

Item 1 – GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Initial Report) – Supplementary Report (Tuesday morning)

At the request of the Moderator's Advisory Committee, the General Assembly Business Committee agreed to include two additional resolutions to be considered at the end of its Initial Report on Tuesday morning. The context in which these resolutions are tabled for consideration by the Assembly can be found in part of the supplementary report of the Moderator's Advisory Committee, see S13-S15 of these Supplementary Reports.

Additional Resolutions

5.(a) That for the 2018 General Assembly, any individual who has had a matter decided by the Judicial Commission on behalf of the Assembly may not address the Assembly on that or any related matter; and that where an individual is asked to give an undertaking to abide by this decision of the Assembly, and refuses to do so, that individual will either not be issued with a Voting Card or have their Voting Card withdrawn.

5.(b) That the Judicial Commission considers the matter for subsequent General Assemblies and report, with appropriate overture(s) if necessary, to the 2019 General Assembly.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Church of Ireland Synod 2018 Report

The Very Rev Dr Frank Sellar reports:

148th General Synod meeting in Armagh (10th – 12th May 2018)

1. Attending the opening Eucharist on Ascension Day, it was a joy to appreciate the light streaming through the great East Window in Armagh Cathedral bringing to life the depictions of the ascended and reigning Lord. This and the fine sermon by The Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher speaking about the giving of gifts by Jesus to the Church, was like a metaphor for this year's Synod.
2. Mrs Sadie Somerville (elder from 1st Armagh) and I attended on behalf of PCI and while much of the business seems routine; dull even, like looking at a stained glass window from the outside of an ecclesiastical building in, once inside and looking out, with the benefit of the light of Christ shining through, even the routine becomes brighter.

3. Sir Paul Girvan used this analogy when commending a new beautifully produced Commentary on the Constitution of the Church of Ireland : the laws of the church, a product of disestablishment.
4. Key decisions this year included a Bill uniting in principle, the dioceses of Limerick & Killaloe with Tuam, Killala and Achonry and the introduction of a Bill which seeks to establish a proportional and representative formula for the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives and General Synod reducing its number from a current 648 to 531.
5. Following a debate on same sex marriage last year, this Synod the House of Bishops announced that there is little appetite in the church to redefine marriage and so the marriage service remains unchanged and marriage may be solemnized only between a man and a woman.
6. A new Order of Service for morning and evening prayer has been produced by the Liturgical Advisory Committee and leave was given for a Bill to be approved next year for a liturgy to be used in situations of Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Neonatal deaths.
7. A very warm welcome was given by Synod to Dr Eamon Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh who along with Dr Richard Clarke launched a pilot project designating the two Armagh cathedrals places of safety for people affected by domestic violence, which it was hoped other parishes might take up.
8. A highlight for me was the very stimulating presentation on Third Level Chaplaincy shared by Rev Barry Forde from Belfast and Rev Rob Jones from Dublin. Leading teams in both locations a fine and imaginative work is being done among ‘the lost generation’ of students.
9. It was a privilege to bring greetings to the Synod from our General Assembly and a delight to renew friendships with past acquaintances and present friends and to sense the light of the presence of the ascended and reigning Lord among His people in the Church of Ireland.
10. General Synod 2019 will take place in Millennium Forum in Derry/Londonderry, from 16th-18th May and 2020 in Croke Park Events Centre 7-9 May.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 2 – REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES
Supplementary Report (Tuesday Morning)

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT OF THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTH BELFAST (pages 162-163)

The Presbytery of North Belfast further report that under their care are, as Ministers without Charge, the Revs CI McKnight (retired), Samuel Newell, WA Shaw and WM Smyth (retired).

