen's. When Rev Noel Williamson left in the summer it was an opportunity to look at our team at Queen's and how the two sites – the Bush Café in Elmwood Avenue and Derryvolgie Hall – work together. The aim has been that both might feed one another to give us as big an influence as possible into the Queen's student and staff population.

2. It has very much been a year to get myself noticed and recognised in the wider University community. Being involved in the Induction week made me aware of a whole world outside of Derryvolgie Hall and this year I have attempted to be seen around spending a lot of time in the Bush Café but also getting involved in the wider community where possible. The Queen's Carol Service and Graduations have been helpful in this and I have been building relationships with the Students Union and staff where possible.

3. We have had a great team this year. Maureen Rankin continues to keep the Café nutritiously and deliciously effective. Though all the Chaplaincy cafés are busy, they are suffering financially due to students' financial situations with the discontinuance of grants.

4. In Derryvolgie Lorna Dunlop keeps the place looking fantastic as well as reaching out to students and covering administration issues at the Bush.

5. Jan Carson has been a great asset as Arts Development worker and she has run arts programmes, a Network course as well as building community and networking with others especially the Christian Union and Church Of Ireland Centre. A joint week of events No Labels was very successful in showing how Christians are concerned about Third World issues and upwards on 500 attended the Thursday night event.

6. The Derryvolgie volunteer Lynn Ferguson as also been very active in relating to students and organising social events. Lynn and Jan both were very heavily involved with the Church of Ireland in a new project that takes soup and coffee to the streets on a Thursday night to meet students coming out of the plethora of clubs and bars in the area.

7. Chaplaincy worship and study takes place at Derryvolgie and though these are very well attended we are still in the early days of seeing more from the Bush and beyond coming in to these events. We have looked at The Lords Prayer and also the basic needs that Christ can bring us – love, security, significance, the miraculous and hope. We also had a great night with the South Belfast Presbytery Youth Council looking at Missionary work. We took over 40 to Lucan for our weekend and also had a very successful in-house weekend.

8. This summer we plan to take two teams of 25 students to Cape Town to build houses on a Township with Habitat For Humanity. This is three times the numbers we took in 2000 and it is 20% of all Habitat's numbers going away this year! As part of the orientation we have been running the Presbyterian Youth for Peace course with David Smith and Craig Sands. As well as building houses for those who do not have them, this gives us a chance to look at world mission, social justice issues of the Kingdom of God, reconciliation, as well as giving us time for spiritual development and building relationships that will give a strong foundation to next year's ministry.

University of Ulster

Rev Dr William Crawley reports from the University of Ulster, Jordanstown Campus:

1. In addition to a drop-in space with round-the-clock coffee and conversation, the chaplaincy team provides regular study and faith-formation opportunities for students, along with a series of weekend spiritual retreats and overnight visits throughout the year. I have also initiated a weekly student-led prayer and praise fellowship, which has already gathered a solid following.

2. We were delighted when Dr Barbara Stephenson, the US Consul-General for Northern Ireland, attended our now annual Fourth of July celebration as guest of honour. The Consul-General's visit was particularly appreciated by our American international students in the period following the September 11 attacks. In the aftermath of those attacks, the chaplaincy worked in partnership with the UUJ's Department of American Studies to provoke public debate on the ethics of war. I also hosted two panel events open to the public, which featured politicians, US diplomatic staff, academics and religious leaders reflecting on the place of religion and ethics in the current climate. Our efforts to encourage reflection will continue with an up-coming visit by Bruce Kent, leader of the Movement for the Abolition of War.

3. The chaplaincy team's creative partnership with Habitat for Humanity NI goes from strength to strength. Fundraising projects by last summer's teams, working in Nicaragua and Sri Lanka, will finance the building of nearly seventy homes in those countries. I am particularly grateful to congregations in the Presbytery of North Belfast for their very generous support for the Sri Lanka team. This summer will see another two UUJ Chaplaincy

teams working in Honduras and El Salvador—this latter team co-led by myself and the Rev Anne Tolland, whose quiet good sense I rely on considerably.

4. Both my Catholic colleagues, the Rev Ciaran Dallat and Sr Dympna O'Daly, will end their tenure at Jordanstown in July 2002, with new Catholic chaplains in place by the following September. My thanks to them for their friendship, encouragement and sound advice during my first full year as a university chaplain; I wish them both God's blessing in their new ministries.

Coleraine Campus

Rev Peter Lyle reports from the University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus:

1. The past year has been another positive one in Coleraine University. Obviously as the years have gone by my relationships with many students has developed and that has provided many opportunities to help them in their spiritual lives. I continue to serve my 'on duty' on a Wednesday during which I am available for any student on campus. Many students, from a variety of religious backgrounds and views, do take the opportunity to visit and sometimes discuss matters of faith. It is also a time when students who are facing some kind of crisis would make contact. I find these times very special for it allows me access into very private areas of the lives of young people and I count it a great privilege to share Christ in such circumstances.

2. I continue working with my colleagues from the other traditions and represent the church wherever possible at major university events. I have also continued my links with the Christian Union, speaking at one of their meetings in February 2002 and serving on a local advisory group for the CU Executive Committee.

3. Certainly, the highlight of each week is the Bible Study that I run over Wednesday lunchtime. The students who come along often express appreciation for the studies, which I try to make as relevant as possible for them – dealing with issues of university life and also preparation for life after graduation.

4. I continue to thank God so much for this immense privilege to serve him in this way and among the young people I have contact with.

Magee Campus

Rev Joe McCormick reports from the University of Ulster, Magee Campus:

1. A Presbyterian presence continues to be maintained at Magee in spite of apathy and lack of interest in spiritual matters from the majority of the student population. The work of the Christian Union is encouraged.

2. Fr Finton Digen, RC chaplain, and I continue to work together for the benefit of both students and staff. In view of increasing pressure upon students (of all faiths) and the very serious threat of students resorting to extreme measures, viz, drugs or suicide, meetings have been set up with the University authorities to address the role of chaplains.

Trinity College, Dublin

Rev Katherine Meyer reports:

1. Until August 2001, I continued to serve as Presbyterian chaplain to Trinity College Dublin, while maintaining a presence on the chaplaincy teams of Dublin City University and Dublin Institute of Technology. I would like to thank and pay tribute to my colleagues at both DCU and DIT who consistently included me as part of the chaplaincy team. The majority of my time and energy, however, was spent as part of the Trinity College chaplaincy.

2. From September 2001, I have been the full-time Presbyterian and Methodist Chaplain to Trinity College, and I am serving as Chairperson of the TCD chaplaincy team for the academic year 2001-2002. Some of the College-wide issues in which I am particularly involved at present include the place of Christian chaplaincy in the development of Student Services, the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act, and the refinement of protocols for memorial services in College Chapel.

3. In September, the chaplains invited the new Provost of Trinity College for coffee and had a very useful and open conversation with him. We were also particularly pleased to meet with the leadership of the Christian Union, and have enjoyed a very warm and mutually helpful relationship with them.

4. Regular events included a weekly soup lunch for students and a Tuesday evening programme which focussed on the marks of Christian community. Our weekend away in November took us to Co Wexford and the term culminated with the recording of an ecumenical service for Christmas from the TCD chaplaincy.

5. In the wake of the events of 11 September, during which a well-loved member of the wider TCD community lost his life, the chaplains organised both a Service of Prayer, held on the National Day of Mourning, and a Service of Remembrance and Hope. The latter was a reflective service which drew together people from different communities. The comments we received afterwards suggested that it had been for many a powerful, evangelical event.

6. Thank you all for your support, your encouragement, and your prayers; I am delighted to be engaged in this important ministry on your behalf.

Dublin City University & Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Rev William McLaren reports:

It would be difficult to imagine two more different institutions - one a medical school founded over two hundred years ago and with 1230 students, the other a multi-discipline university founded little over a decade ago but now boasting a student population of 10,800. Working in two such contrasting third level institutions presents a real challenge, yet in both Dublin City University and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland students, staff, and chaplaincy colleagues have been welcoming and supportive. Both colleges, but especially RCSI, have a large number of international students, many belonging to other faiths. At RCSI a short act of worship followed by a "friendship lunch" is the

focal point of the week, but groups as varied as the Christian Union, the Rugby Club and the Drama Society have welcomed the interest of the Chaplain. At DCU it has also been possible to form links with various societies and student groups and a Lenten discussion group, in which we have explored the history, faith and practice of our different Christian denominations, has been welcomed by both staff and students. There too, a weekly “friendship lunch” also presents the opportunity to debate topics of interest in a relaxed, informal manner. It has also been possible to act as a bridge between the two colleges and local churches of all denominations. The third level chaplains conference, held in Limerick in January, was a useful opportunity to meet chaplains of all denominations from all over Ireland and to learn from their experience. As I continue to build on the work of the last seven months I am grateful for the support and encouragement of colleagues.

T R BUICK, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

State Education Committee

2. That the General Board be authorised to act on behalf of the General Assembly in taking any decisions related to the review of the R E Core Syllabus.
3. That the draft response to the Report on Education for the 21st Century (The Burns Report) be approved.
4. That the Rev Dr R F S Poots continue as Convener of the State Education Committee.

Church Education Committee

5. That the General Assembly thank Sunday Schools and Youth Groups for their generous support for the current Building Hope Project 2002 and commend the new Project providing transport for church workers overseas and the refurbishment of Rostrevor Youth Centre.

General

6. That the Board of Education, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 284 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF STUDIES AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Very Rev Dr A W G BROWN

Secretary: Rev J H ROBINSON

1. The work of the Board since last Assembly has been unusually busy with a series of major undertakings requiring careful thought and preparation. Work on the College buildings is well under way, and is expected to finish in time for the College's 150th birthday in 2003. Principal Cecil McCullough has decided to step down a year early in order that the new Principal might be in place to take things forward at a time of new beginnings. We thank him most warmly for his wise and gracious leadership, and wish his successor well as he leads Union College into the next chapter of its history.

2. Happily we are at long last able to report a much healthier outlook in regard to the number of ministerial students. Twenty-one applications were received by the December closing date, and hopefully this will provide us with a large entrance class a year or so ahead. However, the present serious shortage of ministers will continue with us for some years to come, and we cannot stress too strongly the need for congregations to pray earnestly for more candidates, and for ministers to set before their people the challenge of ordained ministry.

3. We have been greatly encouraged by the growing numbers of undergraduates who choose Union College for their courses in theology. We must never underestimate the exciting opportunity of teaching the Christian faith at this level, and by so doing of helping to train future teachers, and hopefully Church leaders, as well as helping some to hear God's call to full-time ministry.

4. This has been a year of steady development in the Christian Training Centre, and there has been a worthwhile uptake of courses, as well as plans for some video materials for wider use.

5. The Board also discussed the most effective structure by which the Students' Bursary Fund might fulfil its remit, and is persuaded that its efficiency would be enhanced if it became a Committee of the Board, rather than that of the General Assembly, enabling it to draw more widely on those with interest and relevant expertise. A resolution is appended to this effect.

REV PRINCIPAL J C McCULLOUGH

Rev Professor L S Kirkpatrick, Secretary of Faculty, writes:

6. In August 2002 the Rev Prof John Cecil McCullough will have completed a four year term as Principal of the Union Theological College. This has proved an onerous task in respect of the unprecedented changes that have occurred in that period. He has carried the burden of administrative restructuring, the introduction of new Masters and Doctoral level courses in ministry, the integration of DMS and CTC functions into a wider College organization and the initiation of extensive refurbishment of College premises.

In addition the College played a leading role in a recent independent Teaching Quality Assessment which resulted in an award of 'excellent'. We thank Principal McCullough for his leadership for the past four years.

PERSONNEL

7. During the year, the Board set up a sub-committee to comment on issues raised by the Personnel and Planning Committee of the Union Commission regarding the increasing use of pastoral personnel by congregations and the variety of titles and job descriptions that are being used. While welcoming the greater flexibility in ministry thus indicated, the Board recommended that congregations should include in-service training and personal development courses, and advised that the Christian Training Centre would be able to offer advice and/or provide suitable courses. Our main concern however was that the proliferation of such posts should not render it more difficult for our students for the ministry to be assigned and eventually employed.

8. The sub-committee was also asked to consider how the Church might respond to the present shortage of candidates for the ministry. The Committee looked at the Office of the Reader and provision of an Auxiliary Ministry in the Church of Scotland. Our own Church has examined both models a number of times in recent decades, but has never felt any urgent need to proceed in either direction. We did note, however, valuable experiments in Donegal and Omagh Presbyteries in the recent past in which a number of suitable people were identified, trained and used to good effect in the leading of public worship. The Director of Christian Training was able to inform us that several Presbyteries have been in touch with him recently, requesting help of this kind. We believe that this may be the way forward and we have asked Dr Alexander to monitor this situation for us. If local schemes of this kind were to prove valuable, then the idea might well commend itself to the wider Church in due course. We anticipate a short fall of about twenty-five ministers by 2005, and that in itself must give the Church pause for thought! We intend to keep this matter under review.

REVIEW OF THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF MINISTERIAL STUDENTS

9. The post of Director of Ministerial Students was set up by the General Assembly in 1995, and the Rev Harry Robinson was appointed to the post at the General Assembly of 1996. Written into the appointment was the stipulation that the job description would be reviewed after a period of five years. This is the task that has now been undertaken by the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

10. Meantime, at the General Assembly of 1998, the Report of the College and Training Review was received. The remit of this committee included an overview of this among other posts, and this present review is broadly in line with its recommendations.

'Within the proposed structure the Director of Ministerial Students would continue to have an important role as at present but, while remaining a member of the Board, would cease to be its secretary and would be related to the overall

structure as a Head of Department. The post would also entail the hearing of students preaching and the conducting of preaching seminars. There would also be additional work arising from the expansion of in-service training for licentiates and ministers.' (Reports 1998 p 8, Par 23)

11. The process of review began with the appointment of a committee to carry out the task, and to report their findings to the Board. At the first meeting, a paper was presented in person by the Rev Harry Robinson, outlining how his responsibilities had evolved, and especially in relation to the original job description, and how he himself would wish the job to develop in the future. Mr Robinson was then questioned and withdrew from the meeting

12. A paper was then presented from the Faculty of the College in which they indicated that they had given considerable thought as to how they would evaluate the post. Their conclusion was that they greatly valued the personal contribution of the present Director, and the indispensable part that he now took in College life. They expressed their desire to further the process by which the Director was seen less as in an independent relationship to the Board, and more as a member of the staff team of the College, drawing his authority from his place in that team, and subject to the line management of the Principal.

