

# BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Convener: Rev RA PATTON

Secretary: Rev DJ BRUCE

1. The purpose of the Board of Mission in Ireland is: “Serving the Church, enabling mission”.

2. Our vision is that increasingly, PCI Congregations will be vibrant communities of Christ, serving and transforming Ireland.

3. To fulfil this purpose and realise this vision, the Board currently pursues four key strategies:

(1) Mission Development. Building the capacity for mission in Ireland

- (a) Research
- (b) Mission Planning
- (c) Mission Development
- (d) Mission Networks

(2) Strategy for Mission. Pushing the boundaries of mission in Ireland

- (a) Home Mission
- (b) Irish Mission
- (c) Deaconesses
- (d) Evangelists

(3) Communication. Narrating the story of mission in Ireland

- (a) ReachOut
- (b) Online presence
- (c) Conferences
- (d) Publications

(4) Support. Enabling the delivery of mission in Ireland

- (a) Finance
- (b) Grants
- (c) Personnel
- (d) Property

4. The Board employs five executive staff, with two full-time and three part-time administrative staff. It has six Committees and a number of Panels, which together seek to turn these key strategies into realities in the lives of Presbyteries and Congregations across the Church.

5. The Board affirms the utter dependence of His people on God alone for mission. All our plans are dependent on Him, and our effectiveness in mission is an outworking of His gracious dealings with His human creation. As in the past, the Board calls the Church to fervent and urgent prayer for the spiritual life of this island, and to seek His will for the future witness of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in these deeply challenging days. All that follows

in this Report is offered in this spirit of absolute dependence on the God who sends us out to proclaim His good news.

## STRATEGY FOR MISSION COMMITTEE

### Mission Planning

1. During 2009/10, the Board has been working with Presbyteries and Congregations in mission planning. The “Tell it Again” materials have been used in hundreds of Congregations, and the process of mission planning has uncovered the scale of the task and the breadth of the opportunities open to us as a Church. Some copies of the “Tell it Again” materials are still available from the BMI office.

### Strategy for Mission Development

2. In light of the resolution passed at the 2009 General Assembly, (Minutes, 2009, p 71) which required the production of “a detailed strategy for supporting mission development at Presbytery and Congregational levels”, the Assembly this year will hear a presentation of this strategy, and be invited to approve it. With Assembly approval the Rev David Thompson ([dthompson@pcinet.org](mailto:dthompson@pcinet.org)) will head up the delivery of a programme of facilitated discussion with each Presbytery over the next number of years, and will help Presbyteries and Congregations navigate the shift from mission planning to mission development. The full text of the proposed strategy is attached as Appendix A to this Report, with an appended resolution, that it is sent to Presbyteries for comment by 31 December 2010.

### Home Mission

3. The Committee offers comment on mission-related matters to the Union Commission when requested to do so. The following Home Mission charges or Congregations are currently vacant, and the Committee is assessing and evaluating the opportunities for mission development in each case:

- Galway
- (Ebrington) and Inch
- Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge, Newtownbutler
- Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
- Carlow and Athy
- (Frankford, Castleblayney) and Corvalley
- Carndonagh and Malin
- Carrigart and Dunfanaghy

### Church Planting

4. The Revs Dario Leal (Cliftonville Road, Belfast) and Andy Carroll (Donabate, North Dublin) have recently begun ministry as Church Planters, having been called by the BMI to these positions. The Board affirms again the necessity for our denomination to be committed to new Church development,

and commends Dario and Andy to the prayers of the wider Church. A meeting with Steve Timmis, an experienced church planter working with the Crowded House initiative in Sheffield and as the European representative of the Acts 29 church-planting network, took place on Wednesday 14 April 2010 to discuss models of church planting.

### **Urban Mission Panel**

*The Rev David Thompson reports:*

5. A Panel to steer the Board's activities in urban settings was launched on 14 April 2010 at an event in Belvoir Presbyterian Church. The Committee has agreed the Panel's membership and its remit is threefold:

- Urban Mission Network – to create, build and sustain an urban mission network for the denomination as a vehicle for sharing stories, bringing practitioners together, highlighting resources, aiding reflection and provoking imagination;
- Urban Mission Strategy – to act as an advisory body to the BMI Strategy for Mission Committee in assessing the allocation of resources in urban mission;
- Urban Mission Research – to commission pieces of research to address some presenting issues in urban mission.

6. By resolution of the Board, Taughmonagh Presbyterian Church in South Belfast Presbytery was designated an Urban Mission Congregation, having applied to the Presbytery for this change in its designation.

### **Nightlight Panel**

*The Rev Alistair Bill reports:*

7. The ministry of Nightlight continues under the Director John Luke, with Linzie Cobain and Brian Simons as the Development Officers and Catherine Dalzell taking responsibility for administration and communication. The project is being reviewed during 2010. The Board recognises and affirms the valuable work that has been done since the inception of this work in September 1995. In seeking to proclaim and demonstrate the Kingdom of God through word and action, Nightlight has involved dozens of volunteers, and touched the lives of thousands of people in the entertainment areas of Belfast. Following an initial period of consultation, completed during the winter, a more complete process of review will be finished by the autumn of 2010, after which the Board will receive a final report.