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 3 – CORRESPONDING MEMBERS & DELEGATES
Supplementary Report (Tuesday morning)

Delete

Rt Rev Dr John McDowell – Church of Ireland
 Rev Joseph Kasaab - National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon
 Sheena Bell - Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Add

Ven Paul Dundas, Archdeacon of Dalriada– Church of Ireland
 Brid Coady-Weekes – Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 5 - GENERAL COUNCIL: Section 1 – Supplementary Report
(Tuesday Afternoon)

(A) SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Correction to Finance Panel Report

1. Delete the current paragraph 3 on page 16 and substitute with:
3. The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Panel on the pros and cons of a change in the Church's financial year end from 31st December to 31st August – the latter to coincide with the end of the 'church year'. Given that the considerable disruption that would result from a change, the Committee agreed with the Panel's advice that a review should be undertaken into the implications of retaining the existing year end but revising the timetables for the preparation of end year accounts and statistical returns in the light of necessary approval

requirements and the filing of accounts with the Charity Commission. However, the Committee endorsed the conclusion of the Panel that a new deadline should be set for the annual statistical return (and in effect for CCNI accounts) of 30th April, with the annual return being split into a statistical part and a financial part. The statistical part would be completed in line with the present arrangements i.e. submitted to Presbytery by February/March and then reported through the current structure to the General Assembly. The financial part would come before a May meeting of Presbytery and then summaries would be presented to a new General Council meeting in June. The Minutes and Statistics Book would include the present summary tables, graphs and individual congregational details. These new arrangements should be implemented for the financial year ended 31st December 2018.

Collated information on the statistical returns was not available to the Panel at its 29th March meeting, due to delays in filing reports on the part of some Presbyteries. They were presented directly to the General Council at its meeting on 10th April and summaries are included in Appendices 4 and 5.

Retirements

2. Since the last meeting of the Support Services Committee an application for leave to retire under the provisions of the Par 223(3) of the Code has been received from the Route Presbytery in relation to Rev N McClean (First Kilraughts). Mr McClean is seeking permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday. The terms of retirement will reflect the appropriate pension scheme early retirement factors. An amended resolution 9, standardising the wording relating to another retirement which is included in the Reports, is also appended.

Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009)

3. At the time of writing the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) have just received the initial results of Actuarial Valuation of the Scheme, as at 31st December 2017. There is a statutory requirement for all pension scheme to have such a valuation every three years and the results of the valuation indicates the level of funding that is required for the pension scheme over the next number of years.
4. The Support Services Committee acts as ‘the employer’ for matters relating to the PCI Pension Scheme (2009). Meetings will be held over the next number of months to consider the results of the actuarial valuation and the response that is necessary, especially with regard to funding levels. As appropriate action will be required prior to the meeting of the 2019 General Assembly (the statutory deadline for response is 31st March 2019) it is proposed that the General Council be authorised to take necessary decisions,

in particular with regard to funding levels. An appropriate resolution is appended.

5. The Clerk of Assembly has requested that the Pension Trustees and Actuary seek to ensure that the next set of statutory actuarial valuation results (as at 31st December 2020) are available at an earlier date, thereby enabling the General Assembly itself to make any necessary decisions relating to those results in 2021.

ADDITIONAL RESOLUTION

- 7(a). That the General Assembly authorise the General Council to take all appropriate decisions necessitated by the current actuarial valuation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009).

AMENDED RESOLUTION

9. That under the provision of Code Par 223(3), the Rev RJA (Ballyclare) be granted permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday.

ADDITIONAL RESOLUTION

- 9(a). That under the provision of Code Par 223(3), the Rev Noel McClean (First Kilraughts) be granted permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

(B) GUYSMERE TASK GROUP

Amendment to Resolution 12 (page 144)

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

JAMES A McCAUGHAN

(C) MEMORIAL RECORD

The Rev William Harold Gray, BA.BD. Minister Emeritus (Released)