13. The Committee appointed a drafting sub-committee which met twice and submitted its work to a further meeting of the full committee. The committee charged with the review of the post accepts that the original job description, which was drafted without any experience of how the job might work out in practice, has on the whole served us well, and that the Director has steadily evolved the job to fulfil the original vision in appropriate and relevant ways. We also recognised that it created some areas of potential conflict between the duties we envisaged for the Director, and duties that had been entrusted to Faculty by Act of Parliament, for example in the organisation of college worship, and in the discipline of students. In particular there were some potential areas of conflict in the roles assigned to the Professor of Practical Theology and the DMS. Faculty paid tribute to the way the present holders of these offices by their good sense had overcome these difficulties, and in their report they detailed how both men had involved each other in a number of areas of work. They also paid tribute to Harry Robinson's personal skills as a leader of worship and as an able teacher within the Department of Practical Theology.

14. The discussion that followed these papers clarified a number of areas where changes needed to be made, and in particular in locating this post clearly within the staff structure of the college. This will entail the DMS giving up his official position as Secretary of the Board, as this would involve a conflict in line management as between the DMS and the Principal. However there is no reason why the DMS should not continue to minute as appropriate, and carry out much of the Board correspondence with students. Nor would this change preclude his servicing meetings of the Board and its various committees as at present.

15. The strongly pastoral nature of the post was recognised and this has two important implications. The DMS, as part of the Faculty team, should be asked to develop pastoral links not only with ministry students, but in informal and appropriate ways with the many Queens students who are now being taught within the College. In relation to the Residential Interview where the DMS has done such valuable work, it was felt that he should continue to organise the

summer school for candidates. The servicing of the interviewing process and the communication of results should fall to the Convener of the Ministerial Studies Committee, leaving the DMS free to act in a purely pastoral way towards prospective candidates, to observe the interview process, and to service an appeals procedure where this was deemed necessary.

16. The committee was strongly of the opinion that the DMS should not feel inhibited as he had done heretofore from including an occasional visit to students studying overseas where this was deemed pastorally appropriate.

17. The committee decided that the role of the DMS in heightening the profile of the College and the Board of Studies should be strengthened. He will continue to attract students to choose Union College for their undergraduate studies and to set before Church members the challenge of vocation to the ministry. The committee saw no conflict in this role with the proposed College Development Officer whose principal work would be to attract students from outside Ireland, and to investigate the possibility of trust income and other new sources of funding.

18. In conclusion, the committee placed on record the Board's gratitude to the Rev Harry Robinson for the excellent way in which he has carried out his work with professionalism, integrity and dedication, and always in a gracious and friendly manner, and their sincere hope that he will continue in post for a long time to come.

APPENDIX

THE DIRECTOR OF MINISTERIAL STUDENTS

Revised Job Description – 2002

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

The Director of Ministerial Students is a member of the staff of Union Theological College, appointed by the General Assembly to oversee the academic and pastoral care of students for the ministry in accordance with its regulations, and on behalf of the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

He is a member of the Staff Committee of the College, and may be invited to teach in the area of his expertise, and to be responsible for organising College worship.

He will be responsible for the academic and pastoral care of deaconesses in training, in consultation with the PWA and the Board of Mission in Ireland. Together with other members of Faculty, he will seek to give pastoral support where appropriate to other students taking courses at the College.

The Director shall not act as Secretary to the Board of Studies and Christian Training, but may take minutes and carry out much of the Board's correspondence.

His duties will include:

1. To undertake the day to day non-monetary administration of all matters concerning students for the ministry from initial enquiry until ordination. The Director will report to the Board of Studies and Christian Training through the Committee on Ministerial Studies.

2. To administer the placements during each stage of a student's course.

Supervision

3. To supervise all ministerial students, studying both at home and overseas, on behalf of the Board of Studies and Christian Training, ensuring that, in all instances, the requirements of the General Assembly are being fulfilled, and to supervise all deaconesses in training in consultation with PWA and Board of Mission in Ireland.

Liaison

4. To liaise with nominating Presbyteries, Presbyteries offering experience/training, and colleges and denominations overseas where students are gaining experience/training.

5. To liaise with the Secretaries of the Overseas Board, PWA and Board of Mission in Ireland etc, with regard to the fulfilling of the cultural awareness aspect of the Learning Covenants.

6. To liaise with the training officials of sister denominations so that fresh insights might be gained.

Spirituality

7. To co-operate with supervising Presbyteries, the Practical Theology Department, and others, ensuring that all students have opportunity and encouragement to grow in grace and godliness. This will include the organising of retreat days, weekends, days of prayer, and college missions.

Representation

8. To have the chief responsibility for raising the profile of the College and Board, and to encourage interest in, prayer for, and generosity towards their work. This will involve deputation, publication, conferences, careers conventions etc.

9. To invite people to consider the courses on offer at our College, and in particular to consider the call of God to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in our Church. This will involve addressing Church services and gatherings such as Kirk Sessions, mid-week services, PWA's, Youth Fellowships, CE Societies, Christian Unions, etc.

SPECIFIC AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Learning Covenants

10. Producing, on the basis of the recommendation of the Interviewing Panel, draft Learning Covenants, taking into account academic background, life experience, etc, and following up any queries which arise from these covenants.

11. Liaising with Faculty and other interested parties with regard to the delivering of the experiences described in the Learning Covenants.

12. Submitting draft Learning Covenants for approval by the Interviewing Panel and the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

13. Acquainting accepted students and their supervising Presbyteries with details of the Learning Covenants.

14. Ensuring that, through contact with students, Faculty, and Presbyteries, all aspects of the Learning Covenants are being fulfilled at each stage and in each location.

15. Researching “openings” in universities, church boards, Presbyteries, congregations, and para-church organisations, for innovative ways of fulfilling aspects of the Learning Covenants, especially those related to the Pre-Theological stage and cultural awareness aspect.

Administration of the Pre-Theological Stage

16. Academic: In liaison with the Faculty, ensuring that all ministerial students have opportunity to fulfil all academic aspects of the Pre-Theological stage. Also, exploring the possibility of new ways to fulfil the Pre-Theological requirements eg evening classes, summer schools, correspondence courses.

17. Cultural Awareness: Ensuring that, in co-operation with the providing agency (eg the Overseas Board, Irish Mission), all students complete the cultural awareness aspect of their Learning Covenant, and dealing with any difficulties. Also, ensuring that all students attend the briefing and reflection seminars associated with their experience.

18. Placements: In co-operation with nominating Presbyteries, seeking out placements best suited to individual students both in congregations and with other agencies. Setting up, monitoring and receiving feedback from Presbyteries, ministers and students with regard to these placements.

19. Learning Covenants: Adjusting initial Learning Covenants (where necessary) in the light of the Pre-Theological stage, and adding or deleting academic study and/or placements if necessary.

Administration of the Theological Courses

20. Academic Requirements: Offering advice on the General Assembly requirements, and ensuring that all ministerial students at Union and elsewhere fulfil them.

21. Spirituality: Ensuring that all ministerial students have the opportunity and encouragement to grow in grace and godliness. This includes organising, but not necessarily conducting, Days of Prayer, Weekends, College Missions etc.

22. Placements: Setting up, monitoring, and receiving feedback from Presbyteries, ministers, and students involved in placements.

23. Reports: Preparing in liaison with Faculty, and forwarding to supervising Presbyteries, an annual report on the progress of students under their care. Comments on personal and spiritual development will be included, as well as academic progress.

24. Cases of Difficulty: The College has its own internal arrangements for the discipline of students. The DMS will normally liaise, when necessary, with Board Officers, Presbytery Student Conveners, and Clerks of Presbytery, and will administer any additional courses and/or placements that may arise in such cases.

25. Certificates: Administering the issue of the required certificates, on the authority of the Board of Studies and Christian Training, prior to licensing.

Administration of Courses During Licentiate Stage

26. In liaison with the Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Christian Training, administering the setting up, monitoring and assessing of all required courses for licentiates.

27. Meeting with appropriate persons in cases of difficulty.

28. Administering any additional courses/placements required in cases of difficulty.

29. Administering the issue of certificates, on the authority of the Board of Studies and Christian Training, prior to ordination.

OTHER RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

First Contact

30. Meeting with, and giving accurate information to, each enquirer, and following up such contacts.

Residential Interview

31. Dispatching application forms to candidates, Kirk Session questionnaires to ministers, and questionnaires to Clerks of Presbytery, as well as relevant forms to referees.

32. Bringing to the Committee on Ministerial Studies for approval recommendations for membership of the Interviewing Panels, and arranging for their attendance and supplying all necessary papers and information (in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Studies and Christian Training).

33. Arranging for the provision of psychological tests and interviews with the Vocational Consultant.

34. Meeting with each candidate to obtain detailed information on academic achievements and intentions.

35. Assisting the Convener of the Committee on Ministerial Studies in devising the time-table for the Residential Interview and making the necessary practical arrangements. The DMS will be present throughout the interviewing process ex officio, but it will be the task of the Convener to act as non-voting secretary to the interviewing panel, and to inform candidates and Clerks of Presbyteries of the outcome, and arrange for follow-up meetings with those not recommended or not immediately recommended, and representatives of nominating Presbyteries and officers of the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

36. Planning and servicing the associated Summer School for the interviewees.

Immediate Post Residential Interview

37. Presenting recommendations of the Interviewing Panel to the Board together with an outline of the proposed Learning Covenants.

38. Offering appropriate pastoral care and/or advice on the behalf of the Board of Studies and Christian Training to those not recommended or not immediately recommended.

Longer Term Involvement Post Residential Interview

39. Liaising with the Convener of the Committee of Ministerial Studies in setting up re-interviews and appeals.

40. Examining the validity of claims for exemption(s) and making proposals on such claims to the Committee on Ministerial Studies.

41. Examining the academic qualifications of recommended candidates, and making specific recommendations to the Committee on Ministerial Studies.

42. Keeping contact with, and offering advice to, all ministerial students who have not begun theological training.

43. Preparing the annual resolution to the General Assembly re names of recommended candidates.

MISCELLANEOUS

44. Researching, in liaison with the Faculty, the academic accreditation and courses offered at theological colleges not currently recognised by the General Assembly in order to make a recommendation to the Board of Studies and Christian Training re recognition.

45. Researching the content of specific courses on offer at recognised overseas colleges in order to offer guidance to ministerial students so that the General Assembly requirements are completed.

46. Liaising with faculties and staff of recognised colleges in order to keep up to date on course changes, etc.

47. Updating written materials issued by the Board of Studies and Christian Training, including information leaflets, application forms, questionnaires to ministers, sessions, Presbyteries, and referees.

48. Supplying all necessary information to Assignment Committee, Students' Bursary Fund, Committee for the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates, etc.

49. In conjunction with the Convener of the Board of Studies and Christian Training preparing the annual report to the General Assembly.

50. To instigate and administer a successor to the Pulpit Supply Association whereby accepted students for the ordained ministry and candidates undertaking the Applicants Course have opportunity, where appropriate in an assessed situation, to conduct services of worship in congregations of our Church, subject to the normal rules regarding vacancies.

51. To facilitate the Board in carrying out strategic thinking on the subject of Ministry for the 21st Century and its implications for training.

52. Undertaking such other duties as may reasonably be required.

This post will be equivalent to a Head of Department in Church House, though based at Union College.

Part-time secretarial support (at present 20 hours per week) will also be provided.

* * * * *

ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson reports:

1. Interviews for fifth year students were held on 17 December, 2001.
2. Eleven requests were received for assistants but only five students were available, all of whom were placed. Some re-assignments also proved necessary and the Committee records its gratitude to all concerned for their co-operation.
3. It is hoped that about twelve students will be available for assignment next year.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES

1. The Committee met three times during the year.
2. Through the Director of Ministerial Students it continued to give advice to prospective candidates and to set courses and administer examinations in accordance with the Regulations of the General Assembly and the direction of the Board of Studies & Christian Training.
3. Following the advice received from the Child Protection Monitoring Group, a Pre-Employment Consultancy Check was carried out on candidates for the ordained ministry who were recommended to the Board following the June 2001 Phase I Interview. It is envisaged that this will continue to be our practice.
4. In the academic year 2001/2002 there were 25 students under the care of Presbyteries (22 in 2000/2001), as listed in the appended Schedule.
5. Three students were granted permission to study at Universities/Colleges other than Union: one at Princeton and two at Westminster.
6. The Committee expresses its thanks for the work of the following external examiners:
 - OT Language and Biblical Theology - The Rev I J Patterson, BA, MTh.
 - NT Language - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.
 - NT Greek (Qual) - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD.
 - Systematic Theology - The Rev D Bradley, BA, BD.
 - Church History - The Rev T N Hamilton, BA, BD.
 - Homiletics, Public Worship and Pastoral Work - The Rev Dr D C Irwin, MA, BD.

Study in a Missionary Partnership

Rev Dr Ian Hart reports:

7. Students who are studying for the ministry of our church at Union College are encouraged to spend one of the three theological years (or, if they prefer, a "year out") studying theology in a country where we have a missionary partnership. Such a time can be a very enlightening and stimulating experience. For example, overseas churches are often struggling with very different issues from those we are preoccupied with in Northern Ireland. We sometimes need to

be freed from localistic practices, and we may realise that we have been following social conventions rather than the gospel. In recent years students have taken up this opportunity in Kenya (St Paul's United Theological College, Limuru), in Jamaica (United Theological College, Kingston), and in Singapore (Trinity Theological College).

Pre-Theological Summer School & Phase I Interview

8. The Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview was held in Union College from Monday 18 to Friday 22 June 2001. The Interviewing Panel comprised: The Revs R S Hetherington, J H McIntyre, Dr R F S Poots OBE, R Allen, J M Cathcart, Dr W D Patton, D I J McNie, R J A Bell, R Lockhart; Very Rev Dr A R Rodgers; Miss M McVeigh, Mrs M Myers, Mrs M Robinson, Dr R J Rodgers OBE and Mr S Agnew MBE, together with the Rev J H Robinson (Secretary), and Dr D E Eagleson MA, DipVocG and Mrs H Mullan BSc PGCE (Vocational Consultants acting as advisors to the Panel).