8. The review will address:

- The vision and values of the project;
- The current spheres of work in Belfast;
- The prioritisation of ministry resources;
- The management structures;
- The place of Nightlight in PCI's developing strategy for Belfast city centre;
- The possibility of multiplication of the model;

- The possibility for continuous learning from similar ministries across the UK and elsewhere;
- The effectiveness of training for volunteers and staff;
- The possibility of additional sources of funding.

### **Evangelism**

9. In the General Board's Panel on Ministries report, a section has been written on identifying and training evangelists. The Board sees this as a priority for the Church at large, and proposes to commit some time and energy to the preparation and delivery of a part-time course for evangelists. This is not to supersede the strong biblical imperative that all believers are called to be witnesses to the transforming power of the gospel, but to recognise that for some, there is a specific gift of an evangelist. This gift once identified needs to be nurtured and used.

WILLIAM HENRY, Convener

## **RESEARCH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee will adjust its emphasis, should the Assembly agree a shift from mission planning to mission development. Among other functions, the Committee will help the Board assess resources from third party agencies, which may be useful in Congregational life and mission. For Congregations that have been envisioned by mission planning, there will be a place to turn for "What next?" ideas.

2. The Committee receives reports from two Panels as follows:

### **Worship Panel Report 2010**

*The Rev Karen Campbell reports:*

3. The "Engaging the Heart" Conference in August 2009 was well attended and provided an important opportunity to be revived by the concept of worship as covenant renewal. John Witvliet, the Director of Calvin Institute of Worship, provided inspirational keynote addresses.

4. The Worship Panel continues to provide a mentoring service available to all musical directors. This has been used by a variety of Congregations over the past year. The musical arranging service continues to be available on request ([mhiggins@pcinet.org](mailto:mhiggins@pcinet.org)) to provide musicians with arrangements for different instruments.

5. During the year, the Worship Panel piloted a 'reluctant organist' workshop for five Presbyteries, where participants could receive organ training for a Saturday morning. The Panel are looking to develop this project in order to encourage other organists.

6. The Panel plans to provide several worship road shows in the incoming year which will provide practical and theological training for those involved in worship leading. The core theme running through each seminar and workshop will be the use of Psalms in worship.

## Revision of the Book of Public Worship Panel

*The Very Rev Dr David Clarke reports:*

7. The Panel and its working groups have met at various times over the winter months and its work has been broken down into several specific areas, as follows:

- Sacraments;
- Presbytery Services;
- Special Occasions, including weddings and funerals;
- Worship and Christian Festivals.

8. Sub-Committees have been established to address each of these areas.

9. The Panel has invited suggestions from Presbyteries on the format of services of Ordination and Installation; and are hopeful that its work will be substantially completed during 2010. When ready, the material will be submitted to Presbyteries for comment, and a resolution to this effect is appended.

10. The Panel plans to complete its work this year and bring a full report to the 2011 General Assembly.

CHRIS KENNEDY, Convener

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the year BMI has published 6 editions of ReachOut magazine, with a growing circulation – 8,000 copies of each edition are distributed. The focus in ReachOut is unashamedly the mission of the Church, and the intention is that Ministers and leaders will be able to find ideas for effective mission, and examples of missional activity that could be replicated in their locality. Circulation could increase. It is noted that 2 out of every 5 Congregations within PCI do not promote the magazine at all. Robin Fairbairn ([rfairbairn@pcinet.org](mailto:rfairbairn@pcinet.org)) can organise a promotional pack for any Congregation on request.

2. BMI hosts [www.missionireland.org](http://www.missionireland.org) with its associated prayer bulletins, blogs and downloadable resources. The site is being refreshed and restructured in time for the Assembly this year. Online booking for events and online payments for events and products are just two of the added facilities, not to mention *Flickr* and *YouTube* connectivity. Prayerfocus, in a new layout, continues to be e-mailed to subscribers as well as being available for downloading in PDF from the website.

3. The Publications Panel has been looking at the production of all of the Board's printed material. This includes the re-publication of some earlier booklets, which remain relevant to PCI members and Ministers. The Communion booklet "The Lord's Supper" has already been refreshed and reprinted in a contemporary format and is available for order from the BMI office or website.

4. Mission in Ireland evenings have again been well supported this year, with an estimated 2,600 people in attendance across 13 locations. There was greater flexibility this year both in the timing and choice of venue. These events

are part of the Board's strategy to tell the story of mission across the Church. During the year, as well as the regular day and residential conferences for Deaconesses and Irish Mission Workers, the Board ran two special conferences on urban mission and missional church. "Cross with Care" in October 2009 was jointly led by Dr Manny Ortiz, Professor of Ministry and Urban Mission, Emeritus, and Dr Susan Baker, Adjunct Professor of Practical Theology, from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. "Total Church" in April 2010 was led by Steve Timmis, co-author of the book of the same title.