Harmony Hill, Lambeg, died on 18th April 2018, in the ninety-second year of his age and the sixty-second year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 1st July 1926, the only child of William Gray, a joiner and builder, and his wife Florence, née Hanson. The family worshipped in St Enoch's congregation, Carlisle Circus, where his father was an elder and his mother a stalwart of the Women's Missionary Association (WMA). As a teenager he made a conscious commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. He served as Boys' Brigade Captain and as Sunday School Superintendent, both then very large organisations, enabling him to hone his leadership skills. Mr Gray trained as a teacher at Stranmillis College and the Queen's University, graduating BA in 1948. He returned to the Boys' Model where he taught for four years from 1948 to 1952. During this time his sense of a strong calling to the ordained ministry grew, and, on being accepted for training, he attended the Assembly's College, 1952 to 1953, New College, Edinburgh, 1953 to 1954, and returned to Belfast to complete his training 1954 to 1955. From 1954 to 1956 he served as Assistant in Great Victoria Street congregation with the Minister, the Rev J R Boyd, who later became Professor of Practical Theology in the Assembly's College. The Presbytery of Tyrone ordained and installed him in the congregation of Newmills, near Dungannon, on 17th October 1956. A few years later Newmills was joined with Carland and Mr Gray was installed there on 1st June 1960. He married Jean Kelly, who was also brought up in St Enoch's, on 6th July 1955, and together they served Christ and His Church with enthusiasm and dedication over the years. They had three children, Peter, David, and Catherine. After thirteen years of steady ministry Mr Gray moved to the large congregation of Woodvale, Belfast, with eleven hundred families, where he was installed by the Presbytery of North Belfast on 10th September 1969. He and his family arrived there just as the 'Troubles' broke out severely impacting the local area and residents. Soldiers were a common sight on the streets, barricades were thrown up, communities bitterly divided, gun battles and bombs frequent. Homes and businesses were destroyed and church property damaged. The church halls were opened to all comers as a place of shelter and Mr Gray worked tirelessly to help those most affected by the turmoil and to create friendly relationships across the sectarian divide. In 1976 he moved to the congregation of Harmony Hill, Lambeg, and was installed there by the Presbytery of Dromore on 23rd January 1976. This was a young congregation which began as an outreach ministry of First Lisburn at Lambeg and was erected a congregation in its own right in February 1968 with Rev D.H.A. Watson as Minister. By the nineteen-seventies it was a thriving congregation with a large number of young families who settled in the new builds in the surrounding area. Mr Gray excelled as a pastor who loved his people and ministered to their needs in all the varied circumstances of life. He was assiduous in his pulpit preparation and delivery of the Good News of the Gospel. In the wider community he became a member of Wallace High School Board of Governors, then Chairman for some

years and also a trustee. His experience of, and interest in, education, was utilised as a member of the South Eastern Education and Library Board, of which he became Chairman. His interest in the welfare of young people involved him in the structures of the central Church as Director of the Youth Education Committee, in which capacity he attended the World Council of Christian Education in Jamaica and in Lima, Peru. He served as Convener of the National and International Problems Committee, 1987 to 1993, and was also a member of the Board of Publications and Aids to Worship, and the Historical Society Committee. He was Moderator of the Synod of Antrim and Down in 1989. Mr Gray retired on 31st October 1991 and he and Mrs Gray enjoyed many happy years together until Mrs Gray's death on 17th October 2015. We share with Mr Gray's family in their loss as we give thanks to God for the good and faithful service of our brother.

