

# COUNCIL FOR CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS

Convener: Rev Dr GRAHAM CONNOR

Secretary: Rev DAVID THOMPSON

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. At time of writing the Council for Congregational Life and Witness has met on two occasions since last year's General Assembly. A third meeting is scheduled in May to maintain necessary progress in the run up to the General Assembly.

2. The Council has had a threefold focus this year:

- (i) Continuing to develop the life of the Council both strategically and structurally. Strategic development has focussed on a listening exercise in which all nineteen Presbyteries have been visited, giving members the opportunity to express their views on priorities in congregational life and witness and how the Council can most effectively offer support in addressing them. Structural development has involved continuing to lay foundations on which to build, and shaping ways of integrating and developing inherited aspects of the work. These have included integrating *Presbyterian Women* into the wider remit of the Women's Ministry Strategy and Coordination Committee, reviewing SPUD and the Volunteers and Interns Programme (VIP).
- (ii) Crafting Committee remits and agendas to deliver a programme of events, training and resourcing aimed at supporting and developing all areas of the life and witness of local Congregations.
- (iii) Constructing a framework strategy to shape and guide the Council's resourcing and supporting of Congregations for their life and witness as the work continues to progress and grow.

3. Reflecting these areas of focus, the remainder of the report is presented under three headings:

- THE DEVELOPING LIFE OF THE COUNCIL
- AN EMERGING AGENDA AROUND CORE ASPECTS OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS
- RESOURCING AND SUPPORTING CONGREGATIONS FOR THEIR LIFE AND WITNESS

4. The report also references significant pieces of work relating to the areas of PCI Counselling and the PCI Family Holiday. At time of writing, progress is ongoing in both areas. It is hoped to provide more up to date detail by way of the Supplementary Reports.

5. Plans for developing the vision of *Fruitful Congregations* as the Council's central theme have been advanced.

## THE DEVELOPING LIFE OF THE COUNCIL

### Active listening

6. A major focus of this year's life has been active listening to the wider Church. The exercise of Presbytery Engagement completed in March with all nineteen Presbyteries visited. The Council is grateful to Presbytery Clerks, host venues, those who attended, executive and administrative staff and Committee Conveners who have made this unprecedented piece of work possible. The task of analysing and making sense of all the returns is ongoing and will shape and nuance the formation of the Council's agenda in terms of both content and delivery. A flavour of the early impressions is woven throughout the report (see paragraphs 41, 50, 54, 58, 61, 64, 68, 71 and 73). A resolution instructing Council to provide each Presbytery with the feedback from their engagement for examination and comment, with a view to continuing the conversation, is appended.

### Potential, progress, pace, problems and practices

7. As the work of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness moved into its second year, the scale of its remit continued to be daunting. However it is also enormously exciting to see what is beginning to develop. The potential for an increasingly coordinated and effective support and accompaniment for Congregations in the development of their ministry and mission is what drives the life of the Council and its agenda.

8. Enormous progress has been made in many areas, but it should be expected that the Council will remain in something of a transitional period for quite some time. It is simply not possible to give immediate detailed attention to all the issues and questions that have come with various aspects of the work passed on from the previous Board structures. Pressing matters with particularly significant implications have naturally taken priority. Developments in some of these areas are detailed below. Additionally, as new work has expanded, the Council has experienced significant growing pains. With every new Panel, Task Group and Organising Group comes the challenge of finding Conveners and adequately populating membership. The Council was grateful to receive an additional member from each Presbytery to help alleviate these pressures.

9. The process of developing adequate reporting mechanisms for a wide range of Organising Groups attending to the detail of events under the oversight of Council Committees is a matter of ongoing consideration. The challenge is to strike an appropriate balance between proper accountability and an expectation of a level of detail that would quickly swamp Committee agendas.

10. Improving means of communication with Congregations and networks of key leaders is a priority if the Council is to be able to deliver its remit. The new PCI website and associated platforms of communication are eagerly anticipated. The ability to quickly harness their potential will be crucial if a two-way flow of information between the Council and Congregations is to be developed. Similarly, the relationship forged through the Presbytery Engagement exercise needs to be built upon to maintain the momentum established.

11. The Council is committed to continuing to cultivate a range of practices which will develop the embodiment of the principles of accountability, communication and engagement enshrined in the 2014 Structures Review.

### **Integrating Presbyterian Women**

12. A major piece of work this year involved arriving at a suitable structure to incorporate *Presbyterian Women* into the life of the Council. After careful consideration and consultation, the new arrangement gained final approval from the Finance and Staffing Commission.

13. The structure involves the oversight of the ongoing running of *Presbyterian Women* by a PW Panel, which will sit under the Council Committee renamed the Women's Ministry Strategy and Coordination Committee. This arrangement allows *Presbyterian Women* to run with minimal change to its structure of relating to congregational groups through its Forum and Presbytery LINKs. It also ensures a good balance of functional autonomy for *Presbyterian Women* while ensuring its strategic contribution to the overall development of women's ministry through Panel representation on the Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee. Overlap in membership between the two bodies will ensure good two way communication and common direction.

14. In light of the new arrangements, the job descriptions of the PW General Secretary and the PW Development Officer were to be re-examined in terms of designated responsibilities servicing the organisational requirements of *Presbyterian Women* and any anticipated wider contribution to the development of the strategy and coordination of women's ministry in the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. With the subsequent vacancy created by the resignation of Caroline Hawthorne from the post of PW General Secretary, that post has been lightly reshaped and re-designated Women's Ministry and Presbyterian Women's Development Officer. The Council record their thanks to Caroline for the energy and vision she brought to her work and the significant part she played in the development of *Presbyterian Women*. The focus of the previously designated post of PW Development Officer remains unchanged, but it has been renamed PW Support Officer.

15. Important details of the new arrangements are set out below for the information of the Assembly.

### **A. The Role and membership of the Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee**

#### **Strategy Role**

To envision, equip and enable Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for women's ministry and mission in line with the key Council themes of Discipleship, Leadership, Worship, Outreach, Global Mission Involvement and Pastoral Care, and in conjunction with strategy for Youth, Children's and Family Ministry.