5. "Awake to Jesus" – a low-cost edition of Luke's gospel was produced as a resource for Congregations to use in mission. While the devotions, which are linked to the Gospel according to Luke appearing at the end of the booklet, were primarily intended for use during the period leading up to Easter, they were not specifically linked to that period and so could be used at any time of the year. 35,000 copies were distributed.

6. A resolution is appended, proposing that the Communications Committee become a Committee of the Board.

CHERRY POYNTON, Convener

### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

*Mrs Irene Young reports:*

1. The Board currently deploys 9 Irish Mission workers, with one probationer.

2. In partnership with the PW, BMI deploys 28 Deaconesses, with a further 5 student Deaconesses at different stages of preparation.

3. There are currently 36 Ministers serving with the Board, including 2 Church Planters, 2 in urban situations and 32 in Home Mission Congregations.

4. A full directory of personnel serving with the Board is included in Appendix B.

#### **Home and Urban Mission Ministers and Church Planters:**

5. The Rev Dario Leal was ordained and inducted as Church Planter on Cliftonville Road under the supervision of North Belfast Presbytery on 22 September 2009.

6. The Rev Andy Carroll was ordained and inducted as Church Planter, Donabate, North Dublin, under the supervision of Dublin Munster Presbytery on 7 February 2010.

7. The Rev William Montgomery was ordained and inducted as Home Mission Minister in Fermoy and Cahir (stated supply) on 20 March 2010 by Dublin and Munster Presbytery.

#### **Irish Mission Workers:**

8. Mr Keith Preston was transferred from Tyrone Presbytery to serve in East and South Belfast Presbyteries, reaching migrant communities.

9. Mr Jonathan Reid resigned from the Glens of Antrim, Ballymena Presbytery.

10. Mr Eamon Doyle was transferred to Howth and Malahide to undertake a further probationary year, under the supervision of the Rev Dr Gary Millar.

11. Mr Stephen Wilson was transferred to Kells and Ervey on a temporary placement to serve alongside the Rev Dr Brian Savage.

**Deaconesses:**

12. Mrs Elizabeth Matthews received a Call to serve in Elmwood Congregation.

13. Mrs Elizabeth Warnock was Called and Commissioned to serve as a Deaconess in Abbey, Monkstown, alongside the Rev John Seawright, on 6 September 2009.

14. Miss Rosemary Spiers was Called and Commissioned to serve as a Deaconess in First Antrim, alongside the Rev Bill Parker, on 6 December 2009.

**Student Deaconesses:**

15. Mrs Lynda McFaul commenced her probationary year in First Carrickfergus on 1 June 2009, and subsequently received a Call to serve in First Carrickfergus.

16. Mrs Eileen Black, Miss Joanne McCourt, Miss Tracey Nicholl and Mrs Hazel Reid commenced two year training at Union Theological College on 28 September 2009.

17. Miss Amy Johnston commenced one year training at Union Theological College on 28 September 2009, and starts a probationary year in Muckamore on 1 June 2010.

18. Mrs Lorna Lynn resigned as a Student Deaconess on health grounds in September 2009.

**Resignations and Retirements:**

19. Ms Gillian Martin resigned from Woodvale Congregation in March 2010 to commence other employment. She remains a Deaconess on the records of North Belfast Presbytery for one year.

20. Miss Sheila Sutter retired on health grounds from Kells, Ballymena Congregation, in October 2009.

**Line management arrangements:**

21. It is assumed by the Board that where possible, line management responsibility for Deaconesses in congregational situations, Irish Mission workers deployed with a Congregation and other personnel in similar locations should be through the local Minister. To assist Ministers with additional staff, the Board of Christian Training ran a pilot training course in January 2010. The BMI will have further input into future courses, and may seek to provide additional training specific to BMI staff, and/or Home Mission Ministers. An overture relating to The Code Par 302 is appended to reflect this understanding, in relation to Irish Mission workers.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

*Mr Douglas Cowan reports:*

1. This has been a difficult year for all concerned with financial oversight, both within the Church and throughout the commercial and business world, with few indications that the outlook will improve in the short term. However, the Committee affirms that its faith and dependency is not on the world economic situation but on the Lord who has provided all that has been needed to finance the work of the Board for 2009/10.

2. BMI has assets in properties owned, part owned, rented out and rented for staff members. The Committee would like to adjust some of these arrangements but, after a full review, believes that this is not the opportune time to make any changes. This matter will be kept under review.

3. During 2009 the Shankill Road Mission ceased to operate. The Board has incurred costs in the closing of this operation. Arrangements have been made to look after the property until a decision is made about the long-term future of the building.

4. As part of the overall review of BMI accounts, the Committee has had discussions with appropriate groups about the finances of ReachOut, Nightlight and the cost of employing 28 Deaconesses. The Committee is grateful for the support of Congregations and PW to help with the latter and are satisfied that these important areas of the Board's work are being held accountable for the finance involved.