The Rev James Stanley McIvor, BA, BD, Ph.D, Professor Emeritus (Released) the Union Theological College, Belfast, died on 23rd May 2018, in the ninetieth year of his age and the sixty-fourth year of his ministry. He was born on 26th November 1928 at Derryalskea, County Tyrone, an only son and third of four children, to James McIvor, Farmer, Soldier and Civil Servant, and his wife, Florence, née Clayton. The family worshipped then in the congregation of Castlecaulfield where he learned to love the Saviour who first loved him and gave himself for him. He attended Kilnaslee National School and then the Royal School, Dungannon. A good scholar with a taste for study, he went to the Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, graduating BA in 1949. With a growing sense of call he went on to New College, Edinburgh, from which he graduated BD in 1952. His academic ability won him a scholarship enabling him to study Linguistics at Tübingen University, Germany, also taking the opportunity to learn German which would facilitate his Biblical studies. On his return home, he attended the Assembly's College, Belfast, 1953 to 1954, to complete his qualifying course of study for the Church. Professor McIvor served an assistantship in the large and busy congregation of Great Victoria Street, Belfast, where the Rev James R Boyd was Minister. He became convinced of a call from God to Army Chaplaincy, and was licensed and ordained, or, in Forces terms, commissioned, on 4th June 1954, by the Presbytery of Tyrone in Dungannon congregation to which his family had moved some years previously. It was during this time that he met and married Ruth Patricia Greer on 21st January 1956 and over the next number of years they were blessed with the birth of four children. Army life took them on tours of duty around the world, and, at one period, Professor McIvor served as Deputy Warden at the Royal Army's Department Depot, Bagshot Park, Surrey, where his work as Assistant Trainer of new Chaplains was greatly valued and respected. He and his family returned to Northern Ireland in 1964 to Londonderry on his appointment as Principal of Magee Theological College, and Professor of Hebrew, New Testament

Interpretation and Biblical Literature. During the ensuing years he studied for a Ph.D. which he was awarded in 1977 from the University of Edinburgh. When Magee became part of the University of Ulster in 1978, the Faculty was amalgamated with the Assembly's College and took the name Union College, it is believed at the suggestion of Professor McIvor, and he and R F G Holmes moved to Belfast where they took up professorships in Hebrew and Church History respectively. Professor McIvor acted as Secretary to Union College Faculty for sixteen years writing meticulous minutes of the meetings. His particular academic interest was in Aramaic and he contributed to volume nineteen of *The Aramaic Bible*, writing on 'The Targum of Chronicles: Translated with Introduction, Apparatus and Notes' (Liturgical Press, 1994). During his thirty years of lecturing several hundreds of theological students came under his influence and owe to him a great debt for his part in equipping them for the ordained ministry. As someone who exercised good self-discipline he expected the same attitude in his students and would brook neither carelessness nor indolence. Yet, he recognised that not every student was a natural Hebraist and he sought to give as much help and encouragement as he could. Even so, it was a daunting experience to sit in his lectures during translation work and suddenly to hear your name called with the command, 'Parse!' Professor McIvor retired on 30th September 1994, and we give thanks for a dedicated servant of God who loved the Scriptures and the Lord of the Scriptures and who demonstrated a life of grace and faith. To his wife, Pat, children, Morag, Colin, Ian, and Louise, their children and the wider family circle, (his sisters pre-deceased him) we extend our prayerful sympathy in their loss.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 6 - COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Supplementary Report (Tuesday afternoon)

DEALING WITH THE PAST

1. On Friday 11th May 2018 the Northern Ireland Office published a consultation paper: 'Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past'. The public consultation seeks views on the UK Government's proposal to legislate to establish the institutions set out in a draft Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill. These institutions include:
 - The Historical Investigations Unit – to take forward outstanding investigations into Troubles-related deaths.
 - The Independent Commission on Information Retrieval – to enable family members to seek and privately receive information about the Troubles-related deaths of their relatives.
 - The Oral History Archive – an archive that enables people to share experiences and narratives related to the Troubles.

- The Implementation and Reconciliation Group – an institution to promote reconciliation and anti-sectarianism and to review and assess the implementation of the other legacy institutions proposed under the Stormont House Agreement.
 - The proposals will have a direct impact on many people within our congregations and represent one of the most important developments in recent years in terms of addressing the legacy of the past. It is therefore crucial that the PCI submit a considered response by the closing date on 10th September 2018.
2. It is proposed that a Task Group be set up by the General Assembly to report and make recommendations to a special meeting of the Council for Public Affairs, with the Council for Public Affairs authorised to act on behalf of the Assembly.