Thirteen candidates were in attendance and completed the normal aspects of the interviewing process. Nine are being recommended to this General Assembly, together with a candidate from previous years whose Applicants' Courses had been extended.

9. The 2002 Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview is planned for 18th to 21st June. The size and personnel of the Interviewing Panel have been approved by the Committee.

STEPHEN P MOORE, Convener

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| ARDS | Amanda Best | Union |
| | Paul Jamieson | Union |
| | Chris W P Kennedy | Westminster |
| | Barry J McCroskery | Union |
| | James W D Rogers | Union |
| ARMAGH | S J Mervyn Lindsay | Union |
| BALLYMENA | Jonathan E Sloan | Union |
| NORTH BELFAST | William G Hamilton | - |
| | William J Hayes | Union |
| | David J Laney | Union |
| COLERAINE | Darran B McCorrison | Union |
| | Philip B Wilson | - |
| DERRY & STRABANE | Roy A Campbell | Westminster |
| | Paul E Linkens | Union |
| | Samuel Newell | Union |
| DOWN | Niall S R Lockhart | Union |
| DROMORE | Michael McClenahan | Oxford |
| | Karen Campbell | Union |
| DUBLIN & MUNSTER | David S Henry | Union |
| NEWRY | Richard C Kerr | Union |

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| OMAGH | David J Irvine | Union |
| ROUTE | Glenn A Chestnutt | Princeton |
| TYRONE David H Brown | Union | |
| | Knox A Jones | Union |
| | Adrian T S McAlister | - |

COLLEGE AND MAGEE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Since last General Assembly the Committee has met five times.
2. Much of the year was spent taking forward our plans for the redevelopment of the College site. Revised estimates of our income from the sale of properties and realisation of other income along with rising building costs meant that we have not proceeded with the courtyard development. We have done this to keep faith with the promise given to the General Assembly that we would not be asking for a direct appeal to congregations to raise finance for the project. The existing premises are being renovated, developed and enhanced at the cost of £2.8 million.
3. Work has begun on the first phase, the residential wing. This is to be completed by September and will include refurbished residences to the highest standard along with office and study accommodation for all staff. Phase 2, which includes the Library Area along with half the classroom block will commence in the Summer. We regret the many inconveniences caused by the refurbishment. The whole project will be completed by the end of 2003 in time to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the College.
4. Details of the work of the Director of Christian Training and Director of Ministerial Students are given elsewhere in the reports. We are glad to report that they are now fully integrated into the Management Committee's programme.
5. In the Academic Year 2001-02 there are 71 full time students (19 ministerial students), and 183 part time students (1 ministerial student). 90 students are studying PTFI certificate courses, and there are 37 post-graduates on full or part time study.
The Management Committee records its appreciation of the work of the Christian Training Centre and College, and the academic and administrative staff for their interest in the students and in the delivery and promoting of courses within a warm fellowship of pastoral concern.
6. During the year an invitation was extended to the Presbyterian Historical Society to move their operation and resources to the new library and resource centre at Union College. After lengthy negotiations we understand at the time of writing that the status quo is to remain.
7. Last June we sent a submission to the War Memorial Hostel Committee for the provision of services for post-graduates and young professionals living in the refurbished Gibson Chambers. We await the opportunity to discuss this venture further, in the hope that a way may be found

for them to use their expertise in this area within the future community on our site.

8. At the request of the Committee, last year's General Assembly approved amendments to the Magee Fund Scheme. These amendments were subsequently considered and approved by the Department for Social Development, the successor to the Department of Finance cited in the Scheme.

9. A wide variety of courses and events were held under the auspices of the Christian Training Centre. A twelve-week course for elders was successfully inaugurated, as was a seven-week Level 1 course in pastoral care and Christian counselling, taken by the Rev Gary Haire from Christian Guidelines. The Rev Howard Lewis and Rev Dr Rodger Crooks, along with the Director of Christian Training, conducted several six-week courses that drew in about 200 participants. A one-day conference featuring Professor D A Carson was held in April. Mrs Arline Birney and Mr John Truscott also conducted one-day courses on 'Banner making' and 'Developing a staff team' respectively.

GRAHAM CONNOR, Convener

APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE MAGEE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDONDERRY ACT

(NORTHERN IRELAND) 1979

WHEREAS

(1) clause 10 of the Scheme made by the High Court of Justice in Northern Ireland on 14 May 1979 under the above Act provides for the provisions thereof to "be varied or altered by the General Assembly from time to time subject to the approval of the Department of Finance".

(2) On 8 June 2001 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland resolved that the Scheme be amended by renumbering clause 8(a) as 8(a)(i) and by inserting the following sub-clause after it:

"(a)(ii) Without prejudice to the preceding sub-clause, to contribute, whether by means of loan or otherwise, to the cost of adapting and maintaining Union College"

(3) The functions of the Department of Finance with regard to charities are now vested in the Department for Social Development.

THE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT hereby approves the above amendments.

Dated this 7th day of *September* 2001

Signed: JOHN O'NEILL

A Senior Officer of the Department for Social Development

STUDENTS' BURSARY FUND COMMITTEE

1. The Students' Bursary Fund Committee continues to seek to provide for our students for the ministry and their families.

2. Total income for the fund was £114,249 and total expenditure £188,019.

3. The Committee is grateful to all who contributed to our funds through offerings taken at services of installation, ordination etc.

4. This is a vital source of income for the fund and so we would request Presbytery Clerks and vacancy conveners to ensure that such an offering is taken, that use is made of the literature available, and that advantage is taken of the Gift Aid scheme at services in Northern Ireland.

5. As reported last year, work was in progress on new promotional materials. That work has now been completed, including a new Gift Aid envelope for use at services held in Northern Ireland. The introduction of similar material for use in services in the Republic of Ireland is now under consideration.

6. On making an application to the Student Bursary Fund each student signs the following declaration, '*Should I not continue until licensing or be required not to continue until licensing, or cease to serve the Church or be required to cease serving the Church within five years after licensing, I accept and hold myself under obligation to repay such Bursaries as I may have received, in whole or in part, as shall be determined by the Fund Committee.*' During the year, the Committee has continued to take steps to recover grants and fees from a number of former students who did not complete five years service within PCI after licensing.

T J CONWAY, Joint Convener
GEORGE MOORE, Joint Convener

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCING CHRISTIANS FOR MINISTRY

1. During the year, in its attempt to help Christians serve Jesus more effectively in their congregations and communities, the committee sought to set its programme of six-week learning modules.

- In January / February 2002, Rev Howard Lewis led a module on personal spiritual development called *Going for Growth*.
- In April / May 2002, Dr Rodger Crooks lead a module of Christian leadership called *Learning to Lead*. Both these courses were well attended and, from the feedback received, participants seemed to benefit from them.
- In September / October 2002, it is hoped to run a module on personal evangelism called *Making Jesus Known*.

So far, all the modules have been based in the Christian Training Centre. However, it is hoped to run them away from Belfast in the future.

2. We are in the process of putting together resources packs, consisting of printed material, a video and an audio CD, for each of the modules. This will

enable groups or individuals to use the material taught in the modules in their own locality.

3. The committee is in debt to Dr Desi Alexander, the Director of Christian Training, for all his help and practical advice. It was pleased to be associated with him in such ventures as bringing Don Carson over in April 2002 to speak about proclaiming Christ in the modern world.

RODGER M CROOKS, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the thanks of the General Assembly be extended to the Rev Professor J C McCullough for his services as Principal of Union Theological College 1998 – 2002.
3. That the General Assembly note with pleasure and gratitude the recent upturn in numbers of those making application for ordained ministry, and encourage ministers and Kirk Sessions to identify suitably-gifted members so that this welcome increase may be sustained.
4. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Board of Studies and Christian Training, be accepted as students for the Ordained Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Michael R J Anderson | Drumbo | Dromore |
| Nigel D Craig | 1 st Newtownards | Ards |
| Colin I Dickson | Shore Street | Ards |
| William J Knox | Wellington Street | Ballymena |
| J Emerson McDowell | Hazelbank | Coleraine |
| Colin McKibbin | Hillsborough | Dromore |
| Leslie A Patterson | Edengrove | Down |
| Nigel J E Reid | Sion Mills | Derry and Strabane |
| Heather M Rendell | Ballycarry | Carrickfergus |
| Mark J Welsh | Knock | East Belfast |

5. That the General Assembly approve the revised Job Description of the Director of Ministerial Students and commend the Rev Harry Robinson to the prayers of the Church as he undertakes this role.

6. That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme in 2002 be 0.75p per £ of stipend.

7. That the General Assembly accept the resignation of the Rev George Moore as Joint Convener of the Students' Bursary Fund, and that he be thanked for his services.

8. That the General Assembly encourage the use of the new literature, including the new Gift Aid envelope, drawn up by the Students' Bursary Fund Committee for use at services of installation, ordination etc within Northern Ireland.

9. That the Students' Bursary Fund Committee become, with immediate effect, a Committee of the Board of Studies and Christian Training, appointed annually by it and reporting directly to it.

10. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| June Summer School & Phase I Interview | £1,200 |
| Pre-Term College Retreat | £1,355 |
| Applicants' Study Day | £260 |
| Licentiate Courses | £650 |
| Meetings for students and spouses | £400 |
| Honoraria for External Examiners | £300 |
| Teaching Communication Skills for students outside Ireland | <u>£85</u> |
| TOTAL | £4,250 |

11. That the Board of Studies and Christian Training, together with the appropriate working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 285 of the Code as follows:-

COMMITTEE ON THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. During the year the committee received one application from a minister to be received as a minister without charge and gave advice to another minister who did not proceed to memorialise the General Assembly. In addition the convener supplied information to four other ministers and one licentiate who inquired about the procedure for making application. All of these approaches came from ministers serving in churches outside the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. A further application from a minister within the WARC is pending.

Rev Dr Stephen Paul Swinn

2. The memorial of the Rev Stephen Paul Swinn, BA, BD, PhD, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia will come before the General Assembly. The committee appointed a sub-committee which interviewed Dr Swinn while he was in Ireland.

3. At interview Dr Swinn impressed the panel by his faith, his strong sense of call and his all round ability. Academically he is well qualified; his first class honours degree and his doctorate were both awarded by the University of Sydney and he did his theological studies at the Australian College of Theology, where he again obtained first class honours. His expertise is in the field of the Biblical languages.

4. Dr Swinn hopes to serve as a chaplain in the British Army.

5. The Committee supports the application of the Rev Dr Stephen Paul Swinn to be received as a minister without charge but recommends that he be ineligible to receive a call to a congregation for a period of five years without having first served a one year assistantship.

Church of Scotland

6. The committee has continued to keep under review the deliberations within the Church of Scotland on the reception of ministers into that Church.

R BRIAN SAVAGE, Convener

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on the 10th Day of June, 2002.

The Memorial of the Reverend Dr Stephen Paul Swinn respectfully Showeth:

That he is 39 years of age; that he was born in Nottingham, England, and emigrated to Australia in 1978; that he is married with five children; that he is in good health; that he was regularly ordained to the Christian Ministry in December 1992 by the Presbytery of Ballarat within the Presbyterian Church of Australia; that he is a minister in good and regular standing with his church body; that he is full accord with the Doctrinal Standards of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

That he served his exit appointment in the parish of Carisbrook - Smeaton - Maryborough, Victoria; that he has served as minister to the congregations of Carisbrook - Smeaton - Maryborough and Auburn, Victoria.

That he was commissioned as a part-time chaplain in the Australian Army in June 1995; that he was advanced to the rank of Chaplain Division 2 (Major) in March 2001.

That he holds the following earned degrees: Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours, Doctor of Philosophy, and Bachelor of Theology with First Class Honours.

That he is desirous of being accepted as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with a view to serving as a full-time Chaplain in the British Army.

That he applied to the Committee on the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates; that, if accepted, he will undertake any additional studies required by the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

Memorialist therefore prays your Venerable Assembly to receive him as a Minister Without Charge and to place him under the care of the Presbytery of Dromore.

And Memorialist as in duty bound will ever pray.

PAUL SWINN

Dated the sixteenth day of January, 2002

Licensed by the Presbytery of Dromore at its meeting in Lisburn on 5th February, 2002, and transmitted simpliciter.

HUGH MULLAN, Moderator
J I DAVEY, Clerk

Transmitted simpliciter by the Synod of Armagh and Down at its meeting in Ballydown on 12th March, 2002.

W H SANDERSON, Moderator
E P GAMBLE, Clerk

COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

1. Attention is drawn to the Capital Account of the General Investment Fund. The Commission advised the acceptance of the Trust Funds.

A J RANKIN, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 130 of the Code as follows:-

BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Convener: Mr FRANKLIN ADAIR

1. The Board met four times during the year.
2. **Mr Tom Cochrane, JP**, the Deputy Financial Secretary, will retire as from 31 July 2002 due to ongoing medical problems. He has served the Church faithfully for 33 years. Many have appreciated the ready and friendly way that he has given them information and advice over the years. The Board prays that he, and his wife Ann, will have a long, healthy and happy retirement.
3. A separate report on the legal position of the Church, in relation to contracts in its name, is provided in an appendix to this report.
4. A Handbook for Treasurers has been produced to assist congregations. It is an important reference source to help ensure that there are consistent accounting standards in all congregations. The Board is concerned to note that there are still about 250 congregations that have not purchased a copy and recommends that those congregations, which have not yet taken a copy acquire one as soon as possible.
5. The Board decided during the year that a Standing Committee should be set up to pursue the Board's business while it was not in session, and that it be composed of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Clerk of the General Assembly, the Board Convener, the Conveners of the Board's Committees and the Financial Secretary with power to transact such business of the Board as the Standing Committee considered appropriate, bearing in mind the proximity of a Board Meeting and the possibility of calling a special meeting of the Board if the business, in the Committee's view, was of sufficient importance.
6. The Church fulfilled its legal obligation to have a Stakeholders Pension Scheme in place by the date specified under UK legislation.
7. The Board considered the merits of changing the levying of assessments on congregations from quarterly to monthly. At present it was felt that the advantages were not sufficiently great to merit going ahead. It was therefore decided to retain the quarterly system for the time being.
8. Various computer applications were changed successfully during the year to provide the necessary Euro functionality.
9. The Board has maintained contact with the Board of Communications regarding that Board's overdraft position both in relation to the repayment of it and the development of systems to prevent it occurring again.
10. The Board records its appreciation for the excellent and progressive work done by Mr Clive Knox, Financial Secretary, and the staff of the Finance Office in the areas of accounting and personnel during the past year.