5. In 2009 the Irish Mission Fund was established and the balance carried forward into 2010 to provide grants for Congregations or Presbyteries seeking to appoint evangelists to work in their areas. Congregations or Presbyteries seeking financial help with the employment of evangelists (full or part time) may apply to Lorraine Beatty for application forms and assistance with the process. ([lbeatty@pcinet.org](mailto:lbeatty@pcinet.org))

6. The Committee reviews the Board accounts quarterly and is satisfied that these are in line with budgetary projections. Where there have been variations, these have been investigated. One major difference in the figures in 2009 arose because some capital expenditure and sale of surplus land included in the original budgets did not take place because of the property downturn both in the Republic and Northern Ireland. Variations in the currency value of the Euro have also affected the Board's financial position.

**GRANTS PANEL**

*The Rev David Bruce reports:*

1. The Grants Panel with members of the BMI Finance and Property Committees has met regularly to consider and approve grant applications from Congregations and Presbyteries. The Board currently makes grants under the following main headings:

Capital	For construction of buildings and land purchase. This is open to Home and Urban Mission Congregations only.
Property repairs	For assistance towards repairs to Church property. This is open to Home and Urban Mission Congregations only.
Mission support	For missional projects, such as the employment of additional personnel, equipment purchase or the refurbishment of facilities for missional purposes. This is open to all Congregations.
Urban Mission support	For the deployment of mission support staff in urban situations. This is generally a fixed term grant over three years, in partnership with a local Congregation or Presbytery. It is open to all Congregations in urban situations.
Irish Mission Fund	For the employment of evangelists, usually based with a Congregation or group of Congregations. It is open to all Congregations and Presbyteries.

2. In addition, the Board also administers loan funds and fabric grants for Home and Urban Mission Congregations, and the Grants Panel manages these arrangements.

3. Mr Nehru Dass is the BMI Finance Manager with overall financial operational responsibility, ([ndass@pcinet.org](mailto:ndass@pcinet.org))

4. Miss Lorraine Beatty has executive responsibility for managing the Board's grant-making capacity, and its properties, and acts as secretary to the Panel, ([lbeatty@pcinet.org](mailto:lbeatty@pcinet.org))

### **PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

*Mr Brian Knox reports:*

In addition to the stated meetings of the Property Committee, representative sub-Groups, using the varying expertise of members, have visited numerous Church properties, meeting with many Congregational representatives and thereafter reporting to the Board as appropriate. The following is a brief summary of the work of the Committee since reporting to the 2009 General Assembly.

#### **Irvinestown**

1. The new replacement Church building has been completed and the Congregation is enjoying the facilities provided.

#### **Mullingar**

2. Negotiations to acquire a new site for a larger Church building are progressing and several meetings have been held with representatives from Westmeath County Council, the site owners. The Property Committee continues to progress matters, hopefully concluding the site purchase soon.

**Mountmellick**

3. Positive attempts to sell the listed Church building and adjoining manse are continuing, without any offers being made to date. In the interests of safety, some essential maintenance works have been carried out.

**Drogheda**

4. Tenders have been obtained and statutory approvals granted in respect of the new Church building on a site acquired in South Drogheda. The Committee was encouraged to learn during several meetings with Drogheda representatives, of the commitment of the local Congregation to the next phase of the project, however unfortunately there has been no progress to date regarding the sale of the existing Church. The local Congregation realise that, while BMI have committed to support this exciting scheme with a substantial grant, no work can be commenced until the project funding is secured. Positive discussions are ongoing.

**Waterford**

5. The ownership of St Patricks, Waterford, a listed building in need of essential repair and upgrading works, has been transferred to the Methodist Church. The handover service took place in October 2009 and our involvement has ceased, although the door is open for us to establish a new Presbyterian witness in the area.

**Ballyshannon**

6. Due to the downturn in the property market no sound offers have yet been received for the Church building. Meetings have been held with the Architectural Conservation Officer from Donegal County Council with a view to obtaining permission to remove pulpit, pews etc, thereby hopefully making the property more marketable. Essential maintenance works are being undertaken to minimise further deterioration to the property.

**Corvalley**

7. The sale of the old manse has progressed, a holding deposit having been paid by the purchaser. A contract of sale is presently being prepared for completion.

**Donabate**

8. Arrangements have been made to rent a house in Donabate for an initial 12 month period for the Board's Church Planter.

**Howth and Malahide**

9. Proposals to extend the Church Hall at Malahide have been agreed and building works are to be progressed at this time.

**Shankill Road Mission**

10. Essential remedial work to dangerous stonework has been completed on the SRM building, and it is realised that there will be the need for certain other works to secure the building. All members of the Property Committee have visited the building, however final decisions regarding the future of the property have yet to be taken, bearing in mind the present state of the property market.

**Lisbellaw Manse**

11. Tenders have been obtained and statutory approvals granted in respect of agreed work to extend and upgrade the manse building. A grant towards this work was approved and works are presently underway.

**Clones Manse**

12. Maintenance/upgrading works to the interior of the manse have been carried out and essential re-roofing work is presently underway.

**Kilkenny**

13. Following appropriate researches and surveys, a new house has been purchased for the Irish Mission Worker in Kilkenny.