EIGHTH AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF IRELAND

3. On Friday 25th May 2018 citizens in the Republic of Ireland voted by a large margin to repeal the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland, which upheld the equal right to life of the mother and the unborn child. The statement released by the Church following the referendum result is included at Appendix A.
4. It is expected that the Government will now introduce legislation allowing unrestricted access to abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy and on health grounds after 12 weeks, and that this will pass through the Oireachtas swiftly and easily. Indeed, some members who spoke passionately about retaining the Eighth Amendment have now indicated they will either support the legislation or abstain in light of the referendum result.
5. The PCI must play its part in encouraging longer-term, life-affirming cultural change that enhances support for women in crisis and addresses the societal issues that contribute to abortion. This will involve further conversations with the Government, members of the Oireachtas and others in wider society about how to provide world-leading, compassionate care across Ireland for women, children and families facing pregnancy crisis.
6. As Government officials begin to meet with medical bodies to discuss the implementation of new legislation, it is important that the concerns of medical professionals who cannot, in conscience, participate in abortion provision are taken seriously and properly addressed. This includes those who have a conscientious objection to referring patients seeking an abortion, who should be supported and accommodated within any new system.

Appendix A
Statement issued on 26 May 2018 on the outcome of the referendum
on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution

‘Profound sadness’ at referendum result

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rt. Rev. Dr. Noble McNeely, along with former Moderator and minister emeritus of Lucan Presbyterian Church, Dr. Trevor Morrow, and the Clerk of the denomination’s General Assembly, Rev. Trevor Gribben have expressed their ‘profound sense of sadness’ regarding today’s Eighth Amendment referendum result.

In their statement they said:

We acknowledge the outcome of yesterday’s referendum with a profound sense of sadness. The country is evidently living through a defining moment in which the inherent value placed on human life is at stake. Today is not a day for celebration, but for quiet reflection.

We would strongly urge the Government and the Oireachtas, as they legislate, to keep the promise they have made to the electorate to make abortions ‘rare’ in Ireland, and to ensure that the unborn with disabilities, like Down’s syndrome, will not have their lives terminated.

The result of this referendum hasn’t changed the fact that human life is still just as sacred and special as it was before Friday’s vote. There should be no place for unrestricted abortion in a society that claims to cherish human life.

We would encourage both the Government and wider society to place a greater focus on the provision of world-leading, compassionate care for women, children and families, including comprehensive support in the perinatal period for those facing pregnancy crisis.’

Additional Resolutions:

- 1.(a) That the General Assembly appoint a Task Group under the Council for Public Affairs, consisting of the Moderator and Clerk of the General Assembly, Convener of the Council for Public Affairs, Public Affairs Officer, the Rev Tony Davidson, Mr Edgar Jardine (with the power to co-opt up to 3 others) with the following remit:
 - To draw up a report and recommendations concerning the Northern Ireland Office consultation paper: ‘Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland’s Past’, to be presented to the Council for Public Affairs for consideration, with the Council then authorised to submit an appropriate response to the public consultation on behalf of the General Assembly.

- 3.(a) That the General Assembly:
 - (i) express their sadness regarding the outcome of the referendum on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland;

- (ii) urge the Government and the Oireachtas to keep to the promises made to the electorate that abortions will be ‘rare’ in Ireland and that unborn children with disabilities will not have their lives terminated;
- (iii) repeat their call for the best possible life-affirming care and support to be made available to women facing pregnancy crisis.