APPENDIX

1. The Central Church contracts on an ongoing basis in relation to employment, property, maintenance and service agreements and various other matters. The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland are responsible for property contracts, but other contracts, such as those relating to eg employment, will be entered into by Employing Agencies, approved by the General Assembly. Board or Committee Conveners or other appropriate authorised person may also sign contracts. The Board of Finance and Administration is concerned to ensure that those having legal rights and liabilities are clearly established in contracts that are in effect entered into by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Board does not consider it to be an acceptable position that it could be left to the courts to decide who are the parties having legal rights or liabilities, should an action arise.

2. The following resolution was approved at the 2001 General Assembly “that the General Assembly request the Board of Finance and Administration to bring a report to the General Assembly in 2002 to clarify the issues regarding contracts into which the Church and, the Assembly Agencies enter, in particular to ensure that under Par 286(3)(c) of the Code all steps are taken as considered necessary by the Board for the protection of the assets of the Church against all classes of risk.”

3. The Board sought legal opinion and this concluded that liability in certain contracts was unclear, and that under the present arrangements individual members of Boards or Committees could be held liable in accordance with the case of “Affleck v Newcastle Mind & Other”. In attempting to address this situation legal opinion was that there were 3 options available:

- (i) leave matters as they are with the present uncertainty and allow the courts to decide who is liable or who has rights should an action arise;
- (ii) use the existing corporate body of Trustees for all contracts; or
- (iii) consider establishing a company limited by guarantee, which would enter into all legal agreements.

4. Following consultation with the Church of Scotland it became evident that they have also considered this matter and in an attempt to resolve the issue have

- (i) implemented detailed rules to be followed when Board or Committees enter into contracts, eg as to who can sign such contracts;
- (ii) issued guidance notes and provide training, where appropriate, to Board and Committee members outlining their responsibilities; and
- (iii) arranged suitable indemnity cover for Board and Committee members.

5. Our own legal opinion was sought on the “Church of Scotland model” and it concluded that, while many of the procedures were good practice, they did not alter the uncertainty inherent in contracts entered into by Boards and Committees. It also concluded that the creation of a company Limited by Guarantee would provide greater certainty.

ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

1. The Committee is delighted to report that we have moved from an overdraft position to that of a substantial credit balance: £196,680

2. Retail trading in central Belfast is currently depressed. This has resulted in a number of units being not let at present. The Letting Agents have been, and will continue to be, proactive in this area and we hope that our web site, recently launched under www.spiresbelfast.co.uk will increase our options. We would appeal to business members of our Church to consider the Spires as a sphere of activity.

3. Income from the letting of our Halls continues to encourage us. It contributed £54,541 to our annual income.

4. We are still pursuing a debt in the Republic of Ireland. The legal costs continue to mount and we may have to write this off eventually. However, as the debt is only in the region of £3000, we believe we can stand this loss. We would stress that we review constantly any potential problems in this area.

5. We have taken the decision to renovate the walls and repair the roofs of the Assembly Buildings complex. This has been necessitated by a couple of incidents of falling masonry. An extensive examination of the walls has been completed and it is estimated that even with the receipt of Grant Aid, the work, which will soon begin, will cost in the region of £500,000. This will be funded from future surpluses.

6. We would commend Mr Harry Orr (Buildings Manager), his assistants and the indefatigable reception staff for their loyalty and hard work throughout the year.

7. We also would record our appreciation for the support, advice and good offices of our Letting Agents, Lambert Smith Hampton, our Architects, Gordon McKnight Partnership and our Solicitors, Cleaver Fulton and Rankin.

R I A ALLELY, Convener

INCIDENTAL FUND COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on three occasions during the year.

2. The Incidental Fund Account (including General Purposes Fund) confirms a credit balance at the year end 2001 of £44,860. The Committee considered the surplus satisfactory.

3. The Ministerial Development Fund Account confirms a credit balance at the year end 2001 of £244,404. The Committee raised its concern with the Board of Studies and Christian Training concerning the accumulation of funds in this account.

4. The Committee reviewed applications for funding and recommends that the following grants be paid in 2002.

| | £ |
|---|----------|
| Arrangements | 15,000 |
| Inter-Church Relations | 47,864 |
| Social Witness | 3,000 |
| Youth Board | 6,500 |
| PCI Holiday | 10,000 |
| Church Architecture | 500 |
| Peace and Peacemaking | 2,500 |
| Historical Society | 13,700 |
| Church and Government | 4,000 |
| Board of Studies and Christian Training | 4,250 |
| Conciliation Panel | 3,000 |
| Public Worship | 800 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £111,114 |
| | <hr/> |

5. Due to ongoing expenses relating to the General Secretary's Office – in particular costs in connection with the Clerk-Designate appointment and the potential for increased legal costs the Committee recommends that the assessment be maintained at 5p/£.

6. Thanks are recorded to all who have served in the Incidental Fund Committee and also to members of staff at Church House for their help during the year.

M FITCH, Convener

FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

1. Good progress continues to be made in respect of the Personnel function within Church House. During the year policies were developed and issued on a number of key aspects. Thanks are due to the Head of Personnel, Mrs Eileen McClenaghan, for her dedicated and professional work.

2. The Committee continues to monitor the development of charities legislation within GB, recognising that subsequent NI legislation will appear which will have a particular bearing on the financial aspects of our work at Church House and at Congregational level.

3. Thanks are due to the staff in the Financial Secretary's office for the processing of the Statistical Returns within the usual short timeframe, in particular Mrs Ruth Taylor and Mr Tom Cochrane.

4. Statistical and financial data for 2001 is summarised in the appended tables, together with comparative figures for the preceding year.

5. The headline statistics since 1975 are shown by way of line graphs and indicate that the decline is continuing at the same rate as in recent years.

6. The givings to specified sources by contributing family since 1996 are shown in an additional line graph this year. This shows that our people are giving faithfully, with increases in the last five years of 36% in NI congregations and 51% in RoI congregations.

DAVID LAMB, Convener

TABLE ONE**PERSONS AND AGENCIES**

| | 2000 | 2001 | Increase | Decrease |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Retired Ministers | 203 | 209 | 6 | |
| Ministers in Active Duty | 410 | 415 | 5 | |
| Retired Missionaries | 2 | 4 | 2 | |
| Missionaries in Active Duty | 85 | 75 | | 10 |
| Total Ministers and Missionaries | 700 | 703 | 3 | |
| Licensures | 9 | 4 | | 5 |
| Congregations | 559 | 560 | 1 | |
| Total Families | 114,439 | 113,719 | | 720 |
| Persons of All Ages | 281,324 | 279,961 | | 1,363 |
| Contributors to FWO or Stipend | 94,369 | 93,299 | | 1,070 |
| Baptisms | 2,229 | 2,023 | | 206 |
| Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time | 1,849 | 1,744 | | 105 |
| Communicants | 117,719 | 117,174 | | 545 |
| Attended at Least One Communion during year | 76,319 | 75,048 | | 1,271 |
| Ruling Elders in Kirk Session | 7,251 | 7,230 | | 21 |
| Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes | 33,056 | 32,098 | | 958 |

TABLE TWO
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

| | 2000 | | 2001 | | % Difference | |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| | £ | IR£ | £ | IR£ | N.I. | R. of I. |
| Specified Sources | 22,028,828 | 1,224,980 | 23,187,810 | 1,370,519 | 5.3%+ | 11.9%+ |
| Building Fund etc. | 9,708,218 | 685,691 | 10,561,315 | 758,178 | 8.8%+ | 10.6%+ |
| “For Others” | 5,149,911 | 300,843 | 5,868,001 | 341,784 | 13.9%+ | 13.6%+ |
| Raised from other sources | 3,835,166 | 564,054 | 4,304,776 | 634,023 | 12.2%+ | 12.4%+ |
| Bequests etc. | 3,872,321 | 270,543 | 3,369,850 | 219,576 | 13.0%— | 18.8%— |
| Total Receipts | 44,594,047 | 3,046,110 | 47,291,750 | 3,324,079 | 6.0%+ | 9.1%+ |
| Total Receipts Less | | | | | | |
| Bequests etc. | 40,722,126 | 2,775,567 | 43,921,900 | 3,104,513 | 7.9%+ | 11.9%+ |
| Bequests | 1,437,436 | 62,226 | 798,229 | 41,885 | 44.5%— | 32.7%— |

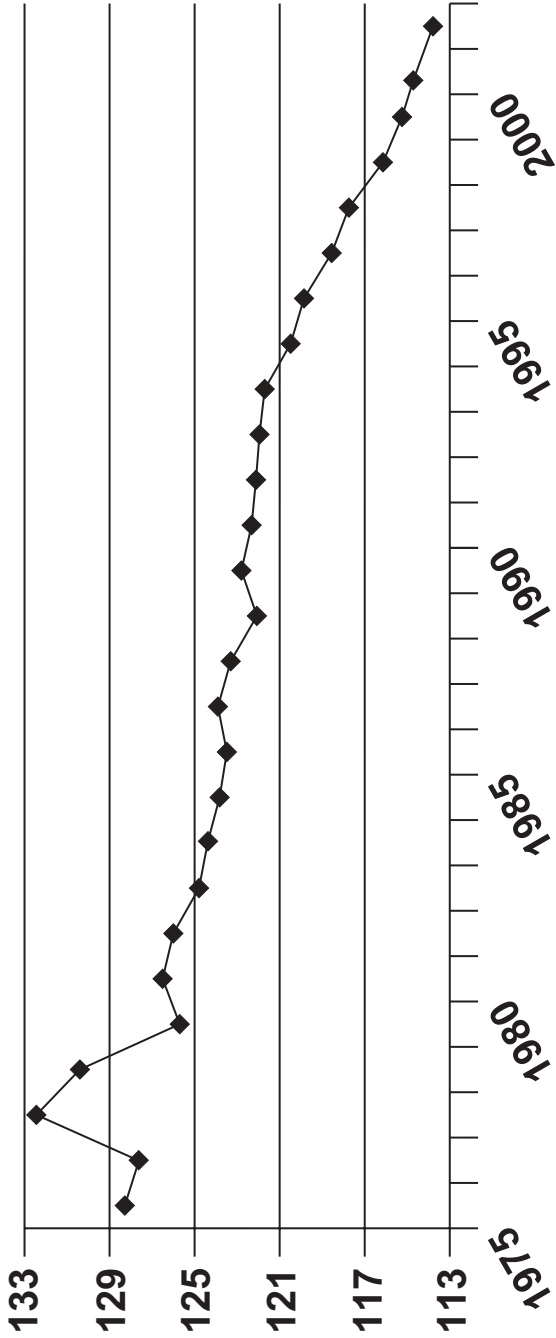
TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

| | 2000 | | 2001 | | % Difference | |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| | £ | IR£ | £ | IR£ | N.I. | R. of I. |
| Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others | 11,864,286 | 741,224 | 12,458,969 | 821,982 | 5.0%+ | 10.9%+ |
| Payments under Assembly Assessments | 4,539,840 | 281,223 | 4,704,809 | 302,929 | 3.6%+ | 7.7%+ |
| Building, Repairs, etc. | 8,380,071 | 854,049 | 11,069,309 | 768,476 | 32.1%+ | 10.0%— |
| United Appeal Schemes | 2,643,193 | 111,984 | 2,748,905 | 122,467 | 4.0%+ | 9.4%+ |
| Supplementary Schemes | | | | | | |
| Other Religious and Charitable Objects | 3,456,691 | 250,998 | 3,956,479 | 291,134 | 14.5%+ | 16.0%+ |
| General Expenses | 6,146,235 | 546,831 | 6,499,414 | 584,921 | 5.7%+ | 7.0%+ |
| Total Payments | 37,030,316 | 2,786,309 | 41,437,885 | 2,891,909 | 11.9%+ | 3.8%+ |

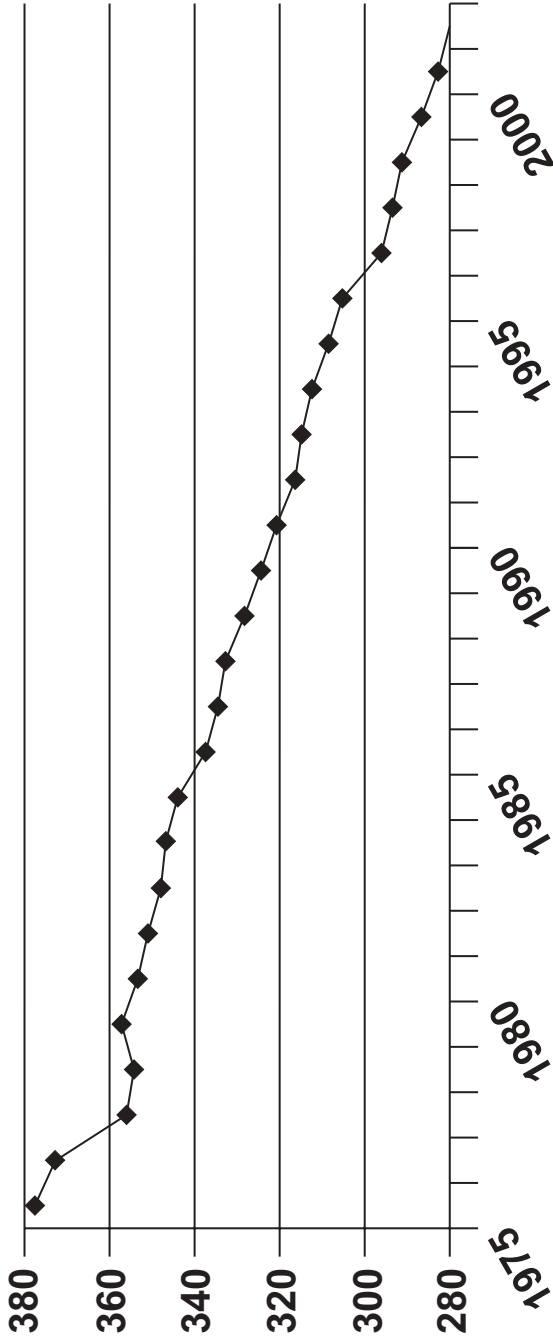
TABLE FOUR
CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES

| | Closing 2000 | | Opening 2001 | | Closing 2001 | | % Difference | |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| | £ | IR£ | £ | IR£ | £ | IR£ | N.I. | R. of I. |
| Credits | 23,025,265 | 1,591,093 | 22,921,823 | 1,713,899 | 25,139,629 | 1,978,200 | 9.7%+ | 15.4%+ |
| Debits | 2,824,411 | 59,206 | 2,824,004 | 51,359 | 2,734,819 | 46,506 | 3.2%— | 9.4%— |
| Net Credits | 20,200,854 | 1,531,887 | 20,097,819 | 1,662,540 | 22,404,810 | 1,931,694 | 11.5%+ | 16.2%+ |