**General**

14. The Committee continues to strive to be supportive in respect of property issues throughout the work of the Board. Over the year numerous matters have been under discussion in addition to those already referred to. These include; Arklow; former manse in Galway; Donegal manse; residence in Cork; Fermoy; Cahir; Bellasis; Sligo.

15. The Property Committee continues to work in close co-operation with other relevant Committees in order to give appropriate ongoing assistance to the Board in property matters. Work on preparation of a comprehensive database regarding all title deeds of properties owned by BMI is progressing. The location of most title deeds has now been recorded, and in due course the deeds will be examined and any difficulties noted will be resolved.

16. The Assembly will be asked by overture to amend Par 300(4) of The Code to allow proceeds from the sale of Home Mission properties to be used for missional purposes through the normal grants mechanisms of the Board.

**SPUD**

1. This year SPUD delegates had the chance to participate in a session jointly led by BMI and BMO. The young people were given a chance to prayerfully reflect on accounts of different communities, both at home and abroad, fictional and non-fictional. They considered how far these reflected their own communities, and went on to explore how we both identify and respond to needs in both local and global communities. The young people were asked what makes them care about the lives of others. Being loved by God, they said, meant that they loved others. They were convinced that we must build relationships with people, learn their stories, and that our greatest resource in responding to these people's needs is God. The young people were encouraged to work with

God, not just for Him. Prayer, patience, and being prepared to answer tough questions were all things that the young people felt were important to ensure that the Biblical message of caring for others is translated from Word into action. The young people felt strongly that greater co-operation between the Mission Boards would be beneficial, and were keen to maintain a voice in the ongoing conversations surrounding holistic mission and community engagement.

## APPENDIX A

### A DETAILED STRATEGY FOR FUTURE MISSION DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. Reflections on the present Mission Planning Process

- 1.1 May 2010 saw the completion of a process in which both Presbyteries and Congregations have drawn up Mission Plans. The exercise has enabled our denomination to take stock of the opportunities and challenges we face in mission in Ireland today and our readiness to respond.
- 1.2 The Board of Mission in Ireland pays tribute to the work of those who, in prayer and dependence on God, have given themselves to the task of mission planning at both Presbytery and Congregational levels.
- 1.3 At the completion of this process, the Board of Mission in Ireland remains eager to identify the best means by which to fulfil its role of serving the Church and enabling mission. To that end the Board offers the following key observations and conclusions which represent the valuable lessons learned through the mission planning process.

#### 2. Presbytery Mission Planning

- 2.1 The limitations of Presbytery capacity.
  - 2.1.1 The Presbytery Mission Plan process proved to be an exacting task. The Board recognises the constraint of time commitment available in the already busy schedules of those who led the process. Additionally, this was the first time Presbyteries had been asked to undertake such a task. The nineteen Presbytery Mission Plans vary widely in terms of content and length. In part this reflects the variety of situations across Presbyteries as to their geographical spread, context for mission and cohesion. In addition however, it does appear that those Presbyteries facing greater challenges in terms of sustainability of Congregations and the pressures of secularisation of society invested more in, and benefited most from, the exercise. In every case, Presbytery Mission Plans focused more on analysing the present situation than anticipating future strategic responses.

*It is evident that if Presbyteries are to exercise a significant role in planning for mission in future that their capacity to fulfil this task will need to be enhanced. This will require maximising the limited time and resources available to undertake this crucial aspect of Presbytery life and work.*

- 2.2 The need for outside facilitation.
- 2.2.1 Presbytery Mission Plan teams were reluctant to comment on specific challenges and opportunities facing Congregations in mission, much less begin to evaluate their responses. In part this may have resulted from a lack of available information and knowledge of local situations. Another factor at work, however, was a widespread feeling of discomfort at being asked to comment on the life and witness of neighbouring Congregations. This issue of proximity impedes Presbytery's readiness to exercise its role in local accountability with the necessary rigour.

*Experience suggests that only with the support of a degree of external facilitation will Presbytery be enabled to fulfil its role of oversight of Congregations in developing their local mission.*

- 2.3 Presbytery as an agent of mission support.
- 2.3.1 Many Presbyteries were creative in responding to last year's General Assembly resolution asking them to offer support to Congregations in their task of mission planning. Presbytery's ability in supporting Congregations in mission planning provides a platform to build upon in the future. The bringing together of neighbouring Congregations in geographical clusters seems to offer a particularly valuable means of exploring new possibilities in mission.

*Opportunities for Presbytery to bring together Congregations for mutual support, encouragement and training in mission must become an ongoing part of its life and work.*

### 3. Congregational Mission Planning

- 3.1 The importance of context.
- 3.1.1 Both the *Tell it Again* and *Tearfund Discovery* resources proved popular vehicles in enabling Congregations to engage their membership in planning for mission. Both resources recognised the range of different starting points for Congregations and offered a varied toolbox of materials rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

*The need to take seriously the variety of contexts for mission, both in terms of Congregations and the communities they serve, is crucial to the effectiveness of future mission development. Congregations need to continue to be encouraged to develop their ability to read their local situations and develop appropriate responses.*

- 3.2 An atmosphere of worship and dialogue.
- 3.2.1 The importance of the emphasis of engaging in this process guided by the Word and in an atmosphere of prayer, in an effort to genuinely discern God's will, positively undergirded the whole

exercise. Additionally, there was widespread testimony to the value of an approach to mission planning that facilitated discussion among members. Many long-standing impediments to mission were named for the first time and the levels of awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing situation facing local Congregations deepened.