NORMAN HAMILTON

**Item 9 – COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & WITNESS
Supplementary Report (Wednesday morning)**

SPUD YOUTH ASSEMBLY REPORT

2018 Youth Assembly

1. In February this year the Youth Assembly gathered over one hundred 15-25 year olds from congregations right across the denomination. This year’s theme was ‘Re-imagine: Presbyterianism for today’s generation’.
2. As part of the event, participants were asked, “what gives you reason to celebrate being part of a PCI congregation?” A common response was being part of a multi-generational family of faith in which relationship and connection with other generations was valued. Further conversation found that young people desire the input of older, more experienced, influencers as contributors to their faith journey. This needs to be more than an occasional, token gesture. Building genuine relationships within church life is a high priority. The shared example of those who are older in the faith has a crucial part to play.
3. These responses inspired the Youth Assembly Working Group to explore how congregations are already connecting the generations together and creating multi-generational environments of faith. These range from the development of informal spaces, in which relationships can be built in social situations, to more intentional programmes of relational discipleship and mentoring.
4. To highlight and promote this crucial area of congregational life, the Youth Assembly Working Group set about creating a video resource to help share with congregations the need and opportunity to develop connection points and relational opportunities across all ages of their church family. This four minute video is now available for use within congregations and will be

launched, shown and made available at the Youth Assembly Fringe Event held in the new downstairs conference space in Assembly Buildings on Wednesday 6th June. The event will include stories and discussion around the theme of “Inter-Generational Ministry” and will run from 6.00 – 7.15pm. A light tea will be served. Booking is essential for the event and can be completed online at the PCI website.

5. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness commends this video to congregations and hope that it will be used throughout the denomination to both inspire and enable the continued development of inter-generational ministry.

A change of name

6. During the past year discussion has taken place within SPUD itself regarding the name ‘SPUD’. A clear consensus has been arrived at for a change of name to ‘The PCI Youth Assembly’. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness is supportive of this name change and an appropriate resolution is appended.

ADDITIONAL RESOLUTION

(A) That the General Assembly agree to the change of name from ‘SPUD’ to ‘The PCI Youth Assembly’.

DAVID THOMPSON

Item 10 – COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY Supplementary Report (Wednesday Morning)

Reception of Ministers and Licentiatees Committee

As indicated in the reports, Appendix 2 (pages 269-271), ‘Recommendations Concerning Licentiatees and Ministers without Charge’, a recommendation is included here concerning the Rev JD Maxwell as follows:

South Belfast

Rev JD Maxwell to be retained a Minister without charge but that the Presbytery be informed that, for such a recommendation to be made next year, it will be conditional that Mr Maxwell is reported as playing a meaningful part in the life of the Congregation in which he is a Communicant Member.

The following additions are made to the recommendations concerning Licentiatees and Ministers without charge in Appendix 2.

North Belfast

Rev Samuel Newell to be retained as Minister without charge.

South Belfast

Rev Dr PG McDowell to be retained as Minister without charge.

East Belfast

Rev Dr MJ Welsh to be retained as Minister without charge.

Clarification

In Appendix 3 (pages 272-274), 'Rules to be followed in the reception of ministers and licentiates from other churches', the Assembly is being asked to choose between three different options, outlined in Par 16 of the Appendix:

- EITHER Sub-Par 16(a) is included
- OR Sub-Pars 16 (b) & (c) are included
- OR Sub-Par 16 (d) is included and subsequently Par 17 not included

The Council for Training in Ministry is recommending the second option, i.e. including Sub-Pars 16 (b) & (c). A revised resolution 3 is appended to this effect.

REVISED RESOLUTION:

3. That Appendix 3 be approved as Rules to be followed in the reception of ministers and licentiates from other churches, with the inclusion of sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) in paragraph 16.