#### **Coordinating Role**

- To ensure good two-way communication with the Council in the area of women's ministry and mission
- To ensure good two-way communication with the other Council Committees
- To ensure good two-way communication with *Presbyterian Women*

- To ensure coordination of resourcing and training and in the area of women's ministry through the Council's Congregational Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel
- To oversee delivery of congregational resources, events and training in women's ministry
  - (i) directly through *Presbyterian Women*
  - (ii) in conjunction with *Presbyterian Women*
  - (iii) on occasions out with, but never in competition with, *Presbyterian Women* – in service of the delivery of the remits of the other Council Committees

**Membership of Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee (\*indicates overlapping membership with the Presbyterian Women's Panel)**

Moderator\*, Clerk\*, Council Convener\*, Council Secretary\* (4)  
 Convener of WS&C Committee\*, President of PW\* (2)

Two women drawn from the membership of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness (2)

Two members\* with a detailed experience of PW who also serve on the PW Panel (2)

Two women chosen for their wider vision for women's ministry (2)

One member (male or female) chosen to bring a congregational perspective on women's ministry (1)

*Women's Ministry and Presbyterian Women's Development Officer\* to sit and deliberate*

**B. The Role and membership of the Presbyterian Women's Panel**

**Role**

- To act as the decision making body of the organisation of *Presbyterian Women* and the main delivery unit of women's ministry under the Council of Congregational Life and Witness.
- To be responsible for the spiritual life of the organisation as it:
  - decides the theme and direction of *Presbyterian Women* taking on board the theme and direction of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness and the wider Church
  - promotes women's ministry
  - encourages prayer
  - educates regarding mission at home and overseas
  - organises the Annual Meeting and other conferences in association with the Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel
  - produces resources
  - provides guidance for PW LINK and PW Group Meetings
- To be responsible for the organisation's finances as it:
  - educates about the Mission Fund
  - allocates grants
  - decides projects in consultation with other finance raising bodies within PCI

- formulates financial policies for speakers' fees etc in consultation with the Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel
- To be responsible for policy making and communication within the organisation
  - reviewing existing policies, as necessary
  - communicate current policy to PW LINKs and PW Groups
- To work on behalf of the organisation in partnership with all the Committees of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, the Council for Mission in Ireland in relation to deaconesses, the Council for Global Mission in relation to missionaries, and other Councils and Committees as necessary in relation to South Belfast Friendship House.
- To oversee the production of the *Wider World* magazine
- To be consulted on Council staffing arrangements as they relate to *Presbyterian Women*

### **Membership**

(\*indicates overlapping membership with the Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee)

Council Convener\*, Council Secretary\*, Convener of WS&C Committee\*, President of PW\*, Home Vice President of PW, Overseas Vice President of PW (6)

Two members\* drawn from the membership of the WS&C Committee (2)  
Seven members drawn from a PW Volunteer Bank into which members' names are submitted (7)

*Women's Ministry and Presbyterian Women's Development Officer\* and Presbyterian Women's Support Officer to sit and deliberate*

### **SPUD 2015/16**

16. SPUD's theme this year has centred on how to equip young people through congregational life to thrive as followers of Jesus in the world beyond. Using the story of Daniel as an anchor point in Scripture, the issue has been framed as "equipping our young people in Jerusalem for their life in Babylon".

17. An overnight conference was held at Wellington Presbyterian Church on 15th-16th April 2016 where delegates wrestled with this issue from individual experience and their reflections on growing up in a variety of Congregations. This provided the first step in discussing, thinking through and framing the issue. The Working Group will compile feedback into a brief report to be passed to the Youth, Children's and Family Strategy and Coordination Committee for consideration as to how best to integrate the insights offered into the life of the Church at Council and congregational levels.

### **SPUD Review**

18. The crucial and refreshing role of SPUD within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is widely acknowledged. Since its inception, SPUD has made a vital contribution to enriching the Church's understanding of many issues through the perspective of its younger members. Nevertheless multiple changes

to the environment in which SPUD operates have necessitated taking stock and consideration of the best way forward. The Council has completed a review of SPUD aimed at achieving five key outcomes:

- Re-establishing the primary focus of SPUD
- Reimagining elements of the programme to address changes in the environment in which SPUD operates, falling numbers and a sense of declining momentum
- Reassigning aspects of work that emerged through SPUD elsewhere in the Council agenda

Repositioning SPUD as part of wider Youth and Young Adults' agenda

Reflecting on how SPUD offers a vehicle for developing leaders

19. The outcome and way forward involves four aspects.

- (i) A constant stream of requests for SPUD representation on Assembly Councils, Committees, Panels and Task Groups has developed in recent years. While this is an indication of SPUD's success in providing a trusted voice of younger members of PCI into a wide variety of contexts and issues, it is simply not possible for SPUD to meet this demand. Consequently, the Council advises the Assembly that it is necessary to explore alternative ways to gain the representative voice and perspective of younger members in policy formation should it wish to continue to do so.
- (ii) It is important that SPUD retains the ability to speak proactively into the Church's life, rather than merely reacting to General Assembly Reports. In recent years the process of compiling the SPUD Report has enabled that to happen. To maintain that valuable contribution, commencing in 2017, an annual one day event will be the focus of drawing together young people for a facilitated discussion on an issue chosen by the SPUD Working Group. The texture and outcome of that discussion will be compiled into a brief report. It is anticipated that this will be passed on to a relevant Council, Committee or Panel for their further consideration.
- (iii) Grow Your Own SPUDs has been the vehicle by which facilitating young people to have opportunity to speak, participate, understand and decide at congregational level has been encouraged. This has been a helpful extension of the original focus of SPUD which revolved around the General Assembly. Gaining real momentum at congregational level, however, has been difficult because of limited capacity. To better develop this emphasis, the Council will revisit the Grow Your Own SPUDs material in conjunction with related aspects of the Close To Home initiative and the youth ministry element of Youth, Children's and Family Strategy. A new package for congregational development of youth participation will be completed by 2018.
- (iv) To endeavour to encourage and enthuse an increase in SPUD participation at the General Assembly, commencing next year, a two night SPUD overnight coinciding with the beginning of Assembly week, will be trialled. Commencing on Sunday night and running through to Tuesday morning, a SPUD community of delegates drawn from the one day event and directly from local congregations, will have the opportunity to collaboratively examine the Assembly Reports, co-

write speeches to be delivered throughout the week and play a part in the life of Assembly.

20. In connection with the outcome of the review, the Council is exploring the most effective means of organising, overseeing and developing appropriate reporting mechanisms for SPUD as it moves into this new phase of ministry.

21. The Council encourage the prayerful and practical support of the Assembly in these experiments in maintaining, refreshing and developing the valuable contribution of SPUD to the Assembly and the wider ministry of the Church.