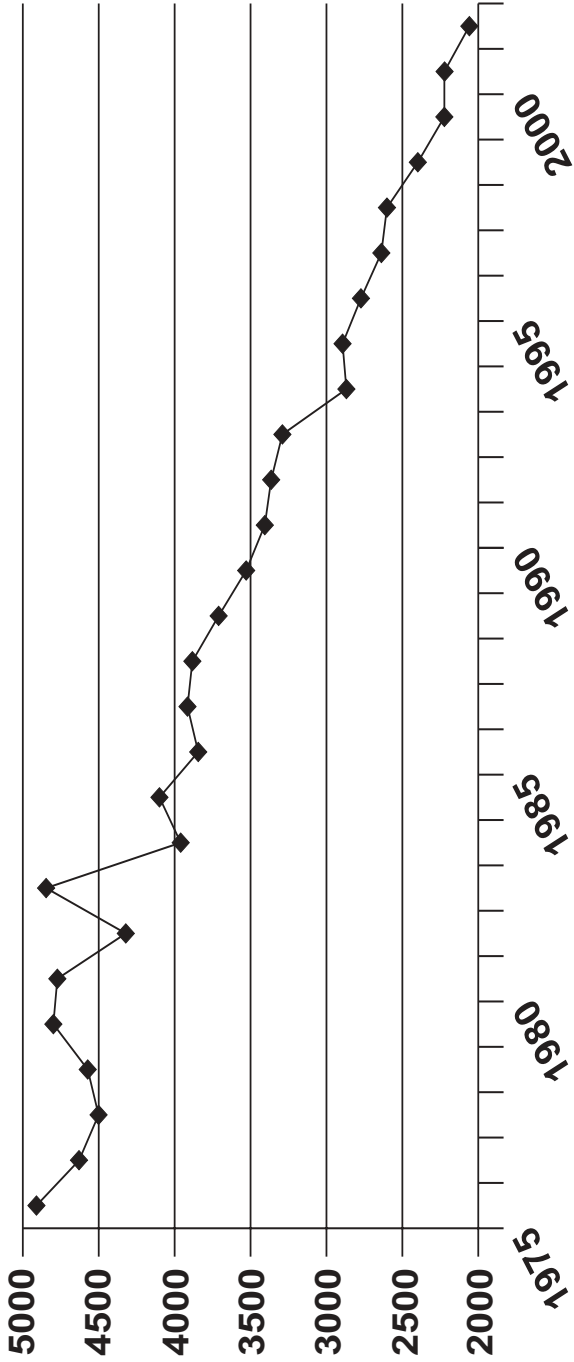
FAMILIES ('000)



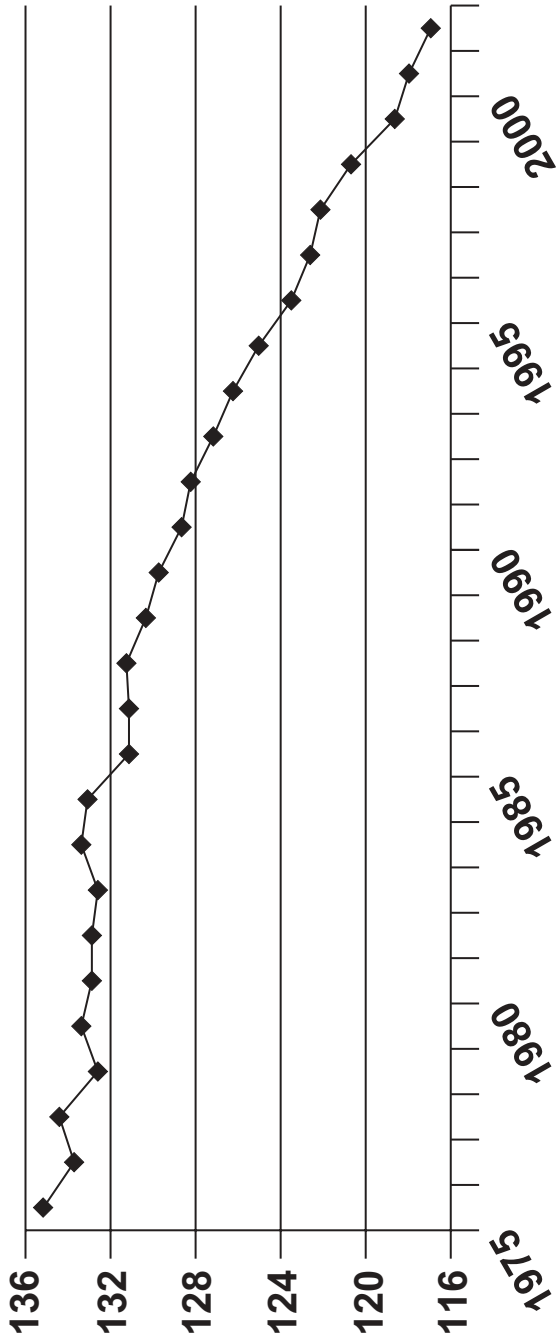
PERSONS ('000)



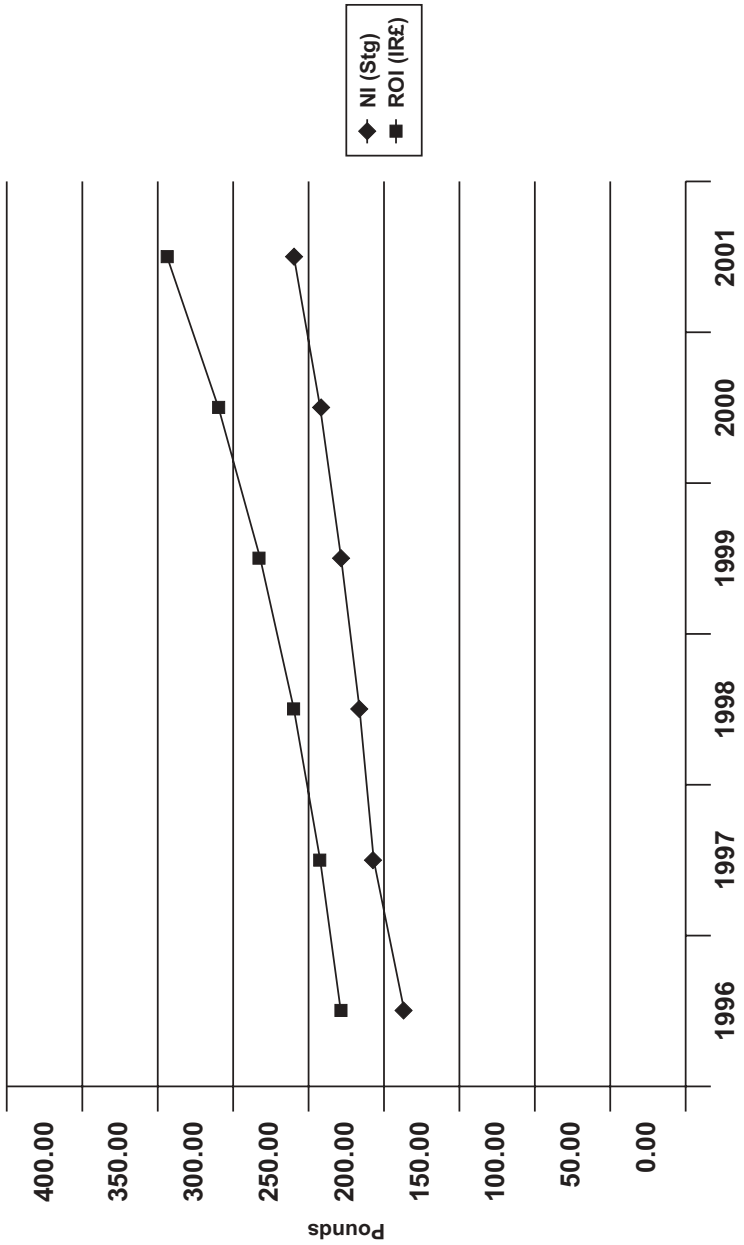
BAPTISMS



COMMUNICANTS ('000)



SPECIFIED SOURCES x CONTRIBUTING FAMILY



APPENDIX

Salary Scales of Executive and Administrative Posts. (The undernoted figures are inclusive of a 2.5% increase applied as from 1 January, 2002 following the annual review).

EXECUTIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£17,874 - £21,390)**

Building Manager
Youth Development Officer
Programme Officer

Scale 2 (£20,292 - £24,573)

Director of Nightlight
Financial Manager
Assistant Residential Services Manager
Superintendent Designate, Kinghan Mission
Finance & Office Manager
Project Manager

Scale 3 (£22,800 - £27,963)

Executive Secretary, PWA
Secretary for Education in Mission
Director of Evangelism
Sunday School Organiser/Christian Education Secretary
Financial Accountant
University Chaplain
Superintendent, Kinghan Mission

Scale 4 (£25,212 - £31,698)

Youth Officer
Superintendent of Irish Mission
Residential Services Manager
Head of Personnel
University Chaplain

Scale 5 (£27,963 - £34,251)

Deputy Financial Secretary
Director of Ministerial Students
Information Officer
Director of Christian Training

Scale 6 (£30,093 - £36,840)

Deputy General Secretary
Convener of Overseas Mission

Director Social Service
Clerk-Designate
Secretary Designate, Overseas Board

Scale 7 (£34,251 - £44,289)

General Secretary
Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS

Scale 1 (£9,060- £10,635)

Junior Secretary
Telephonist
Clerical Officer/Receptionist

Scale 2 (£10,635 - £12,426)

Secretary
Telephonist/Receptionist
Information & Technology Assistant
Information Assistant
Clerical Officer

Scale 3 (£12,033 - £14,040)

Senior Secretary
Deputy Building Manager
Clerical Officer
Wages Clerk

Scale 4 (£13,743 - £15,948)

Personal Secretary
Administrative Assistant
Personnel Assistant
Financial Assistant
Production Assistant
Departmental Secretary

Scale 5 (£15,111 - £17,568)

Personal Secretary
Computer Controller
Production Manager
Financial Assistant/Payroll Administrator
Senior Secretarial Assistant
Youth Board Development Officer
Year Team and Volunteers Co-ordinator
Regional Youth Support Worker

Scale 5 (enhanced) (£16,770 - £19,287)

Senior Administrative Officer

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Board of Finance and Administration continue to consult with the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and that the Board be hereby requested and authorised to
 - (i) introduce guidance notes and provide training, where appropriate, to Board and Committee members to make them aware of their responsibilities in entering into contracts;
 - (ii) obtain suitable indemnity cover for Board and Committee members;
 - (iii) investigate, and if thought appropriate after consultation with the Trustees, create a company Limited by Guarantee under the name "Presbyterian Church in Ireland" to execute particular contracts on behalf of the church; and
3. That the retirement of Mr T H Cochrane, JP, as Deputy Financial Secretary, be noted and that he be thanked for his services.
4. That Ernst and Young LLP be appointed as auditors for all the Committees, Boards, Trusts, Commissions and Agencies of the General Assembly for the year 2002.
5. That the assessment for the Incidental Fund for 2001 be 5.00p in the £ of stipend.
6. That the Board of Finance and Administration, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Mr HAL STEWART

Secretary: Very Rev Dr SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

1. The Board wishes to express its thanks to all congregations who supported the United Appeal in the year 2001. We are especially pleased to note that 169 congregations were able to exceed their target, in some cases by considerable amounts. The Board regrets to report that the appeal for 2001 was £1,131 short of target. This shortfall was caused by the fact that 37 congregations failed to make a return on time to be included in the accounts for 2001. This was, however, an improvement over the year 2000, when some 50 congregations failed to meet the deadline. The accounts for 2001 include contributions totalling £187,837 in respect of the year 2000.

2. The Board was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants for the year 2001.

3. Having met with representatives from various Boards and Agencies the Board examined the Financial Statements and Budgets of each agency requesting grants and consulted with the Panel on the Overview of Funding on a number of matters. After consideration the Board has proposed a Target for the Year 2003 as set out in Schedules III and IV. The target represents an increase of just under 2.8%.

4. The Board proposes that, from the year 2003, the target of each Presbytery should be set by taking into account not only the number of contributing families, but also their Specified Sources of Income. In 2003 therefore 10% of the target will be apportioned in this way and this percentage will be increased each year until it reaches 50%, leaving 50% still apportioned on contributing families.

5. In the year 2000 the Board paid 10% of each agency's grant for that year quarterly in arrears, and this was increased in 2001 to 15%. For 2002 we have further increased the payment on account to 6% of grants payable each month in arrears. We hope in the future, if finances permit, to pay 90% of all grants monthly leaving only 10% to be paid when the final accounts of the Board are complete. This continuing improvement in the cash flow of agencies will further reduce their need to hold large sums of cash or to borrow from central funds. This will reduce their interest costs.

6. The payment of grants to agencies on a timely basis has only been possible as a result of the build up of the capital of the Board. Ideally we would wish to be able to release part of this fund over a period of years to reduce the target set each year. This however is not possible at present as last year almost 75% of target monies were paid over after the end of November and some 3% too late to be included in the accounts of that year. We would again appeal to congregations to honour the spirit of the Code of our Church by endeavouring to pay over one quarter of their allocation in quarterly instalments. We would also again recommend consideration of giving by monthly envelopes, which has been proved in many cases to result in increased giving.

7. Mr. Stephen Lynas continues to serve us well in the production of the Spring and autumn editions of the "United Appeal Briefing". Accepting that there are many demands on his time every effort is made to have these available at the end of January and August each year. The "Briefings" are undated and can therefore be distributed by congregations at times most suitable to them. The Board will continue to consider how best it can improve its literature and educate and encourage members to improve their contributions to the United Appeal. Comments and suggestions, preferably in writing, would be welcomed by the Convener.