NIGEL McCULLOUGH

**Item 12 – GENERAL COUNCIL (SECTION 2) – Supplementary Report
(Wednesday afternoon)**

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE**Item of business overlooked**

1. It very recently came to light that a task remitted by the 2017 General Assembly to the Moderator's Advisory Committee had been overlooked. This related to the Memorial of the Rev Dr Ivan Neish in connection with voting membership of a congregation (see 2017 General Assembly Reports page 358) and the resolution of the Assembly on page 56 of the 2017 Minutes, namely:

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

2. On discovering this recently, the Clerk of Assembly contacted Dr Neish to apologise and brought the matter to the Moderator's Advisory Committee for discussion. To take the matter forward, the Moderator's Advisory Committee appointed a Task Group, made up of members of the Judicial Commission, Linkage Commission and Finance Panel, as follows:

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

3. The Task Group has been asked to meet with Dr Neish and hear his concerns and suggestions; to consider all relevant direct and related issues; and to report to the General Council with options and a recommendation. The General Council, having considered the matter, will report to the 2019 General Assembly, including tabling any legislative changes that may be necessary.

Handling of business in the Private Session

4. The Clerk of Assembly reported to the Moderator's Advisory Committee on the contents of a 'challenging conversation' he had recently had with a Minister. The issue of concern relates to someone who has had a matter considered by the Judicial Commission (with full Assembly powers) and decided upon. Even though that decision is final and binding, the Minister has however indicated that he intends to speak to that matter during the Private Session, strongly asserting his intention to address the Assembly on various aspects of the matter, from his perspective. When advised that it was not in order to speak about any matter that had already been dealt with by the Judicial Commission and that he should not attempt to do so, the Minister stated quite assertively that he intended to do so. The Clerk informed the Minister that he would be referring this stated intention to defy the law of the Church to an appropriate body for consideration before the Assembly.
5. Having considered the particular circumstances, the Moderator's Advisory Committee resolved that the General Assembly Business Committee be requested to licence the following two resolutions for consideration by the 2018 General Assembly, at the end of the initial report of the Business Committee on Tuesday morning:

5.(a) That for the 2018 General Assembly, any individual who has had a matter decided by the Judicial Commission on behalf of the Assembly may not address the Assembly on that or any related matter; and that where an individual is asked to give an undertaking to abide by this decision of the Assembly, and refuses to do so, that individual will either not be issued with a Voting Card or have their Voting Card withdrawn.

5.(b) That the Judicial Commission considers the matter for subsequent General Assemblies and report, with appropriate overture(s) if necessary, to the 2019 General Assembly.

Visit of Pope Francis

6. Invitations have not yet been issued to other Churches regarding the visit of Pope Francis, as the official programme is only being announced later in June. However, an indication has been given that the Moderator will most likely be invited to be present at a State reception for Pope Francis and would briefly meet with him on that occasion. The Moderator will also most likely be invited to be present as a distinguished guest at the 'Festival of Families' being held on the Saturday evening in Croke Park. When a formal invitation is received the General Council will be called to agree a response (see 2018 Reports, page 72, paragraph 18).

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 13 – MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED – Supplementary Report (Wednesday afternoon)

(A) Memorial of the Presbytery of Tyrone

Resolution:

That the prayer of the memorial be granted and that the Rev Tom Conway, on his resignation from his charge, shall continue as a member of the Presbytery of Tyrone under Code Par 61(j) of the Code, so long as he remains in post as Clerk of the Presbytery of Tyrone.

Proposed by: JOHN MULLAN
Seconded by: JONATHAN CURRY

(B) Memorial of the Presbytery of Templepatrick

Resolution:

That the prayer of the memorial be granted and that the names of deaconesses, senior lecturers, auxiliary ministers, lay agents and missionaries under its care who, since its last report, have died, retired, resigned, or have been commissioned and/or appointed by Presbytery, with respective dates, be included, henceforth, in the annual report of Presbytery; and that the Clerk of the Assembly present overture(s) to the

2019 General Assembly to amend Par 260 of The Code, accordingly and to mirror additionally the requirements of Par 260(d).