### **Volunteers and Interns Programme (VIP) Review**

22. Changes in legislation in recent years governing volunteering and internships, along with significant regulations introduced by HMRC in respect of payment of participants in such schemes, has necessitated a review of the Volunteers and Interns Programme. Other aspects of the programme also warranted a fresh look.

23. The review concentrated on the focus of the programme, the range of opportunities it affords, funding and associated legal concerns and the Council's facilitation of the scheme. The findings of the review are outlined below.

- Focus of the programme – The primary focus of the scheme is affirmed as participants testing and developing leadership gifting. A secondary focus is on providing a source of help to host Congregations in resourcing areas of ministry and mission. It was noted that there are often unhelpful conflicting expectations of the scheme from participants and host Congregations. The Council draws the attention of the Assembly and any potential applicant Congregations to the primary and secondary purposes of the scheme.
- Opportunities – The Council is committed to exploring how to extend the range of opportunities for participants beyond youth and children's ministry. Imaginative ideas from applicant Congregations for involvement in other forms of ministry and mission would be welcomed.
- Funding and associated issues – Participants in the scheme are not employees or workers and should not be considered as such by host Congregations. The Council affirms that, in line with HMRC regulations, participants in the scheme should only receive receipted expenses accruing from costs directly incurred in a range of defined areas. Given that 'volunteers' and 'interns' are two different categories under the law, the Council has approved a name change for the scheme from 2016/17. At time of writing, the new name remains to be confirmed. The documentation of the scheme is being overhauled to improve clarity around legal and financial issues.
- Facilitating the scheme – A new application process for 2016/17 is being developed that aims to bring greater synergy between applicants, Congregations and the oversight of the Organising Group. The *Emerging Leaders' Programme* (described in paragraph 39) will reshape Council input and offer enhanced equipping in leadership development for participants.

24. The Council see these changes to the scheme as both necessary and remaining under constant review so as to ensure compliance with legal requirements and ensure operational effectiveness.

### **Events, Training and Resources Coordination Panel**

25. The Panel has begun the task of developing processes to better plan and coordinate the overall output of all the Councils so as to avoid clashes between training and events. A new calendar for event planning has been launched for all the Councils. A meeting with Conveners, Secretaries and key event planners in all Councils has been held with a view to shaping a competent process aimed at prioritising event scheduling.

### **PCI Family Holiday**

26. A number of significant operational issues around staffing and financing the PCI Family Holiday have necessitated a need to reflect on the future of this initiative. After a period of invaluable long service to the Church, a significant number of key members of the Family Holiday Organising Group have decided to stand down simultaneously. In the short-term, this puts the running of the Holiday in 2017 in doubt. Increasing costs and declining numbers also place a question mark over the financial viability of the event for families going forward. The Council is taking steps to reflect on the venture and considering possible alternative ventures in social witness to support families in need.

### **PCI Counselling**

27. The work of the Task Group reviewing PCI Counselling was placed on hold while the issue of continued affiliation to the Association of Christian Counsellors following their issue of a Memorandum of Understanding governing the practice of conversion therapy was addressed. As this issue touches upon areas of theological substance and to the wider consideration of same sex orientation within the Church, the advice of the General Council was sought. The matter was referred back to the Council of Congregational Life and Witness for consideration, initially by its Pastoral Care Committee, with appropriate specialised support from the General Council. At time of writing the recommendations of the Pastoral Care Committee await Council discussion at its May meeting.

28. The attention of the Assembly is drawn to both the complexity of this matter and its ramifications for the Counselling service. The Association of Christian Counsellors provide the necessary professional standards and code of ethics and practice without which the Counselling service cannot function in its present form. There appear to be no obvious alternatives for affiliation. Consequently, should the Association of Christian Counsellors' position on conversion therapy be deemed to be at odds with the doctrinal position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the continuation of the Counselling service would be placed in doubt. An update on this matter will be brought to the Assembly via Supplementary Reports.

### **Marriage and the Family Task Group**

29. This Task Group was formed in response to the following resolution passed at last year's General Assembly:



*Recognising the need for the Church to teach clearly the biblical understanding of marriage and the family, the General Assembly direct the Council for Congregational Life and Witness to give priority to resourcing Congregations for this task.*

30. Signposting to a range of resources for congregational use in a variety of ministry settings has been compiled and is available on the PCI website. This approach will accommodate updating as suitable new resources appear. The Task Group are committed to exploring the viability of developing further initiatives in this area of congregational life and witness and will report to the Council in due course.

### **AN EMERGING AGENDA AROUND CORE ASPECTS OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS**

31. The eight Assembly Committees each make particular contributions to envisioning, equipping and enabling a cohesive approach to developing the life and witness of Congregations. In any year, different Congregations will choose to access specific areas of the Council's output as they relate most directly to their context, emerging priorities and season of ministry. This is to be expected, however the Council is committed to ensuring a wide range of outputs in the core areas of worship, pastoral care, leadership, discipleship, outreach and global mission involvement. An overview of the main activities, training and events offered by the Council during 2015/16 in each core area appears by way of an appendix to the report. It is hoped this will help members of Assembly to be more aware of the range of options provided to support the development of their Congregation's life and witness.

32. The development of how each of the core areas integrate with the particular perspectives of youth, children, family and women's ministries continues to unfold. It is pleasing to note some of these connections occurring very naturally in the overlap of Committee agendas. Others will require continuing intentional coordination if they are to be integrated to their full potential.

33. In this regard, the Youth, Children's and Family Strategy and Coordination Committee have produced a valuable strategy paper which offers a framework for resourcing and a backdrop against which to identify age specific areas of overlap with other aspects of congregational life and witness. Key elements of this paper are shared below for the attention of the Assembly.

34. The Presbyterian Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee has been overseeing the ongoing work of *Presbyterian Women* while the structure for its integration into the Council has progressed in parallel. With that work now complete, the Women's Strategy and Coordination Committee will have space to begin to shape an overall strategy for women's ministry in 2016/17.

35. This phase of Committee life continues to be marked by overseeing a blend of work inherited from the previous structures alongside developing new insights, emerging opportunities and fresh initiatives. Committees have been mindful not to rush ahead of the feedback provided through the Presbytery Engagements and so the pace of their work has been deliberately measured.

36. The following section provides a summary of how the general themes endorsed by last year's Assembly are being developed by each Committee,

along with significant new initiatives or strategic observations, and initial future priorities emerging from Presbytery Engagement feedback.

## LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

### General theme being developed

37. Developing the practice of congregational leadership.

### Significant new initiatives

38. *Leading Edge* consists of two separate learning communities which have each met three times to explore the practice of congregational leadership in the contemporary context of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The two strands, comprising Ministers in one and emerging leaders in the other, will converge in a joint overnight gathering after the Assembly in June at which they will reflect together on what they have learned. While the Committee anticipate that participants will benefit for their practice of leadership, it is also hoped that learning from this programme will shape a range of future initiatives in the crucial area of developing a vision for collective congregational leadership.

39. An *Emerging Leaders' Programme* has been approved and will commence in 2016/17. The programme aims to harness the leadership development potential of a variety of existing Council run activities and networks e.g. SPUD, VIP, summer teams, young adults' activities. However, it also aims to engage more directly with Congregations in their task of developing younger leaders in the context of ongoing Church life. It will offer something of a parallel 'intern' opportunity to that presently provided by VIP, but which would take place in the participant's own Congregation. Leadership development opportunities will be provided through a number of gatherings throughout the year. Learning from these gatherings would then be brought back into congregational life as participants lead in the various organisations and activities of their own local Church. The Council hope that many Congregations will avail of this opportunity to identify and invest in their emerging leaders through the programme.

40. The *Elders' Panel* has commenced its work by commissioning a survey of Ruling Elders. The aim is to identify what Elders, from a wide variety of Congregations across Ireland, consider to be the most pressing issues in developing the practice of eldership.

### Presbytery Engagement feedback

41. This area of congregational life and witness drew a large response from participants indicating the priority of developing our depth and ability to lead well in a changing Church and society. Eldership figured often in comments, with a particular focus on the need for refresher training which would inspire, encourage and equip. Other areas that featured included steps towards raising a new generation of younger leaders, training for Congregational Committee members and the need to raise expectation of commitment among leadership in balance with a realism about changing life patterns and increasing time poverty. There is growing awareness that leadership needs to be a shared task and a desire

to explore stories of Congregations that have developed new cultures and models of leading, along with the practices which enable such change.

JONATHAN CURRY, Convener

## DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE

### General theme being developed

42. Developing Congregations as disciple-shaping Churches.

### Significant new initiatives

43. A number of follow up initiatives to the *Discipleship Church* conference held in Assembly Buildings in March 2015 have sought to take the discipleship agenda to a wider audience. Roadshows were rolled out in Armagh, Iveagh and Coleraine and Limavady Presbyteries. With the accent on taking some of the content from the conference and aiding reflection on how it can be applied in congregational setting, these events were well attended and positively received.

44. On request from the Council for Training in Ministry, post-ordination training for all Ministers in the first five years of ministry on the area of '*Disciple Making: The Minister's Role*' was delivered in April. A '*Preaching for the Frontline*' morning conference took place in Assembly Buildings in May. The Discipleship Development Officer also brought together a number of gatherings in which a wide range of participants contributed insights on discipleship from their congregational experience and setting. All of these initiatives continue to develop understanding and practice of what is required to be a disciple-shaping Church.

45. The Committee is working towards producing a two-year programme of envisioning, equipping and enabling Congregations to introduce, identify and implement specific practices of intentional discipleship into their local life and witness in forms appropriate to their Church context.

46. Work on creating a daily devotional resource entitled *Tides* has been progressed with the aim of resourcing Congregations to equip their members for their discipleship journey. A daily rhythm of bible reflection and prayer will be made available in electronic format.

47. *Transform*, a reimagining of *The Word* event previously delivered by the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, was held in April. Staged in a variety of venues in Titanic and Cathedral Quarters, Belfast, the event quickly sold out. The focus of teaching and discussion was on equipping young adults to live as disciples in their everyday lives.

48. A *Close To Home* DVD Bible Study resource to enable Congregations to capture some of the teaching on the subject of Covenant family that has emerged over recent years is in production. Release is planned for General Assembly week.

49. A *Good Relations Panel* has commenced work examining what it means to follow Jesus in our still divided society. The *Grace of Giving* initiative continues to be integrated as an aspect of discipleship. Material to highlight the importance of planned giving for use among young adults has been produced.

### **Presbytery Engagement feedback**

50. Developing this area of congregational life, and its overflow into witness, is clearly a priority in Congregations. Feedback centred on the need to create a culture of discipleship which is more than being a member of the Church, but enables growth in following Christ in the everyday realities of life such as work and family. There was a large demand for resources for use in congregational settings, but also a desire to learn from stories of Congregations that are undertaking a journey of intentional disciple making and to identify small steps that move the vision of the Discipleshaping Church initiative to congregational practices. Alongside the need for resources to envision whole Congregations, a need was identified to find ways of working intentionally one-on-one with both individuals and small groups. The connection between the discipleship and family, youth and young adult agendas was also noted.

ANGUS STEWART, Convener

## **GLOBAL MISSION INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **General theme being developed**

51. Developing involvement in global mission as a core area of congregational life and witness.

### **Significant new initiative**

52. The Committee's main focus has been on overseeing the design, production and delivery of the 2016/17 denominational Fit for Purpose theme, '*A Community of Global Concern*'. A Task Group, including membership from the Council for Global Mission, has been giving shape to what it means to be a Church which is '*learning from and sharing with our brothers and sisters in the world Church, while recognising with them those issues of concern for our stewardship of the world's resources where together we must challenge injustice, poverty and oppression in Jesus' name.*'

53. The integration of this theme into congregational life involves an intentional drawing together of new and familiar PCI projects, events and resources in the area of global mission. The aim is to provide a platform and programme to envision, equip and enable the local Church to enhance its identification with, and involvement in, God's work in the world. The theme will be a major focus at the Assembly and a launch brochure will be available highlighting a variety of ways for Congregations to engage with the theme throughout the year.

### **Presbytery Engagement feedback**

54. This appears to be an area in which many Congregations are particularly struggling to build momentum. There were two prominent perspectives about how Congregations should develop their involvement in global mission. Some focused on improving links with PCI mission personnel serving overseas. In such cases, the request for better communication of their stories in forms that were more readily useable in congregational life was a recurring theme, along with

increased deputation. Others focused on improving congregational involvement in global mission through developing links with members of PCI serving with other mission agencies, or non-PCI mission agencies. In both cases, specific personal contact with individual missionaries or projects seems to be the preferred way forward, rather than trying to stimulate general interest in mission overseas. There were fewer comments about sending congregational teams overseas than might have been anticipated, but an expressed desire to learn how to construct good overseas partnerships. There appears to be a general deficit of ideas for how to progress this aspect of congregational life and witness.

COLIN DICKSON, Convener

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### General theme being developed

55. Developing the practice of sharing the message of the gospel in contemporary Irish cultures.

### Significant new initiatives

56. Given the scale of the theme, the variety of cultural contexts involved and the range of relationships in which gospel opportunities occur, the Committee have been considering approaches to breaking the task down into manageable outputs useful to Congregations and members. The options include a conference aimed at identifying the challenges of evangelism in a rapidly changing world and/or a series of smaller outputs aimed at upskilling members and Congregations for sharing the gospel in a variety of contexts e.g. urban, rural, the workplace, with friends, in the family, in men's ministry. The spring meeting of the Committee will decide on a specific programme to begin to address this crucial issue.

57. A gathering for those involved in *Parent and Toddler Groups* was held in May and will be followed by a resource to facilitate conversation and share ideas around how to marry the social witness aspect of this ministry with the opportunities it provides to stimulate conversations about Christian faith.

### Presbytery Engagement feedback

58. Feedback suggests a Church that has an increasing hunger to reach out, but is struggling to know how to do so and lacking confidence in the ability to engage evangelistically in a rapidly secularising society. Responses expressed a desire for help in knowing how to connect to changing communities and in beginning to undertake a journey outwards. The sharing of stories of how that is happening from around the Church was a frequent request, as was equipping in evangelism. In some cases the setting for doing so was the organisations of the local Church, in others it was the frontline of the everyday lives of members. There was some indication of desire for PCI to produce evangelistic resources. The variety of settings for evangelism was something that featured regularly, with specific references made to the Republic of Ireland, Loyalist communities, an increasingly secular society, a divided society, urban and rural communities. Recognition of different people groups such as the middle class, men, nominal

Roman Catholics and foreign nationals also featured as requiring different nuancing to sharing of the gospel if it was to connect. The desire for specific ideas seems to indicate the need to engage in outreach with a fresh creativity - faithful to Scripture but imaginative in its ability to connect. The identification of outreach as an overflow of discipleship was also present.

STEPHEN RICHMOND, Convener

## PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

### General theme being developed

59. Casting a vision for the development of the pastoral life of Congregations around the three interlocking themes of pastoral care (all of life understood through the lens of Scripture), pastoral community (space and place in congregational life for genuine sharing of lives with one another) and pastoral care (appropriate response to specific situations of need.)

### Significant new initiatives

60. *'Even to old age I will carry you'* is a resource offering guidelines for those involved in pastoral care of older generations. Accompanying questions to stimulate discussion make the resource useful in a range of congregational settings with groups involved in this crucial aspect of pastoral life.

### Presbytery Engagement feedback

61. Responses indicated the need to continue to build on the existing platform of training content. The three models of pastoral care for Congregations endorsed by the General Assembly in 2011 continue to develop in different forms in a variety of settings. As well as an enhanced Elders' district based model, the two newer models involve developing a pastoral care team and facilitating pastoral care in small groups. If there is to be a shift in balance from a Minister and Elder focused model to a more collective approach, stories of Congregations who have navigated this journey need to be shared so as to envision for alternative possibilities, show how to take first steps, build momentum and begin to deliver effective pastoral care in a new way. Nevertheless, it is important to note that help with pastoral visitation in the home remains a high priority. There is a desire for the signposting or production of resources that might develop the practice of visitors, supplement conversation and appropriately introduce ministry of the Word and prayer. The need for congregations to find ways of developing genuine congregational community as the platform of effective caring for one another is an increasing realisation. Requests for a number of specialist areas of training and guidance for pastoral carers also emerged including bereavement, stress, depression, death of a child, marriage and family breakdown. The expressed desire was for simple resources or basic pastoral skills training to equip those offering support and ministering into these situations.

ALISTAIR BILL, Convener

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

### General theme being developed

62. Developing a renewed focus on encounter with God in congregational worship.

### Significant new initiatives

63. Work has begun on designing a variety of resources for congregational use to envision, equip and enable all participating and leading in public worship to do so within an atmosphere of expectation and reflection on meeting with the living God.

### Presbytery Engagement feedback

64. Feedback comprised a mix of presenting issues arising from practical challenges around the mechanics of delivering worship week on week and deeper reflection on form, change and heart. There are clearly difficulties for many Congregations in providing musical accompaniment, persuading members other than the Minister to lead worship and in tensions around worship style. There appears to be a desire to be helped to re-imagine Reformed worship in terms of the movements in the service, use of language and a desire for contemporary Psalmody. More thinking about the practice of intergenerational worship and how to sensitively lead change were frequent requests. There is a sense of the majority of Congregations aiming at a blend of contemporary and traditional in worship.

JAMES HYNDMAN, Convener

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

### General theme being developed

65. Developing a flexible, but intentional, framework to help Congregations in the development of their ministry and mission to children, young people and young adults in the context of a 'Church family' umbrella.

### Significant strategic observations

66. More work remains to be done in developing the framework, however some of the key observations that have emerged from this detailed piece of work are shared for reflection below.

- (a) *The need to develop ministry and mission - Balancing congregational life and witness in the area of children's, youth, young adults and family ministry.*

There is a growing and healthy focus across the Church on developing congregational life to minister to covenant families, children, youth

and young adults. Central to this is recapturing the primary role of covenant parents in nurturing faith and reimagining what that looks like in contemporary family life. Enhancing the understanding and practice of congregational covenant ministry by developing and resourcing partnership in ministry between parents, leaders and members of Congregations needs to remain a high priority. However, in all Congregations, a healthy balance needs to be struck between this concentration and the development of an equally important outward facing emphasis so as to effectively reach out to those who do not grow up in covenant homes and their families. In some Congregations there are few or no covenant children or young people. They must be equipped to start afresh to win a new generation of children, youth, young adults and families for Christ. The Council will need to ensure balance in its output so as to envision, equip and enable Congregations for covenant ministry and in reaching out with the gospel in this age specific area of *congregational witness*. This twin emphasis needs to be firmly embedded in the life of our Church if we are to faithfully live out the fullness of our calling as covenant people and so be fruitful Congregations.