SCHEDULE I

| Presbytery | Contributing Families 2000 | United Appeal 2002 £ |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ards..... | 10,163 | 295,029 |
| Armagh | 4,058 | 117,802 |
| Ballymena | 7,948 | 230,728 |
| Belfast North..... | 7,128 | 206,923 |
| Belfast South..... | 3,992 | 115,886 |
| Belfast East | 9,033 | 262,225 |
| Carrickfergus..... | 6,019 | 174,730 |
| Coleraine | 4,549 | 132,056 |
| Derry & Strabane..... | 3,593 | 104,304 |
| Donegal..... | 1,309 | 38,000 |
| Down..... | 4,819 | 139,894 |
| Dromore | 5,374 | 156,005 |
| Dublin & Munster..... | 1,226 | 35,590 |
| Foyle | 3,015 | 87,524 |
| Iveagh..... | 3,609 | 104,768 |
| Monaghan | 1,008 | 29,262 |
| Newry..... | 2,680 | 77,799 |
| Omagh..... | 2,549 | 73,997 |
| Route..... | 3,676 | 106,713 |
| Templepatrick | 4,646 | 134,872 |
| Tyrone..... | 3,975 | 115,393 |
| | 94,369 | 2,739,500 |

SCHEDULE II

| | Requested 2002 £ | Proposed Grant 2002 £ |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Home Mission..... | 750,000 | 270,000 |
| Church Extension..... | - | - |
| Christian Training & Evangelism..... | - | - |
| Irish Mission | 345,000 | 320,000 |
| Education Board | 255,000 | 230,000 |
| Students Bursary Fund..... | - | - |
| Youth Board..... | 191,436 | 190,000 |
| Rostrevor Centre | 4,000 | 3,500 |
| Guysmere Centre | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Lucan Centre..... | 10,400 | 10,000 |
| Social Witness Board..... | 110,000 | 70,000 |
| Social Issues & Resources Committee | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| ADE Committee | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Thompson House | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| PCI Enterprises | 15,000 | 14,000 |
| Carlisle House..... | 10,000 | 5,000 |
| Residential Trust..... | 145,000 | 5,000 |
| Kinghan Mission..... | 15,000 | 5,000 |
| Shankill Road Mission..... | 20,000 | 5,000 |
| Overseas Board | 930,000 | 930,000 |
| Department of Communications..... | 140,000 | 140,000 |
| TV/Broadcasting Committee | 35,000 | 30,000 |
| Union Theological College..... | 200,000 | 200,000 |
| Board of Studies | 65,000 | 65,000 |
| Chaplains Committee..... | 15,000 | 5,000 |
| | 3,302,836 | 2,544,500 |
| Currency losses | | 20,000 |
| Contingencies | | 175,000 |
| | 3,302,836 | 2,739,500 |

* Miss Salter's Bequest ceased in 2001

SCHEDULE III

| Presbytery | Contributing Families 2001 | Specified Sources 2001 £ | United Appeal 2003 £ |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ards | 9,992 | 2,435,778 | 299,691 |
| Armagh..... | 4,035 | 1,179,262 | 123,293 |
| Ballymena..... | 7,846 | 2,219,993 | 238,892 |
| Belfast North | 6,871 | 1,514,148 | 204,216 |
| Belfast South | 3,845 | 1,212,851 | 118,521 |
| Belfast East..... | 8,914 | 2,300,885 | 268,842 |
| Carrickfergus | 5,978 | 1,352,759 | 178,086 |
| Coleraine | 4,598 | 1,347,456 | 140,537 |
| Derry & Strabane | 3,584 | 890,274 | 107,688 |
| Donegal | 1,291 | 284,663 | 38,373 |
| Down | 4,723 | 1,044,456 | 140,417 |
| Dromore | 5,331 | 1,416,899 | 161,255 |
| Dublin & Munster | 1,211 | 452,048 | 38,142 |
| Foyle..... | 2,987 | 648,311 | 88,663 |
| Iveagh | 3,667 | 1,041,621 | 111,698 |
| Monaghan..... | 1,001 | 238,539 | 29,960 |
| Newry | 2,708 | 838,570 | 83,292 |
| Omagh | 2,540 | 662,680 | 76,688 |
| Route | 3,632 | 892,381 | 109,016 |
| Templepatrick..... | 4,580 | 1,142,065 | 137,665 |
| Tyrone | 3,965 | 1,151,320 | 121,065 |
| | 93,299 | 24,266,959 | 2,816,000 |

90% of the allocation for 2003 has been based on contributing families and 10% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to sterling on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2001 of 1.27.

SCHEDULE IV

| | Requested 2003 £ | Proposed Grant 2003 £ |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Home Mission..... | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Irish Mission | 330,000 | 330,000 |
| Education Board | 195,000 | 195,000 |
| Students Bursary Fund..... | 190,000 | 190,000 |
| Youth Board..... | 175,000 | 170,000 |
| Rostrevor Centre | 9,000 | 9,000 |
| Guysmere Centre | 9,000 | 9,000 |
| Lucan Centre..... | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| Social Witness Board..... | 120,000 | 115,000 |
| Social Issues & Resources Committee .. | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| ADE Committee | 15,000 | 9,000 |
| Thompson House | 15,000 | 11,000 |
| PCI Enterprises | 10,000 | 5,000 |
| Carlisle House | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| Residential Trust | 30,000 | 15,000 |
| Kinghan Mission..... | 47,500 | 45,000 |
| Shankill Road Mission..... | 15,000 | 5,000 |
| Overseas Board | 960,000 | 930,000 |
| Department of Communications..... | 240,000 | 225,000 |
| Union Theological College..... | 308,000 | 298,000 |
| Chaplains Committee..... | 9,000 | 9,000 |
| | 2,763,500 | 2,656,000 |
| Contingencies | 160,000 | |
| | 2,763,500 | 2,816,000 |

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal Board be given permission to include an amount for contingencies of £160,000 for the year 2003.
3. That the United Appeal for 2003 be as set out in Schedules III and IV.
4. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 287 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS

Convener: Rev D S GRAHAM

1. The Board expresses its thanks to Rev John McVeigh who retires this year as Co-Convener of Central Ministry Fund Committee and welcomes Rev Robert J A Bell as his successor.

2. The Board has had responsibility for implementing the decision of the General Assembly (2001) to introduce the 'Tyrone Memorial' method of paying ministers rather than the 'fraction system'. Views will be welcomed by the Board for sound guidance in future years.

CENTRAL MINISTRY FUND COMMITTEE

1. At the end of the year the CMF had a retained balance of £2,584,009, an increase on 2000 even though there has again been a reduction in the assessment.

2. The Basic Ministerial Minimum for 2002 has been increased to £17,040, with comparable increases in the scale of increments.

3. The CMF is again proposing a reduction in the scale of assessment, from 23.5p in £ of stipend to 21p in £ of stipend. This will enable one of the other Funds to raise its assessment to meet an anticipated increase without placing any further burden on Congregations.

4. The change approved at last year's Assembly, enabling Ministers in the Republic to be paid their stipend at the level of sterling payments converted to IR£, and subsequently Euros, has been accomplished as outlined in last year's Reports p 271, par 4 (d). Further concerns have been expressed that this does not take into consideration the different rates of inflation between N Ireland and the Republic, and this will be monitored and taken into consideration in setting future payments. The CMF Committee did review one situation where the new arrangements resulted in a Minister receiving less than in the previous year.

5. The payment of Family Grants on the basis of total family income was implemented satisfactorily in 2001.

- (a) Grants in 2002 will be payable in full if the total family income for 2001 (as defined in the 2000 Reports, p 25, par 5 (b)) is less than £19,965 (IR£25,555).
- (b) If the total family income is less than £26,855 (IRE34,375), the grant will be reduced by £1 for every £5 by which the total family income exceeds the permitted income.
- (c) If the total family income exceeds £26,855 (IR£34,375), the grant will be reduced by £1 for every £2 by which the total family income exceeds the permitted income.

- (d) Grants payable will be reduced by £1 for every £1 over £1,000 received per child over 16 years of age by way of scholarship or other monetary grant.
- (e) The amount of Grants payable shall be determined by the age of the child on 1 January of the year of the claim.
6. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for

2002:

| | 2002 | 2001 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| (a) Ministerial Minimum | £17,040 | (£16,620) |
| After 5 years service | £17,472 | (£17,037) |
| After 10 years service | £17,892 | (£17,451) |
| After 15 years service | £18,324 | (£17,868) |
| After 20 years service | £18,744 | (£18,282) |
| After 25 years service | £19,176 | (£18,696) |
| After 30 years service | £19,596 | (£19,113) |

| (b) Family Grants | Northern Ireland | Republic of Ireland |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Birth to 10 years | £240 | IR£550 |
| 11-15 years | £360 | IR£860 |
| 16 and over | | |
| at school | £550 | IR£1,600 |
| at university | £1,850 | IR£2,750 |

Bands (joint incomes)

| | Less than £19,965 | IR£25,555 |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|
|--|--------------------------|------------------|

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Reduction | £1 for every £5 | IR£1 for every IR£5 |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| From | 19,965 to £26,855 | IR£25,555 to IR£34,375 |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Reduction | £1 for every £2 | IR£1 for every IR£2 |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|

- (c) The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years of age or over falling into category (b) and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 for every £1 by which such maintenance or training grant or other sponsorship or scholarship exceeds £1,000.
- (d) The amount a Minister may earn, apart from Congregational work, without the Augmented Grant being affected shall be £3,000 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code, or £1,800 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under Par 316(2)(d)(i) & (ii) shall be £3,000.
- (e) BEQUESTS: a Minister may receive up to £1,000 per annum from Bequests received during his/her ministry without Grants being affected.
- (f) That in reckoning Augmentation for 2002, the Central Ministry Fund shall not take account of a sum not exceeding the annual Bonus, being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. Code Par 316(2)(e).

7. The CMF received a total of £120,000 in bequests from the late Dr W R M Strain; this has been invested in the General Investment Fund, and the income will be applied to the Augmentation Fund.

Mr Jack Hutcheson writes:

8. I have greatly appreciated the guidance and help of the Rev John McVeigh during this last year, as I grow into the duties of the CMF Committee. I have also seen his quiet efficiency during the past number of years, reporting to the Union Commission on the work of the CMF. When one realizes the additional work he undertakes as Clerk of East Belfast Presbytery, the Committee, the Board, and the Church at large are indebted to him for his diligence. We heartily thank him.

JOHN McVEIGH, J. HUTCHESON, Co-Conveners

COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENTS AND PENSIONS

1. The Assessment for 2001 was 6.75p in the £ of Stipend and the Fund showed a surplus for the year of £40,817 and a retained balance of £210,093.

2. The Board approved the following recommendations for 2002.

(a) Widows' Pension - £4,260

(b) Widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension - £4,260 plus £475

(c) Widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWFA - £4,260 plus £500

(d) Widows whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension - £4,260 plus £3,926.

3. The Board agreed with the recommendation of the Committee that approval be sought to increase benefits from the Fund. Proposed amendments to Par 326 of the Code are submitted with this report which, if approved, will, from 1 July, 2003, enable benefits to be calculated on 27.5% of the Basic Ministerial Income compared with 25% as at present (an increase of 10%).

Presbyterian Widows' Fund Association

All ministers join this Association at Ordination.

The annual membership subscription remains at 1.0% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum for active ministers and 0.2% for retired ministers. An additional 0.1% is charged to ministers not under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Membership provides an annuity to widows, which is presently £1,164. The annuity and other payments to widows, from the Widows of Ministers Fund, the Ministers Pension Scheme and the Southern Association Widows' Fund, were distributed through the Association. The Committee is grateful to the Directors and Officers of the Association for their services.

RETIRED MINISTERS' FUND

1. The Assessment for 2001 was 12p in the £ of Stipend and the Fund showed a surplus of £111,546 for the year and a retained balance of £548,287.

2. The Board approved the following recommendations for 2002.

(a) Basic Retirement Allowance - £8,520

- (b) Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension - £6,276 (married), £3,926 (single)

3. The Committee reported last year that its refusal to grant a pension under Code Par 321 (5) was the subject of a complaint to the Pensions' Ombudsman.

This was a protracted legal process at the end of which the Ombudsman did not uphold the applicant's complaint. The complaint had, potentially, very serious financial implications for the Fund and, in responding to it, substantial legal and professional fees were incurred. These are provided for in the Fund Accounts.

MINISTERS' PENSION SCHEME (1978)

1. The Trustees Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2001, are included in the published accounts.

2. As authorised by the General Assembly in 2001, the General Board, at its meeting on 11 October, 2001, approved the following proposed increases in assessments and contributions to the Scheme from 1 January, 2002:

Congregational Assessment – from 16.25p in £ of stipend to 18.75p
Minister's Contribution – from 4.4% of Scheme Salary to 5.0%

3. The Trustees have awarded a discretionary increase of 1% on pensions in payment (pre 1997, in excess of the guaranteed minimum pension) for the year commencing 1 April, 2002.

4. The Committee reports that the recently introduced procedures whereby Presbyteries give Leave to Retire are working well and appreciates the co-operation of Ministers and Presbytery Clerks.

Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire by Presbyteries: Very Rev Dr A W G Brown (Ballycastle), Revs G Cunningham (Arroy and Ramoan), D S Graham (First Magherafelt), R Hornby (Mersey Street), T Luke (Drumreagh and Dromore), G L McAdoo (First Larne), W D McBride (Second Saintfield), D McConaghy (Cargycreevy and Loughaghery), C McCurdy (Drogheda and Ervey), K Simpson (Chaplain, Crumlin Road Prison), F Taylor (First Bailieborough, Corranery, and Trinity, Bailieborough) and J Tolland (First Donegore).

Unanimous approval was given to Rev T V Mawhinney (Second Limavady and Myroe) and Rev A McM Kerr (Aghadowey and Crossgar) to seek the permission of the 2002 General Assembly to retire on or after their 64th birthdays. (Code Par 223 (3))

5. A working party continued investigating the possibility of a Scheme or Fund to assist in cases of early retirement due to illness or infirmity and of long-term illness.

A considerable amount of work has been done but the working party is not yet in a position to make proposals although there may be a supplementary report in the Daily Minutes. Various options are being examined eg an Insured Scheme or an in-house Fund but, clearly, regard has to be paid to short and potential long-term costs. Particular caution is being exercised in light of the highly publicised problems of increasing costs of defined benefit Pension Schemes such as the 1978 Scheme.