*The value of a worshipful, relational and conversational, rather than a managerial and detached, approach to mission development needs to continue to be built upon. Mission strategy must be something we do with each other before God rather than to each other as an exercise in mere organisational re-structuring.*

### 3.3 The outworking of our Presbyterian polity.

- 3.3.1 A much-undervalued strength of our Presbyterian polity is the interlocking relationship between the local Congregation, Presbyteries and the Boards of the General Assembly. No-where is this more a strength to build upon than in the area of mission. The mission planning process modelled a positive working relationship in which mutual respect began to replace institutional distrust.

*As in all areas of Church life, unity is a fragile treasure, which God calls us to maintain and develop. We need to learn to become more comfortable with, and value, gracious creative tension. Our ability as a denomination to respond to future challenges and opportunities in mission may rise or fall on our aptitude in harnessing the latent strength of this aspect of our Presbyterian heritage.*

## 4. Future Strategy: From Mission Planning to Mission Development

- 4.1 While in no way wanting to under-play the importance of the concrete outcomes of the mission planning process, the most positive, lasting impact of the initiative may in the longer term be measured less by the specific projects generated and more by the culture of new missional thinking created. Nevertheless, it would be easy for the gains of all that has been done over the last two years to be lost by a failure to follow through on commitments.
- 4.2 In order to harness the best of the new breeze of mission blowing throughout the denomination and to support Congregations, in particular, in developing their local mission, the Board proposes a subtle, but important, shift of future emphasis from *mission planning* to *mission development*.
- 4.3 *Mission development* needs to be seen as a dynamic ongoing process to which we are always bending our minds and hearts and wills, rather than an exercise in *mission planning* to which we routinely return every five years.
- 4.4 By adopting this *mission development* approach, the Board's priorities in encouraging future strategy for mission would therefore be built around the following key principles:

- 4.4.1 **Building** the capacity of Presbytery as a missional body;
  - 4.4.2 **Facilitating** Presbytery in both supporting Congregations in mission and exercising their role of oversight;
  - 4.4.3 **Stimulating** an atmosphere of worshipful reflection on the challenges of mission in Ireland;
  - 4.4.4 **Equipping** Congregations to understand, and respond to, the challenges and opportunities of local mission;
  - 4.4.5 **Harnessing** the potential of Presbyterian polity for mission.
- 4.5 In terms of the ongoing outworking of these principles for mission development, two key questions suggest themselves.

- *How can the Board of Mission in Ireland and Presbyteries work together in the support and oversight of Congregations in the task of local mission?*

- *How can the momentum for mission gained at Congregational level through the mission planning process be built upon?*

## 5. Empowering Presbytery as a missional body

It is the exception, rather than the rule, that Presbytery is an agent of mission. More typically, Presbytery acts in *support* of Congregations as the primary agents of mission. Equally, the role of exercising *oversight* of Congregational mission also falls within Presbytery's remit. Presbytery fulfilment of either of these responsibilities is not without its present difficulties, particularly surrounding issues of capacity and proximity, as noted above.

- 5.1 PRESBYTERY MISSION AUDIT. To assist Presbytery in exercising these roles more effectively, the Board proposes the development of a rolling process of Presbytery Mission Audit. Facilitated by the Mission Development Officer in conjunction with Presbytery Mission Development Committees, the process of Mission Audit would proceed as follows:
- 5.2. SCHEDULE
- 5.2.1 Four Presbyteries audited per year, beginning September 2011. One Presbytery Audit undertaken in each of the following periods Sept/Oct; Nov/Jan; Feb/Mar; Apr/May.
- 5.3 PROCESS
- 5.3.1 Two month review process facilitated by BMI Mission Development Officer along with Presbytery Mission Development Committee.
- 5.4 COMPONENTS: With room for flexibility determined by local situations, the following basic plan is proposed:
- Gathering of Congregational information by questionnaire;
  - Joint Presbytery Worship service around missional theme (Sunday night, stated Presbytery meeting, or other);
  - Preparatory meeting of Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer to examine Congregational returns;

- Series of informal face-to-face interviews undertaken by Presbytery Mission Development Committee and BMI Mission Development Officer with Minister and one representative elder to review each Congregation's mission and to pray together;
- Compilation of short, focused comment on each Congregation's progress in mission with further suggestions to explore as appropriate;
- Identification of any particular common challenge or emerging opportunity for mission within the Presbytery area or within its Congregations;
- Production of Presbytery Mission Audit document;
- Audit document presented to Presbytery for discussion and approval;
- BMI/Presbytery facilitated training day on presenting issues for Congregations in mission development and/or to showcase potential models for mission;
- Twelve months later, Presbytery Mission Development Committee obtain a written review of Congregational progress and follow up with personal contact where necessary;
- Any future missional issue arising within Presbytery bounds would then be considered in the light of the latest audit and by dialogue between all the parties concerned.