(b) *Children's ministry and mission*

*Children's Ministry: Children in congregational life*

The Council's role in helping Congregations develop children's ministry includes:

- Enabling Congregations to examine overall vision and direction of their children's ministry
- Facilitating reflection on programmes, aims of each activity and the variety of provision offered
- Envisioning for developing children's ministry against the increasingly common backdrop of diminishing resources – especially personnel
- Equipping Congregations to support parents in their children's faith development
- Helping Congregations to revitalise existing activities and explore a variety of new models of children's ministry
- Developing a range of models and practices for including and integrating children in worship

*Mission to children: Congregational witness to children*

The Council's role in helping Congregations develop mission to children includes:-

- Enabling increasing congregational awareness of the impact of the loss of Church-going culture and basic Bible knowledge in the world of many of today's children
- Helping Congregations explore the gaps in traditional pathways in children's ministry designed with 'Church children' in mind, but which do not easily facilitate a journey towards the centre of Church life for those who come in from the edges



- Developing new pathways which better support the journey above
- Helping Congregations maximise the outreach potential of Parent and Toddler Groups
- Enabling Congregations to explore ‘Messy Church’ style models of ministry to children and families

(c) *Youth ministry and mission*

*Youth ministry: Young people in congregational life*

The Council’s role in helping Congregations develop youth ministry includes:

- Enabling increasing appreciation of the variety of youth cultures and equipping Congregations to connect with the values and message of the gospel
- Sharing key values and practices of effective youth ministry – providing a place to belong; a holistic emphasis; providing opportunities to contribute to Church life; effectively communicating the gospel; providing opportunities to respond to the gospel; discipling for everyday life as a young person
- Equipping Congregations to support parents in their young people’s faith development
- Helping Congregations to revitalise existing activities and explore a variety of new models of youth ministry
- Enabling development of youth ministry against the common backdrop of diminishing resources and leadership increasingly delivered on a rota basis, rather than by consistent teams
- Balancing suggestions for developing youth ministry between those suitable for Congregations resourced by full or part-time youth workers and those in which provision is entirely by volunteers
- Developing a richer conversation about integrated intergenerational ministry in congregational life which identifies and balances appropriate times of ‘being together’ and ‘doing things apart’

*Mission to young people: Congregational witness to young people*

The Council’s role in helping Congregations develop mission to young people includes:

- Helping the denomination rise to the challenge of the starting point of the vast majority of young people who now grow up with no significant or active connection to any Church
- Sharing key values and practices of effective mission to young people – creating points of connection to Christians and the Church; providing a welcome and pathways into the community of the Congregation; presenting the gospel effectively and providing opportunity for response
- Helping congregational youth organisations, which are key points of contact with many unchurched young people, to develop appropriate evangelistic edge
- Envisioning Congregations in developing pathways, both *out of* the Church into the world of unchurched young people, and *into*

the community of congregational life, so that they may see and experience the gospel embodied

(d) *Young Adults' Ministry and Mission*

*Young Adults' Ministry: Young adults in congregational life*

The Council's role in helping Congregations develop young adults' ministry includes:

- Providing Congregations with ways to identify and grapple with supporting young adults as disciples through the multiple transitions of this stage of life – school/university to unemployment, work or further study; predominantly Church based peer group to a more diverse environment; Church life based on provision to expectation of taking greater responsibility for themselves and leading others
- Helping Congregations develop an environment for thriving young adults' ministry which is shaped by: practices that balance equipping and releasing in ministry; building of intentional community that promotes belonging and deepening relationships; participation in congregational life that allows for influence as well as involvement
- Helping Congregations recognise the following approaches to young adult ministry currently employed:
  - (i) extension of youth ministry
  - (ii) encouraging continued involvement in Church life by channelling into maintaining ministries
  - (iii) segregated young adult age specific programme
  - (iv) focusing on integration of young adult ministry into congregational life.
- Developing a conversation which helps Congregations identify the strengths and weakness of the first three models and to move towards an appropriate expression of the fourth model, will be an important next step towards greater overall effectiveness.

*Mission to young adults: Congregational witness to young adults*

The Council's role in helping Congregations develop mission to young adults includes:

- Helping the denomination recognise and find ways of rising to the missional challenge of the world of the unchurched young adult
- Equipping young adults for living out the missional potential of relationships with their peers in the everyday settings in which they live, work and socialise
- Exploring with Congregations a range of appropriate pathways for unchurched young adults to encounter the life of the local Church and explore questions of belief

(e) *Other areas still to be explored and developed*

These include further investigation of how Congregations can support contemporary expressions of covenant family life and enable smooth age-related transitions between various stages of children's, youth and young adult ministry.

67. Even a cursory reading of the range of challenges and opportunities above is dizzying. However, this work will prove crucial giving shape and direction to the development of this key area of congregational life and witness for the next number of years.

### **Presbytery Engagement feedback**

68. Comments on this area of congregational life and witness indicated a vast array of challenges. Some indicated a shortage of leaders, others the challenges of working with smaller numbers in children's and youth ministry settings. The effect of changes in the family unit on children and young people was noted, along with the specific need for help in knowing how to reach those outside the Church. There was a desire for envisioning in reshaping existing programmes and developing new models. The need for good resourcing with materials that address everything from ministry and mission to teenagers, to parenting and family life, was also prominent. There is a remaining sense of haemorrhaging of young people from the Church and difficulties in integrating them into the regular patterns and practices of Church life. A disconnect between much children's and youth work and the rest of congregational life was noted, as was a lack of joined up strategy between different organisations in the same Congregation. Specific help was requested with reimagining Sunday School and Children's Church, integrating those with special needs and young adults' ministry.

COLIN MORRISON, Convener

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

### **Presbyterian Women Theme 2016/17**

69. The *Presbyterian Women's* theme for 2016/17 is 'This is the Day'. It was launched at the Annual Meeting in Assembly Buildings on 5th/6th May.

### **Resourcing the PW Theme and Annual Projects**

70. A resource pack with ideas to develop the theme in Congregations, called *Inspirations*, has been completed and made available. The *Presbyterian Women* projects for the year are supporting Alan and Tracey Johnston, PCI missionaries in Mantova, Italy, and a project worker in the Big House in Belfast.

### **Presbytery Engagement feedback on Women's Ministry**

71. There was a very clear threefold breakdown in responses in this area. In some settings *Presbyterian Women* remains the single most effective vehicle for women's ministry. In others, *Presbyterian Women* groups have developed other initiatives in ministry and mission to women that supplement and complement the regular meetings of the organisation in the Congregation. A third category indicates a further group of Congregations in which women's ministry is developing in forms other than that of *Presbyterian Women*. A generational divide is evident between older and younger women. This is often the result of

changing lifestyle patterns and generational preferences for formal or informal ways of gathering. There is also a strong desire to develop other aspects of the Council's agenda through the lens of women's ministry such as pastoral care, discipleship, outreach and family.