D BODEN, J MILLAR, Co-Conveners

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND

1. The past year saw a reduction in the number of applications for loans from the Fund. Only four loans were made during 2001 and two of them were repaid before the end of the year. This may be partly due to the fact that the housing market is so volatile at present. It should be pointed out that a further twelve tentative approaches have been made to us and a number of ministers are in the process of purchasing homes for retirement, but had not completed the transaction by 31 December.

2. During the year we sold three properties in which we had an interest and purchased two properties which are now being rented to retired ministers.

3. Aware of the increasing cost of houses the Committee has agreed to increase the amount of money offered to £30,000 provided the loan is for a period of less than five years.

4. The scheme is not restricted to ministers. Deaconesses, widows, and missionaries approaching retirement may also make application and we are happy to assist anyone in these categories. The Fund offers three types of assistance – loans, equity sharing and rented accommodation.

5. We express our thanks to Mr Ted Jackson and the staff in the Financial Secretary's Office for all their help in the day to day running of the Fund, and would encourage anyone who requires assistance to speak to them or either of the Conveners.

N McLAUGHLIN, L CASEMENT, Co-Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Central Ministry Fund

2. That Retired Ministers with pre-1978 service be paid in the current year a special grant, Code Par 315 (5), of £15 per month from Central Ministry Fund.

3. That the rate of assessment for CMF in 2002 be 21p in the £ of Stipend.

Retired Ministers' Fund

4. That the rate of Assessment for 2002 be 11p in the £ of Stipend.

Widows of Ministers' Fund

5. That the rate of Assessment for 2002 be 7.75p in the £ of Stipend.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

6. That, under the provisions of Code Par 223 (3), Rev T V Mawhinney (Second Limavady and Myroe) and Rev A McM Kerr (Aghadowey and Crossgar) be given permission to retire on or after their 64th birthdays and their pensions to be in accordance with the Code and the Rules of the Scheme.

7. That the rate of Assessment for the Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) for 2002 remain at 18.75p in the £ of Stipend as shown in the column 'Stipend paid to the Minister' or as fixed by the Union Commission in the case of a vacancy.

General

8. That the retirement of Rev John McVeigh as Co-Convener of Central Ministry Fund Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Rev Robert J A Bell be appointed in his place.

9. That the Board of Ministry and Pensions, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 288 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 326 (1) (b) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 326 (1) (b) of the Code the words 'one quarter' be deleted and that the words '27.5%' be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 326 (1) (c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 326 (1) (c) of the Code the words '25%' be deleted and that the words '27.5%' be substituted in their place.

D S GRAHAM

TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Hon Secretary: Very Rev Dr SAMUEL HUTCHINSON
Financial Secretary: Mr CLIVE KNOX

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting held in Church House, Belfast, on 11 April, 2002.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2001 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

The General Investment Fund
The Commutation Fund
The Non-Participating Trust Funds
The Magee Fund
The Tops Wilson Trust Fund
The Fire Insurance Trust Fund
The Fortune Mission Bequest

3. Moved by Mr W Cosgrove, seconded by Mr W C Henderson and unanimously agreed, that the Report and the Statements of Accounts be adopted, signed by three Trustees, inserted in the Appendix to the Minute Book and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were, therefore, signed by Mr N H McLean, Mr L McKeague and Mr A Speer and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee had also received and examined the audited Accounts for 2001 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College, The War Memorial Hostel and The Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) and had accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Mr A L Jamieson, seconded by Mr N H McLean, this report was received.

5. Two retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE and Mr David Bell, CB. Rev W J Orr was appointed in place of Rev R J A Bell, resigned.

6. Mr J I Bill, OBE, and Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, were nominated members of the General Assembly, according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

Trust Funds

7. **Mrs A M Davidson Trust:** The total income for 2001 available for distribution is £7,137.20. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Union Theological College | £3,100.00 |
| Church House Repairs | £3,037.20 |
| Youth/Sunday School | £1,000.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £7,137.20 |
| | <hr/> |

8. **Sir Wm V McCleery Estate:** The total income for 2001 available for distribution is £37,263.52. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Central Ministry Fund | 80% |
| Retired Ministers' Fund | 10% |
| Widows of Ministers' Fund | 10% |

9. **Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 2001 available for distribution is £7,720.72. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| PCI Enterprises | £3,720.72 |
| Church House Repairs | £4,000.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £7,720.72 |
| | <hr/> |

10. **Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown:** The total income for 2001 available for distribution is £4,954.88. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Church House Fabric Repairs | 2,954.88 |
| Learning Disabled Project | |
| Willowbrook, Coleraine | £2,000.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £4,954.88 |
| | <hr/> |

GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| 11. Declaration of Dividend | 15.4.01 | 15.10.01 |
| Number of shares qualifying | 4,873,718 | 4,884,169 |
| | £ | £ |
| Income from investment for distribution and income tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees | 615,894 | 821,405 |
| Dividend per share | 11.50p | 16.50p |

In the year 2001 £15,500 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve and the balance on the Dividend Equalisation Reserve at 31 December, 2001 is £637,000.

12. The combined annual Dividend of 28.00p per share is to be compared with 28.00 per share for 2000; 27.00 for 1999; 25.00 for 1998; 23.50 for 1997; 22.00 for 1996; 21.50 for 1995; 21.00 for 1994; 22.00 for 1993; 25.50 for 1992.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 13. Valuation | 15.4.01 | 15.10.01 |
| | £ | £ |
| Valuation of Investments | 31,738,298 | 29,471,681 |
| Cash on Deposit | 832,572 | 961,061 |
| Dividend Equalisation Reserve | 621,500 | 637,000 |
| Property and Ground Rents | 2,215,000 | 2,215,000 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | £35,407,370 | £33,284,742 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| No of Shares Issued | 4,862,331 | 4,910,215 |
| Share Value | £7.2820 | £6.7787 |

Crescent Church Loan Fund

14. The Committee considered applications from congregations seeking loans from the Crescent Church Loan Fund. Loans totalling £25,000 were made.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

15. The joint sub-Committee, representative of the Trustees and the Board of Ministry and Pensions, continues to monitor the investments, meeting regularly with the Fund Managers. In accordance with statutory requirements the Report of the Trustees and the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) together with the Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2001 are included in the Volume of Accounts.

16. In addition to the Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) the Trustees have responsibility for the PWA/Overseas/Irish Mission and the Staff Pension Schemes. The Trustees asked their Pension Scheme Advisers, Kerr Henderson Bacon and Woodrow to undertake a review of all these Pension Schemes to establish aspects which are common to each scheme and areas where administration could be made more efficient. Their report has been received and is under consideration. Proposals for changes to the Trustees of the Schemes are included in an Appendix

Getty Bequest

17. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2001 was as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Overseas – Foreign | £1,275 |
| Overseas – Jewish | 635 |
| Home Mission | 1,780 |
| Belfast City Mission | 5,210 |
| TOTAL | £8,900 |

New Bequests

18. The Very Rev Dr A J Weir left part of the residue of his estate to the Executive Committee of the Trustees. The terms of his Will provide that the bequest should be applied "with preference being given to any new forms of Church work and witness". The Trustees have invested the amount received to

date of £29,722.53, pending a decision on how this might be applied. They welcome any suitable proposals. The Trustees acknowledge with gratitude this very generous bequest.

19. Mr Victor Morrow, late of Tandragee Road, Portadown, left £40,000 to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in his Will. The Trustees invested the bequest in the General Investment Fund and intend to bring proposals on an annual basis as to how income or capital might be applied. They would welcome any suggestions from Assembly members. The Trustees acknowledge with gratitude this very generous bequest.

APPENDIX

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO PENSION SCHEME TRUSTEES

The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pensions and Life Assurance Plan The Overseas/Irish Mission/PWA Pension Scheme

1. The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland are the Trustees of the above three Schemes.

2. In light of the increasing debate and discussion concerning Pension Schemes, the Myners Report on Scheme governance, and Government proposals for Member Nominated Trustees (MNT's) the Trustees have reviewed the position of Trusteeship of the three Schemes.

3. The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, (a body corporate with 34 members) are responsible in law as Trustees of the Pension Schemes. It is clearly impossible for all of those who are not on the Executive Committee of the Trustees to fully appreciate the complex issues relating to Pension Schemes. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland cease to act as Trustees of the three Pension Schemes and that new Trustees are appointed to each Scheme.

4. The Trustees of each Scheme should consist of:

- 5 'Employer' Nominated Trustees (it is proposed that these be the same people for each of the Schemes to enable a similar level of review and control)
- the Convener or other nominee of the relevant Board (ie the Board of Ministry and Pensions, the Board of Finance and Administration and the Overseas Board/Board of Mission in Ireland/PWA)
- 3 Member Nominated Trustees (see below)

5. Under the Scheme Rules the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as 'the Principal Employer', appoints the Trustees. While the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland acted as Trustees there was no need for changes in that body to affect the Pension Schemes. However, since the Trustees will be subject to appointment, removal and retirement as individuals, it will be necessary to have procedures whereby changes can be implemented promptly on behalf of the Assembly. The proposal is that the Executive Committee of the Trustees be authorised to act for the Assembly in the appointment and removal of Pension Scheme Trustees.

6. The appointees of the Executive Committee would not necessarily be members of that Committee or Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and its Executive Committee would not retain any responsibility as Pension Scheme Trustees.

7. Another issue that encouraged the proposal to reduce the number of Trustees for each Scheme is that of Member Nominated Trustees. The Government has proposed that one third of Pension Scheme Trustees must be MNT's. The final details and the implementation date are not yet available and the proposal is that the new Pension Scheme Trustees will liaise with the relevant Boards with a view to meeting the new requirements at the appropriate time.

The proposals have been discussed with, and are supported by, the Conveners of the relevant Boards.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.

6. That in accordance with the Will of the late John Getty the following be constituted as the Committee for the "direction and management of the application" of the income from the Getty Bequest:

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Very Rev Dr T J Simpson, Revs J McAllister, OBE, W D F Marshall, R J A Bell, W J Orr; Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, CB, Mr A T Ross, Mr John Millar, OBE, Mr J I Bill, OBE.

7. That, as soon as practicable, the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland cease to be Trustees of The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978), The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pensions and Life Assurance Plan and The Overseas/Irish Mission/PWA Pension Scheme.

8. That the Executive Committee of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland be authorised to act for the General Assembly in the appointment and removal of 'Employer' Nominated Trustees of The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978), The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pensions and Life Assurance Plan and The Overseas/Irish Mission/PWA Pension Scheme.

9. That the Trustees of each of The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978), The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pensions and Life Assurance Plan and The Overseas/Irish Mission/PWA Pension Scheme consist of 5 'Employer' Nominated Trustees, the Convener or other nominee of the appropriate Board and, when appropriate, 3 Member Nominated Trustees.

10. That the Trustees of each of The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978), The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pensions and Life Assurance Plan and The

Overseas/Irish Mission/PWA Pension Scheme liaise with the appropriate Boards to introduce Member Nominated Trustees when the Regulations require.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEE

Nomination of the Trustees Executive Committee – Rev Dr Donald Watts

RESOLUTION

That Rev Dr Donald Watts be, and is hereby nominated and appointed by the General Assembly as a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in room of Very Rev Dr A J Weir, deceased, and of the due appointment of Rev Dr Donald Watts as a said Trustee attestation is made by the signature of the Moderator of the General Assembly and of the Clerk of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Irish Presbyterian Church Act, 1871.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE TYRONE MEMORIAL

Convener: Rev R KELLY

1. Having received approval at the 2001 General Assembly, the agreed scheme for payment of Ministerial Stipends came into operation on 1 January, 2002.
2. The Committee met on one occasion following the implementation of the scheme. Reports received from Presbytery representatives indicated that the introduction of the scheme had proceeded satisfactorily. Minor queries raised by congregational Treasurers had been dealt with at a local level.
3. One area which demanded further consideration was the issue of additional payments made by congregations. (Note viii, p 284, 2001 Reports). In consultation with other agencies the Committee agreed that the amount of stipend paid plus any additional payment awarded becomes the base figure on which the appropriate increase is calculated for the following year.
4. It is recommended that the ad hoc Committee be continued for a further year to deal with any further matters that may arise.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the ad hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial be reappointed for a further year as follows:

2003 ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Convener: Rev T D GRIBBEN

Secretary: Rev J H ROBINSON

1. The Committee continues to work towards organising a Residential Assembly Conference that will faithfully reflect the Statement of Purpose as approved by the General Assembly in June 2001. To enable planning to progress in an efficient manner, in early autumn 2001 the Committee split into a number of Working Groups covering the following areas : Evening Programme, Morning Programme, 'Seminar' Programme, Administration & Logistics, and Follow-up Events.

2. Each group met separately on a number of occasions, and reported their plans to an overnight meeting of the full Committee held at the end of November 2001. This was a very useful opportunity to hear the initial thinking of the Working Groups, to refine that thinking where necessary, and to ensure that overall direction was being maintained. The Working Groups continue to carry forward their individual areas of responsibility, reporting to meetings of the full Committee as necessary.

3. The one major matter to report is that the Committee has decided to recommend to the Assembly, that the General Assembly Residential Conference be held in the summer of 2004 rather than 2003. The new proposed arrangements are a Residential Conference based at the University of Ulster Coleraine, running from Monday afternoon 9th August to Thursday evening 12th August 2004, with Prof. Don Carson from U.S.A. as our keynote speaker in the morning, and Rev. Martin Allen from Scotland as our evening speaker.

4. The main reason for this proposed change is to enable the Residential Assembly to have both the venue and speakers that it is felt will be most suitable, given its clearly stated purpose as approved by the General Assembly last June, namely :

'Under the Lordship of Christ, guided by God's Word and dependent upon the Holy Spirit, we gather:

- *to focus afresh on God's greatness and grace, so that we may renew and deepen our relationship with him and with each other*
- *to seek to understand better the challenges of the cultures and the contexts in which we find ourselves*
- *to explore how we can engage in, and equip ourselves for, meaningful worship, authentic fellowship and effective witness in today's world'*

5. One added advantage of moving the Conference to 2004, is that the Committee will be more able to plan for both the pre-conference and follow-up periods, to ensure that the important issues that are to be dealt with will have the fullest possible impact upon our denomination as a whole. The Committee will give a fuller report on these matters to the General Assembly in June 2003, and to the General Board in the intervening period.