#### 5.5 PRESBYTERY CONSULTATIONS.

- 5.5.1 Recognising that there may be some overlap with the existing system of Presbytery Consultation, it is proposed that in the calendar year in which a Presbytery undertakes a Presbytery Mission Audit, the process of Presbytery Consultation be suspended.

### 6. Maintaining and supporting Congregational momentum in mission

Due to the sheer scale of the task and the complex variety of issues surrounding mission in Ireland today, the capacity of Presbyteries or the Board of Mission in Ireland, to positively contribute to the mission of Congregations directly, is limited.

- 6.1 NETWORKS. Alongside its work with Presbyteries in the provision of a rolling Mission Audit, the Board of Mission in Ireland can also serve and enable mission at Congregational level through introducing a series of networks for mutual learning and encouragement. These networks might centre upon the following three broad contexts, or categories for mission.
- 6.1.1 *Urban* – addressing the challenges of mission in the urban contexts of town, city, and housing estate.
- 6.1.2 *Rural* – addressing the challenges of mission in the diverse landscape that represents rural Ireland today.
- 6.1.3 *Missional Church* – addressing the broader, and less geographically specific, issues of transition from a culture of maintenance to a mindset for mission.
- 6.2 MAINTAINING THE NETWORKS. It is envisaged that the networks would operate primarily through a web-based presence, regular e-bulletins

and personal gatherings of practitioners. The Board of Mission in Ireland's role would be to develop and maintain the networks based around the following key objectives:

- 6.2.1 Sharing stories of initiatives in mission;
- 6.2.2 Bringing practitioners together;
- 6.2.3 Highlighting available resources;
- 6.2.4 Aiding reflection on particular challenges to mission;
- 6.2.5 Provoking imagination to stimulate new models of mission.

## 7. Which way now?

- 7.1 The Board recognises that any strategy for mission development needs to be tested as to its potential to add value to what is happening on the ground, and will benefit by being refined by the reflection of the wider Church. The Board of Mission in Ireland proposes to send this outline strategy to Presbyteries for their comments to be returned by 31 December 2010.
- 7.2 In addition, to continue to build upon the work done in Presbytery and Congregational mission planning, it is proposed that the Board's Mission Development Officer meets with Mission Development Committees from each Presbytery in the period September 2010 to May 2011, to undertake the following three tasks:
- To examine and make brief comment on each Congregation's Mission Plan;
  - To consider how the Presbytery Plan might be refined in the light of Congregational Mission Plans;
  - To present a report comprising the above to Presbytery.

In so doing, this exercise will give a flavour of what is proposed in the Presbytery Mission Audit process.

## APPENDIX B

### Directory of Ministers, Deaconesses and Irish Mission workers currently serving with the Board.

#### Home Mission Ministers

Rev R Agnew	Congregations in (brackets) are not in the Home Mission.
Rev M Anderson	(1st Monaghan) and Smithborough
Rev S Anketell	Arklow
Rev Janice Browne	First Baileborough, Corraneary, (Trinity Bailieborough)
Rev D Campbell	(Kerrykeel, Milford) and Rathmullan
Rev CFD Clements	(Blackrock) and Bray
Rev C Dickson	Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo
Rev JG Faris	(Cavanaleck) and Aughentaine
Rev CJ Gamble	Cork and Aghada
	Naas

Rev WJ Hayes	Tullamore and Mountmellick
Rev K Henderson	(Aughnacloy) and Ballymagrane
Rev J Honeyford	(2nd Castleberg) and Alt
Rev KA Jones	(Waterside) and Fahan
Rev SJ Lockington	Corboy and Mullingar
Rev R Love	Taughmonagh
Rev Dr DK McCrory	Maynooth
Rev GJ Mackarel	Drumkeeran, Killeshandra, Cavan, Bellasis
Rev DJ Montgomery	Greystones
Rev K Meyer	Sandymount
Rev Dr JG Millar	Howth and Malahide
Rev NS Millen	(Dundalk, Castlebellingham) and Carlingford
Rev GA Mitchell	Sligo and Boyle
Rev William Montgomery	Fermoy and Cahir
Rev DT Moore	Kilkenny
Rev T Morgan	Clones, Stonebridge, Ballyhobridge, Newbliss
Rev SW Rea	Enniscorthy and Wexford
Rev DW Reid	(Ardstraw) and Douglas
Rev SJ Richmond	Donegal
Rev J Rushton	Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount
Rev Dr RB Savage	Kells and Ervey
Rev RB Thompson	(Badoney, Corrick) and Glenelly
Rev DJ Woodside	Drogheda
Rev GP Young	Moville and Greenbank
Rev Geoff Hewitt (Methodist)	Limerick
Vacant	Galway
Vacant	(Ebrington) and Inch
Vacant	Lisbellaw, Lisnaskea, Maguiresbridge, Newtownbutler
Vacant	Ballina, Killala, Ballymote
Vacant	Carlow and Athy
Vacant	(Frankford, Castleblayney) and Corvalley
Vacant	Carndonagh and Malin
Vacant	Carrigart and Dunfanaghy