VALERIE STEWART, Convener

## **RESOURCING AND SUPPORTING CONGREGATIONS FOR THEIR LIFE AND WITNESS**

72. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness exists to resource and support the ministry and mission of Congregations across the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. An important feature of the Council's work this year has been to consider and approve an outline framework for fulfilling this remit. It has done so by facilitating discussion in the Council meetings, but also aware of the need to integrate the feedback from the Presbytery Engagement process. Initial impressions of Presbytery feedback and the key features of the Council outline framework are detailed below.

### **Initial impressions from Presbytery Engagements**

73. A number of important observations emerged on which the Council will continue to reflect and respond.

- (i) Generally Congregations prefer to be resourced directly into the heart of the existing patterns and rhythms of their Church life e.g. have resources to use in Sunday services, midweek and small group gatherings; training which they can deliver locally
- (ii) There is a significant demand for sharing stories from around the Church to expand imagination, illustrate the outworking of important ideas, build confidence that change is achievable and breathe hope by showing God at work
- (iii) A frequent request was to make better use of mediums of communication such as DVD clips and web materials which are immediately accessible and less wordy
- (iv) The time lag between fresh vision shared through conferencing and the provision of congregational resources to embed new ideas locally was identified as impeding momentum and necessary progress in developing change
- (v) The importance of awareness of the variety of congregational contexts and flexibility of resources was stressed
- (vi) The preference for training delivered regionally as opposed to events staged in Assembly Buildings was affirmed, although the role of large conferences in addressing significant themes for the whole denomination is recognised
- (vii) The value of Council staff delivering training, facilitating discussion and accompanying Congregations in journeys of change was confirmed
- (viii) A number of respondents referenced the need to be equipped in using and delivering resources, particularly in developing facilitation skills where leading, planning and bringing change in the local Congregation is required

- (ix) There is a desire for home produced PCI resources, but also signposting of other resources
- (x) There were a significant number of comments about lack of awareness of already available materials
- (xi) An important reminder was to ensure outputs catered for Congregations of all sizes

## **The Council Outline Framework**

### **Envisioning, Equipping and Enabling**

74. The Council identifies three main tasks in resourcing and supporting Congregations:

- (a) Envisioning – presenting possibilities and painting pictures of different ways of doing things;
- (b) Equipping – providing resources and training directly to Congregations and/or up-skilling key leaders to develop effective practices of ministry and mission in the local Congregation;
- (c) Enabling – journeying with Congregations as they work out, and work towards, realising their vision.

### **Supplementing congregational life and witness with larger, specialist events**

75. Where necessary, the Council also needs to supplement the life and witness of Congregations with programmes and events of a larger scale, or requiring specialist expertise, which in turn develop the capabilities of the local Church. This can be achieved by planning more intentionally to create programmes for such events that include an intentional element of fold back into the congregational setting. An example of this approach is the programme for MAD 2015 in which the focus of the theme at the weekend was supplemented by take away resources for use to develop the same content in local Youth Fellowships.

### **Entry points for engagement with Congregations**

76. The Council identifies three entry points through which it needs to engage with Congregations.

- (a) Key leaders – through learning and training opportunities
- (b) The mainstream of congregational life – through resources or other provision which touches down directly into the standard settings around which the rhythms of congregational life are formed e.g. Sunday Services, Small Groups, Midweek Meetings, Kirk Session or other regular meetings of members of key ministries
- (c) Communicating the larger denominational story – through the sharing of observations of changes in the landscape of congregational life and witness and stories which expand imagination and give confidence to experiment

### **Perspectives guiding agenda setting**

77. In this phase of the Council's life, an agenda will emerge from the following perspectives in interaction with one another:

- **A sharper focus** on the primary role of resourcing Congregations and subsidiary role of supplementing congregational activities
- **A fuller picture** of the present agenda with an eye to numbers participating in existing programmes, but with the number of Congregations involved as the key focus
- **A fresh look** at Presbytery Engagement feedback, developing Committee agendas, converging and diverging themes, how to give a lead towards necessary change, signalling shifts in and making sense of the landscape of congregational life and witness
- **A realistic vision** which maps types of Congregation, operates within capacity to fulfil priorities, acknowledges changes in rhythms of Church life, sets expectations, and offers a balanced programme of bigger and smaller events

### **The next phase of the Council's life and agenda**

78. The next phase of the Council's life and agenda will involve a gradual rebalancing of Council outputs. The approach will be to retain a wide range of possible resourcing options, but also the flexibility to choose different combinations of particular elements on a year on year basis depending on emerging priorities.

### **A missing piece?: Men's ministry and mission**

79. One regularly reoccurring piece of feedback during the Presbytery Engagements was that while there was a specific focus on devising a strategy for women's ministry, there was no similar vehicle for examining and developing ministry and mission to men. Many expressed the view that this is a crucial area of work, particularly considering the increasingly noticeable deficit of males in many aspects of congregational life.

80. The Council is keen to respond to this observation and have already taken a first step in doing so by staging a gathering to further explore the nature and practice of men's ministry. Further thought will be given as to how to integrate this particular concern into the agenda of appropriate Committees.

### **FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS: CULTIVATING THE THEME**

81. The Council introduced its central theme of *Fruitful Congregations* at last year's Assembly. The theme has been shared extensively through the process of Presbytery Engagements. It has quickly gained significant currency in the denomination as a useful way of capturing the purpose and nature of congregational life and witness.

82. In I Corinthians 3 v.6 Paul reminds the Church in Corinth of the dynamics of fruitful congregational life as follows,

*I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow*

83. This vision of how fruitfulness happens offers both challenge and encouragement. It asks each Congregation to consider how they are both planting and watering the seed of gospel ministry and mission in each area of life and witness. It also turns our focus to God in prayerful expectation that He might grow His Kingdom, both among us and through us to the world.

84. The Council reaffirms the vast variety of contexts and starting points of Congregations across the island of Ireland and recognises that fruitfulness in ministry and mission can find expression in different ways and is subject to seasonal variations.