6. To facilitate the work of the Committee it is proposed that Rev. J H Robinson, currently Secretary to the Committee, be appointed Co-Convenor.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly approve the holding of the Residential Assembly Conference in August 2004, rather than in August 2003.
3. That Rev J H Robinson be appointed Co-Convenor of the Residential Assembly Conference Committee.
4. That the ad hoc Committee for the Residential Assembly Conference be reappointed for a further year as follows :

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES

Convener: Rev T D GRIBBEN

Introduction

1. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities has, at the time of writing, met on six occasions and plans to hold several additional meetings prior to the General Assembly.

2. The remit of the Ad Hoc Committee, as outlined in the 2001 General Assembly Reports (pages 8–10), was to:

- *“Ascertain from the major spending Boards of the Church their broad priorities. This will be with reference to their five year Business Plans, perhaps slightly amended in some cases, and by discussions with representatives of each major spending Board.”*
- *“Draw up a report on the central priorities for PCI to be presented to the June 2002 Assembly, taking account of the views of the major spending Boards of the Church.”*

3. The work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities is very much a ‘work in progress’. A great deal of information and analysis is to hand, with reference both to the detailed work of Boards and Agencies and to the ‘wider picture’. Working on the basis that the General Assembly itself must set the framework within which the task of prioritising takes place, the Committee presents an interim report to this year’s Assembly for comment and debate. The Committee hopes to bring a more substantive report and recommendations to the General Assembly of 2003.

4. Recognising therefore that there is still much work to be done, Appendix 1 to this report is presented as an outline of the key principles and points that have evolved from our deliberations. It might be useful to read Appendix 1 prior to considering the remainder of this report, as the principles and points contained in it, if approved by the Assembly through Resolution 2, will form the basis from which the Committee will move forward in seeking to fulfil its remit.

Determining the internal priorities of individual Boards and Agencies

5. Working on the understanding that overall priorities for the central work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland can only be set when clear priorities are established within each Board, the Ad Hoc Committee met with each relevant Board in early November 2001. At these meetings the Committee discussed with the Board representatives their internal priorities for the years ahead. The Ad Hoc Committee had before it previously submitted summary information about each Board’s plans and priorities, as well as their five-year business plans. The Committee found these discussions invaluable, and thanks the office-bearers and representatives of the Boards for their help to date, both in attending meetings and in submitting written documentation.

6. These meetings, whilst helping to clarify the Ad Hoc Committee's thinking in many areas, also identified several key issues for which a resolution needs to be found.

7. The Committee also resolved to enter into discussions, at an informal level, with other agencies that have responsibility for allocating what might be described as 'central funds for ministry'. An initial meeting has been held with representatives of the PWA Executive Committee, and it is hoped to meet with representatives of the Union Commission prior to the Assembly.

Mission in Ireland

8. As the thinking of the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities continues to evolve, it is clear that encouraging, resourcing and facilitating the work of mission in Ireland needs to become increasingly one of the key central priorities of PCI. Whilst several Boards and Agencies have a role to play in this work, the vital strategic role of the Board of Mission in Ireland cannot be underestimated. It must be the body that pro-actively manages the work of the various agencies under its supervision, prioritising and making the 'hard decisions' within its sphere of expertise.

9. It is recognised that the Board of Mission in Ireland only came into being in June 2000, and has under its supervision several historic and influential agencies. All of these agencies have their own programmes of work, with both plans for new developments and clear commitments to ongoing work. Whilst all of this is important, and recognising that some of the new developments undertaken by agencies of the Board of Mission in Ireland are very commendable, there is nevertheless a clear need to decide what are the key priorities for mission in Ireland today. Once decided, structures should be such as to ensure that these priorities can be actioned, and the allocation of central resources to the Board of Mission in Ireland should reflect the priorities that have been determined.

10. This task of drawing up priorities between the competing demands of historic agencies is a difficult task for any Board to undertake. This is especially true in the early days of a new Board, made up largely of two former Boards. However, the work under the oversight of the Board of Mission in Ireland is so strategic that the task of drawing up the central priorities of the PCI cannot be adequately concluded until the internal priorities of that Board are more clearly determined. Therefore, to enable this to happen as quickly and efficiently as possible, the Board of Mission in Ireland has agreed to form a small Working Group to draw up these internal priorities. To facilitate the task in hand the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities has been invited to nominate two members to this Working Group. The Working Group has been asked to bring its recommendations to the Board of Mission in Ireland in October 2002, for decision and transmission to the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities.

The General Assembly's central Board and Committee structure

11. Following the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities interviews with the Boards and Agencies, it was apparent that there is sometimes a lack of corporate direction both within some Boards and also within the overall central work of

the General Assembly's Boards and Agencies. This at times manifests itself in a lack co-operation within Boards and between Boards. It also manifests itself in a certain lack of clarity as to who should do what. In many cases the current structures are being used in very creative ways, but in several vital areas the structures, it seems, are no longer relevant to the task in hand, and are in many ways restricting what could be achieved.

12. On the basis that setting priorities and seeking to ensure their delivery are inextricably linked, the Ad Hoc Committee will, in due course, give some consideration to the role of Presbyteries in this area. The Committee has already been giving some thought as to how the central structures of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland can better facilitate the work that has to be done at central level. With regard to this latter issue, the Ad Hoc Committee has had before it the views expressed by various Boards and Agencies themselves, a very useful paper on structures presented by the Board of Finance & Administration and the wisdom of the General Board's Panel on Boards and Committees. (It should be noted that all but one member of the General Board's Panel on Boards and Committees are also members of the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities.)

13. Following consultation with the Clerk of Assembly, in his role as Convener of the General Board's Panel on Boards and Committees, it was agreed to recommend to the General Board that the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities takes the lead in bringing proposals to the General Assembly with regard to central structures that will better facilitate the work that has to be done at central level. It is envisaged that the Panel on Boards and Committees will continue with the work it has in hand with regard to Synods etc.

14. This recommendation was agreed to by the General Board at its meeting on 28th February 2002, and the issue is now presented to the Assembly by way of resolution 3, appended to this report.

Necessary Interim Measures

15. The Ad Hoc Committee is fully aware that, as the process to establish the central priorities of PCI continues, so the work of the Church at central level must also continue. It is important however that what is done in this interim period neither prejudices the outcome of the prioritisation process, nor indeed makes that process more difficult than it already is.

16. Therefore, working on the basis that we must be good stewards today, as well as in the future, the Ad Hoc Committee has sought to put in place mechanisms for the necessary co-ordination of central expenditure and related issues in this interim period. These necessary interim measures are outlined in Appendix 2.

Conclusion

17. The Ad Hoc Committee's work is motivated by the desire to ensure that the central resources of our Church are used in the most effective way possible, as we seek to fulfil the mission that our Lord has given us in His world. We recognise that all of our Boards and Agencies are seeking as best they can to fulfil the remit given them by the General Assembly. The Ad Hoc

Committee's desire is simply to help ensure that the really vital priorities are identified and met, both within individual Boards and within our denomination as a whole.

Appendix 1 – Some Evolving Principles and Points

1. The local Congregation is the primary mission unit of the Church.
2. Congregations do not exist in isolation, but as part of a Presbyterian structure for both government and mission. Likewise as a denomination the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is but part of the one Church of Jesus Christ in the world.

Therefore:

3. At central level, 'Mission & Ministry' Boards should exist to :
 - (a) Encourage, facilitate and resource mission and ministry at local congregational level.
 - (b) Enable local congregations together to be involved in wider mission and ministry, where such mission and ministry would not be possible alone.

With regard to the work of 'Mission & Ministry' Boards:

- Priority should be given to:
 - ▶ 3(a) before 3(b), where that is possible
 - ▶ things that 'only the Church can do'
 - ▶ people before buildings.
- Each Board should seek to act as a 'pointer to other agencies' outside of PCI that will enable them to fulfil 3(a) and particularly 3(b)
- There should be a broad agreement as to what percentage of United Appeal goes overseas and what stays at home.

4. At central level, 'Servant' Boards should exist to:
 - (a) Provide relevant support for the Mission & Ministry Boards of the General Assembly
 - (b) Provide relevant support for local Congregations where applicable.

With regard to the work of 'Servant' Boards:

- It should be ensured that their function is provided as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, within their remit.
- The 'Mission & Ministry' Boards that are served are responsible to ensure effective management and oversight.

5. At central level, there is a need for better co-ordination and management:

- There is a need for Boards to pro-actively manage their work, prioritising and making the 'hard decisions' within their sphere of expertise. Internal Board structures should enable this to happen.
- This may require changes to the Board structure to facilitate the work that has to be done.
- There is a need for central co-ordination and management to ensure that Church's strategic priorities are identified and progressed.

- There is a need to ensure that a more realistic balance is struck between the accountability of central work to the wider Church and enabling people to concentrate on ministry and mission in the local Congregation.

Appendix 2 – Necessary Interim Measures

Co-ordination of central expenditure in the interim period

1. It has become apparent, through the Ad Hoc Committee's interaction with Boards, and through other discussions, that several new posts and projects are about to be proposed from various sources. Many of these, if proceeded with, would commit the central funds of the Church to substantial, and often ongoing, expenditure. Such increases in expenditure, when taken together, would be beyond the ability of the United Appeal Board to fund.

2. The task of seeking under God to determine the central priorities for PCI is a vital one, and therefore time needs to be taken to ensure that this is done well. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities needs to be given adequate time to finish the work the General Assembly has entrusted to it, and ultimately the General Assembly itself needs time to reflect upon the outcome of that work and set the priorities for our denomination's central expenditure.

3. In the light of the above two points, the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities and the General Board's Panel on Overview of Funding have both unanimously agreed to recommend that there should be a temporary moratorium on all new posts and projects, unless these can be funded from within the existing resources of an individual Board or from outside sources. As an initial interim measure, this recommendation was agreed to by the General Board at its meeting on 28th February 2002. The issue is now presented to the Assembly by way of Resolution 4 (a), appended to this report.

4. The Ad Hoc Committee recognises that this is a decision that will present difficulties for some Boards and Agencies. However, the Committee feels that it is the only credible course of action open to it at present, if we as a denomination are to have the time necessary to ensure that the central resources of our Church are used in the most effective way possible. Boards were informed of this recommendation on 31st January 2002, to enable them to take note of the proposed moratorium as they prepared their 2003 submissions for United Appeal Board.

5. It is further recognised that the 2004 'funding-round' will take place as usual during the preceding March, ie in March 2003. This timing enables the United Appeal Board to report its recommended allocations for 2004 to the General Assembly in June 2003. As the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities will also be bringing its substantive report in June 2003, the time-table does not permit its final recommendations to be available to the United Appeal Board, when that Board decides its 2004 allocations in March 2003. Therefore it is recommended that, if the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities feels it is expedient to proceed with certain new expenditure in 2004, that the General Board's Panel on Overview of Funding be given authority to lift the moratorium for that specified expenditure. Resolution 4 (b), appended to this report, deals with this issue.

6. In this interim period, the Ad Hoc Committee is also concerned to ensure that Boards and Agencies with money at their disposal, either by way of reserves or new income from legacies etc, should use that money wisely, and in a way that will be of strategic benefit to the overall mission of the Church. Therefore, the Committee is requesting that the General Board's Panel on Overview of Funding be authorised to monitor and approve any new large planned expenditure by Boards or Agencies. As usual, the United Appeal Board's Finance Committee should refer any matters of concern to the Panel on Overview of Funding. Again, the General Board at its meeting on 28th February 2002 agreed to this recommendation as an initial interim measure. The issue is now presented to the Assembly by way of Resolution 5, appended to this report.

Review of Staff Posts in the interim period

7. Following discussions with representatives of the various Boards, it became apparent to the Ad Hoc Committee that in this present time of significant change and challenge, all Boards and Agencies of the Church need to reassess the way in which they seek to deliver their particular remit within the wider work of our denomination. One aspect of this reassessment must clearly be with regard to the use of human resources. Often the actual workload carried by staff members, and particularly executive staff members, is very different from the initial workload envisaged when an appointment was made.

8. Some Boards have sought to institute formal reviews of such staff positions, indeed some have been required to do this in line with the terms of an original appointment. However, the method of reviewing such staff positions varies greatly between Boards. Some do this purely internally, whilst others have availed themselves of the expertise of the Church House Job Evaluation Panel. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities strongly feels that even when this second approach is adopted, a significant factor is often missing in this important task of reviewing staff positions. That factor is the 'bigger picture', for want of a better phrase. It is vital that all new appointments, and all reviews of existing appointments, take into account the wider priorities of the work and mission of our denomination at central level. Certain posts, and indeed aspects of posts, may seem vital to an internal Board review committee, but when assessed in the context of the competing demands for central funding and the overall work of PCI, their priority may in fact be slightly less.

9. It is clear to the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities that some new mechanism for review of central staff positions needs to be brought into being. The Ad Hoc Committee will bring a further report on this matter at a later stage. In the interim it is recommended that the outcome of all internal Board reviews of current staff posts should be submitted to the General Board, through its Panel on the Overview of Funding, for consideration of the wider issues, prior to the outcome of the review being implemented.

10. The General Board at its meeting on 28th February 2002 agreed to this recommendation as an initial interim measure. The issue is now presented to the Assembly by way of Resolution 6, appended to this report.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities be encouraged to develop the principles and points outlined in Appendix 1, and report further to the General Assembly in June 2003.
3. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities takes the lead on bringing proposals to the General Assembly with regard to central structures that will better facilitate the work that has to be done at central level.
4. (a) That, as an interim measure, the General Assembly approve a moratorium on all new posts and projects, unless these can be funded from within the existing resources of an individual Board or from outside sources.
(b) That, as an interim measure, the General Board's Panel on the Overview of Funding be authorised to lift this moratorium on the conditions outlined in Appendix 2, or as authorised by the General Board in exceptional circumstances.
5. That, as an interim measure, the General Board's Panel on Overview of Funding be authorised to monitor and approve all new significant expenditure that is planned by Boards or Agencies, even when that expenditure is funded from within existing resources or from outside sources.
6. That, as an interim measure, the outcome of all internal Board reviews of current staff posts should be submitted to the General Board, through its Panel on the Overview of Funding, for consideration of the wider issues, prior to the outcome of the review being implemented.
7. That up to £500 be made available from the Incidental Fund for use by the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities.
8. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities be reappointed for a further year as follows:

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