### **Urban Mission Ministers**

Rev M Gibson	Westbourne
Rev D Rankin	Strand, Belfast

### **Church Planters**

Rev D Leal	Cliftonville Road, North Belfast Presbytery
Rev A Carroll	Donabate, Dublin and Munster Presbytery

### **Deaconesses**

Jenny Clegg	Ballycrochan, Bangor
Amanda Cooper	New Row, Coleraine
Muriel Cromie	Belfast City Hospital chaplaincy team

Doreen Draffin	Whitehouse
Eleanor Drysdale	Wellington, Ballymena
Lynda Gibson	NI Prison Service chaplaincy team
Jean Gwyn	Royal Victoria Hospital chaplaincy team
Sharon Heron	Strand, Belfast
Roberta Irvine	First Comber
Christine Kyle	Ulster Hospital chaplaincy team
Phyllis Linton	West Church, Ballymena
Michelle McCauley	Ballygowan
Heather McCracken	Alexandra and locum Royal Victoria Hospital chaplaincy team
Sonya McCullough	Shore Street, Donaghadee
Sadie McCullough	Whiteabbey
Lynda McFaul	First Carrickfergus
Carol McRoberts	Tullycarnet
Elizabeth Matthews	Elmwood, Lisburn
Carol O'Hara	Antrim and Musgrave Park Hospital chaplaincy team
Jackie O'Neill	Joymount, Carrickfergus
Julie Peake	Portrush
Margaret Robertson	Gardenmore, Larne
Jenny Robinson	South Belfast Friendship House (Social Witness Board)
Kathleen Spence	Scarva Street, Banbridge
Evelyn White	First Lisburn
Rosemary Spiers	First Antrim
Liz Warnock	Abbey, Monkstown

### **Student Deaconesses**

Amy Johnston	2nd year Muckamore (probationary placement, 1 year)
Eileen Black	1st year
Joanne McCourt	1st year
Tracey Nicholl	1st year
Hazel Reid	1st year

### **Irish Mission Workers**

David Boyd	Adelaide Road, Dublin
Tom Dowling	Kilkenny
Eamon Doyle	Howth and Malahide (probationer)
Kevin Hargaden	Maynooth
Harry Moreland	Fermoy and Cahir
Billy Patterson	Drogheda
Keith Preston	Migrant communities, South and East Belfast
Stephen Wilson	Kells and Ervey
William Workman	Athy and Carlow
Philip Whelton	Arklow

## RESOLUTIONS

1. That the report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note the Board's strategy for future mission development (Appendix A) and direct that this paper be sent down to Presbyteries for consideration and comment by 31st December 2010, and ask the Board to bring a final report to the General Assembly in 2011.
3. That the General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to welcome the proposal in Appendix A, 7.2, that the BMI Mission Development Officer meets with Mission Development Committees from each Presbytery in the period September 2010 to May 2011 for the purposes outlined.
4. That the General Assembly ask the BMI Research and Resources Committee through its Panel on the Revision of the Book on Public Worship to prepare a Report and send it down to Presbyteries for consideration and response by 31st December 2010.
5. That the General Assembly commend the work of Nightlight under its Director, Mr John Luke, and encourage volunteers to offer themselves for service.
6. That the General Assembly encourage Congregations to set aside one Sunday in the year to celebrate our rich access to Scripture and in this regard, commend the online resources of the Bible Societies in Ireland to Ministers and Kirk Sessions.
7. That the BMI Communications Committee, being a Committee of the General Assembly, becomes a Committee of the Board.
8. 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:

### OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

#### **Anent Par 40(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 40(4) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place: "The Session shall record attendance of communicants at the Lord's Supper and may do so by the use of tokens or other appropriate method approved by Presbytery."

RA PATTON

### OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

#### **Anent Par 280(1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 280(1) of the Code, the words "the Irish Mission Superintendent" and "the Presbyterian Mutual Society Agent" be deleted, and that the words "Youth and Inter-Church Relations" be deleted and the words "and Youth and Children's" be substituted in their place, and that the words "Youth Board" be deleted and the words "Youth and Children's Board" be substituted in their place.

**Anent Par 300(4) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 300(4) of the Code, the words “a Home Mission Repairs Fund account from which” be deleted and the words “the Board of Mission in Ireland so that” be substituted in their place, and that the words “towards the acquisition or repair or improvement of Church or manse property held in connection with any congregations or charges under the Board” be deleted.

**Anent Par 302(3)(a) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 302(3)(a) of the Code be deleted and the following substituted in its place:

(3)(a) An Irish Mission Worker is responsible to the Presbytery for his life and doctrine and at Presbytery Consultations enquiry should be made about his work. Immediate responsibility for the direction and supervision of the work of Irish Mission Workers shall rest with the Minister or in some instances the Presbytery/Board having charge. The Board shall exercise a general responsibility. Irish Mission Workers shall report annually on their work to the Presbytery and the Board of Mission in Ireland.

DJ BRUCE