85. In an effort to further embed this theme among Congregations and their members, the Council notes four things that need to happen:

- (i) Find ways of **introducing** the theme into the thinking of the whole membership of Congregations
- (ii) Fire the **imagination** of members with biblical images of fruitfulness, fused with stories of contemporary expression
- (iii) Focus on **identifying** developments in congregational life and witness that offer examples of movement toward the creation of a culture which nurtures fruitfulness
- (iv) Firmly getting to grips with the practices which, under God, begin to **implement** a local expression of growing fruitfulness

86. The Council offers the following vision of basic elements that make for a fruitful Congregation. They are drawn from the overall conversation about congregational life and witness in Council and Committee meetings up to this point. The insights gleaned from Presbytery Engagement feedback seem to underscore many elements of this emerging picture.

87. Fruitful Congregations:

- Place encounter with the Living God at the centre of their life
- Are shaped by understanding their life and witness as part of God's unfolding story of redemption
- Are led to lean forward into the future
- Develop their life as a community of God's people
- Move the vision of membership from belonging to Church, to longing to be followers of Christ in every aspect of life
- Make an impression for God locally and globally through outreach and involvement in God's wider activity in the world

88. These aspects of developing a culture of fruitfulness should not be read as a sequence of ordered steps, but rather represent the interlocking elements of a rounded approach to the challenge. Neither will any Congregation be able to develop in all areas at once, but will need to prayerfully discern their own starting points and priorities in deepening their overall ministry and mission.

89. The Council will continue to find ways of developing, articulating and cultivating the *Fruitful Congregations* theme at all levels of Church life.

## THE VITAL ROLE OF PRAYER

90. Often we organise prayer in parallel to the activities of our congregational life and witness. Sometimes we pray at the start of our meetings and then proceed in a disconnected way with the business of making plans and decisions. Perhaps we need to recapture something more - a posture of prayerfulness that continually positions us to be sensitive to God's activity around us and responsive in following where He is prompting.

91. In that regard, the Council has scheduled an examination of the practice of prayer in congregational life and witness as an important future agenda

item. Attention is also drawn to the *Fruitful Congregations Prayer Journey* which many have found useful in stimulating intentionality in the prayer life of Congregations. As an undated resource it can be easily launched and incorporated into congregational life at any time. It is accessible primarily as an electronic resource via the PCI website, but hard copies for reproduction are available from the Council office.

## APPENDIX

### Overview of main activities, training and events offered by the Council during 2015/16 in core areas of Congregational Life and Witness

Programme/Event	Venue	Date(s)
VIP Training week & commissioning	Derryvolgie/Maze	31st August – 4th September 2015
PW Forum	Assembly Buildings	19th September 2015
Youth & Children's Workers' Days	Assembly Buildings	A series of morning sessions organised from May to June
Youth Ministry Course (17 weeks)	UTC	September 2015 – March 2016
Children's Ministry Course (10 weeks)	UTC	September to December 2015
Handling the Word (6 weeks)	UTC	October/November 2015
Youth and Children Road Trip	Richhill	13th October 2015
Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills	Lorne House, Holywood	19th-23rd October 2015
MAD Weekend	UUC	23rd-25th October 2015
Youth Ministry Course residential	Castlewellan Castle	6th-8th November 2015
Youth and Children Road Trip	1st Ballymoney	17th November 2015
Leadership Roadshow	Letterkenny	19th November 2015
Discipleship Taster Day	Assembly Buildings	11th December 2015
Discipleship Taster Day	Assembly Buildings	15th December 2015
Discipleship Church Roadshow	Richhill	19th January 2016



<b>Programme/Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Discipleshaping Church Roadshow	Ballydown	26th January 2016
Pastoral Care Training	Ballynure	6th February 2016
PW Forum	Assembly Buildings	6th February 2016
Leadership Roadshow	Kilfennan	8th February 2016
Youth and Children Road Trip	Saintfield Road	16th February 2016
Impact Summer Teams' Leaders' overnight training	Portrush	4th-5th March 2016
Youth and Children Road Trip	Dublin	5th March 2016
Leading Edge – Ministers	Various	3 sessions and 1 residential between March and June
Discipleship Taster Day	Bloomfield	11th March 2016
Discipleship Taster Day	Assembly Buildings	14th March 2016
Prepared to Go	Belfast Bible College	19th March 2016
PCI Family Holiday	Share Centre	28th March - 1st April 2016
Transform Young Adults' Gathering	Cathedral/Titanic Quarters	1st-2nd April 2016
Leading Edge – Emerging Leaders	Various	3 sessions and 1 residential between April and June
SPUD Overnight	Wellington	15th-16th April 2016
Kids' Big Day Out	Wellington	23rd April 2016
PW Annual Meetings	Assembly Buildings	5th/6th May 2016
Discipleshaping Church Roadshow	1st Limavady	17th May 2016
Youth and Children Ministry Courses Graduation	Knock	18th May 2016
Toddler Group Leaders' Envisioning Event	Assembly Buildings	20th May 2016

<b>Programme/Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Preaching for the Frontline	Assembly Buildings	24th May 2016
Youth & Children's Workers' Retreat	Glenavon, Cookstown	25th-26th May 2016
Youth Night	Assembly Buildings	11th June 2016
Impact Mission Teams Training	Assembly Buildings	18th May 2016
Impact Summer Team	Letterkenny & Trenta	25th June - 2nd July 2016
Impact Summer Team	Scrabo	2nd-10th July 2016
Impact Summer Team	Cooke Centenary	2nd-10th July 2016
Impact Summer Team	1st Donaghadee	2nd-10th July 2016
Impact Summer Team	Mullingar	8th-17th July 2016
Impact Summer Team	Donegal Town	16th-24 July 2016
Impact Summer Team	Ballyweany	16-24th July 2016
Impact Summer Team	St Andrew's, Belfast	30th July – 6th August 2016
Impact Summer Team	Friendship House	6th-13th August 2016
Impact Summer Team	Seaview	6th-14th August 2016
Ignite Team	Romania	8th-21st August 2016
Impact Summer Team	Grange	13th-21st August 2016
Impact Summer Team	Ballycastle	27th-31st August 2016

### **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the General Assembly instruct the Council for Congregational Life and Witness to send each Presbytery the feedback from their engagement event and request that Presbytery consider its content and engage with the Council in shaping priorities for future support and resourcing in their area.

2. That the General Assembly welcome the approved structure for the integration of *Presbyterian Women* into the Council for Congregational Life and Witness.

3. That the General Assembly welcome the new format and programme emerging from the SPUD Review and instruct the Youth, Children's and Family

Strategy and Coordination Committee to receive and consider the content of this year's SPUD Report.

4. That the Report of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness be received.