Proposed by: PETER DICKINSON

Seconded by: DESI PAUL

ITEM 19 – OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS
(Thursday Evening, pp 375-379)

A. GENERAL (p 375)

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 35, 47(2)(f), 65(2) and 85(1) of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

B. COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS (p 375-376)

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 85(5)(6)and(7) of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

C. COUNCIL FOR MISSION IN IRELAND (p 376)

Resolution:

1. That the Overture anent Par 36(f) of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

D. LINKAGE COMMISSION (pp 376-377)

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 57(5) and 76(b) of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

E. JUDICIAL COMMISSION (pp 377-379)

Overtures relating to Membership of a Congregation

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 39(1), 39(3), 41(1), 45, and 45 of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church

Overtures regarding Transfer of Congregational Property to an Associated Body

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Par 53(a) and 57 of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

Overtures regarding the Right of Appeal in Cases of Employment Grievances

Resolution:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 38 and 75 of the Code, having lain on the books for one year, be enacted as the law of the Church.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

ITEM 20 – AD HOC OVERTURES (Thursday Evening, pp 149-157)

A. GENERAL (pp 149-155)

Resolutions:

1. That the Overtures anent Pars 53, 57, 70(b), 70(d) and 70(d), of the Code be received and placed on the books.
2. That the Overtures anent Pars 53, 57, 70(b) and 70(d) of the Code be made Interim Acts.
3. That the Overtures anent Par 273(5)(d)(iii), Chapter XV, Section IV, Pars 246-251, Pars 224(2)(a), 256(2), 260(g), 273(2), 306(1), 146(1), 215(6), 258(c), 226, 318(3)(d) and Appendix 6 of the Code be received and that, under Par 111 of the Code, they be made the rule of the Church.

B. LINKAGE COMMISSION (p 155)

Resolution:

1. That the Overture anent Par 273(5)(d)(v) of the Code be received and that, under Par 111 of the Code, it be made the rule of the Church.

C. COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS (p 155)

Resolution:

1. That the Overture anent Par 308 of the Code be received and that, under Par 111 of the Code, it be made the rule of the Church.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

**Item 24 – GENERAL COUNCIL (SECTION 5) – AD-HOC BUSINESS
Supplementary Report (Friday Morning)**

1. During the last year discussions have taken place to seek a resolution to what might be described as a small, but significant, anomaly in the current Code. This is to do with the wording of Par 226, relating to the provision whereby a Minister who is unable to remain in his/her charge to the normal retirement date may apply to be designated Minister Emeritus of the congregation(s) they are leaving. This enables the Minister to be a full member of Presbytery and General Assembly. Reference is made to these discussions in paragraph 7 on page 69 of the 2018 Reports.
2. The current provision of Par 226 of the Code relates to Ministers who ‘voluntarily resign’ from their charge, and the Moderator’s Advisory Committee has outlined the process to be followed for such to be considered by the Assembly (see 2018 Reports pages 69 & 73). However the current wording of the Code does not make similar provision for a Minister who, near to retirement, is loosed from his/her charge and where there is no fault (e.g. under Code Par 318(3)(c)). An overture has therefore been drafted, and is included on page 154 of the 2018 Reports, to enable the Assembly to consider amending the Code so that such Ministers may come within the scope of the provision made in Par 226.
3. The Presbytery of North Belfast, having been an advocate for such a change and having been made aware that the 2018 Assembly would be considering that change, has requested that the Rev Jack Drennan would be able to avail of this new provision, if of course the change to Par 226 is agreed by the Assembly. Mr Drennan was loosed from his charge, to facilitate a realignment of ministry, on 1st February 2016, becoming then a Minister without Charge.
4. This request has been considered by the Moderator’s Advisory Committee, on the basis of the agreed guidelines, and the Committee is supportive of the request. A suitable resolution is appended, which will be competent only if the 2018 Assembly has earlier amended Par 226 through the overture referred to above.

Additional Resolution:

- 37(a). That, under Par 226(a) of the Code, the Rev JSB Drennan be enrolled as Minister Emeritus of the congregation of Crumlin Road, Belfast.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN