

COUNCIL FOR GLOBAL MISSION

Convener: Rev S.E. HUGHES

Secretary: Rev W.S. MARRS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council for Global Mission is all about '*global disciples sharing God's heart for the world, declaring good news and demonstrating God's love*'. The Council is tasked with enabling the co-ordination and delivery of global mission as determined by the General Assembly (Code Par 115), and especially where it is beyond the ability of the local congregation and not falling under the remit of other mission councils, partners or agencies. This entails the development of a strategy on mission overseas, including partnership with overseas churches and sending global mission workers; promoting world development issues, including providing for an annual appeal; leading thinking on issues of global concern such as the environment, race relations, international relations (Code Par 278.3).
2. This report sets out the work of the Council for Global Mission from June 2020. Given the context of a Covid-19 pandemic, the areas of work covered were taken forward by the Global Mission Standing Committee, operating alongside the Council's new Assembly Committees which became operational from May 2020, with all meetings taking place by video-conferencing. The Council for Global Mission was able to meet face to face on 16 November 2020 and 14 June 2021 and reports as follows:
 - (a) **Global Mission** (Pars 3 to 17).
 - (b) **Global Development** (Pars 18 to 49).
 - (c) **Business and Finance** (Pars 50 to 54).

GLOBAL MISSION

3. **Global Mission Workers:** The Council thanks God for the 29 global mission workers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who, as his witnesses, serve in 11 countries around the world and for those who have been commissioned for service in the past year. Details of roles, locations, and global mission partners for those currently serving with the Council are found in Appendix A.

4. On Sunday, 23 December 2020, under the Integrate Programme of service, Steve Kennedy was ordained, inducted, and together with his wife, Rosie, commissioned by the Presbytery of Templepatrick for service in Romania with the Transylvania District of the Hungarian Reformed Church.
5. Memorial minutes were recorded in respect of the following former missionaries who passed away: Rev John Mann who served in Lebanon 1965–1975 and Malawi 1989–1999, died on 4 April 2020; Miss Rosemary Clements who served in Malawi 1982–1991, died on 3 August 2020; Rev Norman Duncan who served in India 1998–2004, died on 24 October 2020; Rev David Glover Bailie who served in India 1954–1961, died on 13 November 2020; Rev Alan Vincent Martin who served in India 1963–1968, died on 21 March 2021; and Mrs Margaret Jackson who served in India 1963–1969, died on 7 May 2021.
6. Covid-19: The advent of the pandemic led to the majority of global mission workers remaining in their countries of service, adjusting to local restrictions and endeavouring to continue their work. A small number who returned to Ireland for medical reasons or to facilitate the education of children, have been able to continue from a distance with significant elements of their work. International travel protocols have been drawn up and home assignments adjusted where necessary. After careful scoping, risk assessments and discussion with insurers, global mission workers were encouraged to be vaccinated, as far as possible, in their country of service. By June 2021, 72% had received their first vaccine.
7. Deputation: Most of the time it has not been possible to engage in face to face ‘deputation’ speaking engagements, although creative alternatives have been found. Following a number of training webinars to equip global mission workers in video recording, a series of videos under the banner of ‘Digital Dispatches’ has been made available on the PCI website. Initial feedback indicates that congregations have welcomed and made good use of these videos, using them in online and face to face services, and the plan is that these videos will be refreshed regularly.
8. Global mission worker prayer bulletins have continued to be produced monthly and global mission worker updates circulated to all ministers on three occasions over the past year. Articles focusing on global mission workers’ experiences during Covid-19 have featured in both the Herald and local press.
9. Global Mission Partnerships: A list of Global Mission Partnerships is provided in Appendix B. All of these partners have suffered adversity to one degree or another during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, especially where healthcare systems are weak and already struggling economies have been crippled by repeated lockdowns, with daily wage earners, widows, orphans, refugees and persecuted minorities suffering

the most. More than 3.5 million people have died from this disease and partners in South East Asia's second wave of Covid-19 have experienced a devastating impact, not least amongst ministers of the gospel as they continued to reach out to their congregations.

10. For some partners, however, Covid-19 has been just one of a number of crises faced in the past year. The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon is still dealing with the consequences of the Beirut explosion in August 2020, with serious economic instability and an ongoing refugee crisis. In addition to internal conflict, food insecurity, flooding and displacement, the 34th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan in November 2020 resulted in a split in the church that has paralysed the flow of much needed financial support from international partners to grassroot communities. The Presbyterian Church in Myanmar has been deeply impacted by the coup d'état there in February 2020 bringing the country to the brink of civil war. Over Easter 2021 the Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor and the Christian Church in Sumba, Indonesia, have experienced loss of life and the destruction of churches, schools and homes due to Cyclone Seroja.
11. Covid-19 restrictions have meant that no overseas visits have been made on behalf of the Council further to those reported in the 2020 General Assembly Report, nor have any visitors from overseas partners been hosted here in Ireland. In some cases, thanks to internet technology, it has been possible to sustain relationships with partners through video-conferencing. On a number of occasions in the past year, the Moderator has written to a partner church to express PCI's support during their time of crisis, and these expressions of solidarity have been warmly received.
12. Grants and emergency funding 2021: The Global Mission Standing Committee approved a schedule of grants totaling £58,889 for the support of partner projects in 2021 covering ten global mission partners around the world. The funding for these grants came from the United Appeal, the World Development Appeal, the Youth and Children's project and designated donations. Thanks to generous extra-mile giving, £53,288 was donated to emergency response projects of partners in Beirut, Lebanon following the Beirut explosion and £8,927 to partners in Timor and Sumba following Cyclone Seroja.
13. Miseen Cara: The Council for Global Mission has secured funding totaling €134,943 during 2020 through partnering with Miseen Cara, an international and Irish faith-based missionary movement, working with some of the most marginalised and vulnerable communities in the world. This funding is supporting the work of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Samburu Awareness and Action Project in Tuum for activities improving access to education particularly for girls, building community leadership and providing more opportunities for developing livelihoods. The United Mission to Nepal has also benefited from Miseen Cara funding, specifically an education project in the

Bahjang area of Western Nepal involved in training teachers, improving school water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, facilitating improvement of school management and governance systems and creating 'child-friendly' classrooms.

14. Global Leadership Training: Three Leaders in Training (LIT) remained within the UK during the pandemic in order to complete their studies that were being sponsored by the Lindsay Memorial Fund. Despite Covid-19 restrictions, each managed well, was followed up pastorally and all have now returned safely to their home countries: Mr Wamaka Nyondo achieved a Master's Degree in Sexual and Reproductive Health at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, returning to Malawi on 25 September 2020; Rev Elias Agola achieved a Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution at Queen's University, Belfast, returning to Kenya on 21 October 2020; Rev Anderson Juma achieved a Master's Degree in Social Research at Sheffield University, returning to Malawi on 28 January 2021.
15. The Global Mission Standing Committee approved a schedule of scholarships of £9,841 for the support of Leaders in Training from partner churches for 2021.
16. Looking forward: In preparing to emerge from the pandemic, the Global Mission Committee carries responsibility for bringing options to the Council when it comes to developing strategy for how PCI shares in the proclamation of the Good News overseas, especially through partnering and sending. It has looked carefully at its expenditure in this current COVID recovery phase 2021–22, identifying some key principles: the importance of walking by faith not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), trusting God to provide adequate funding for the global mission work He calls us to undertake; of listening keenly to congregations who fund the central work of the church; and of ensuring global mission partners, along with global mission workers, are listened to carefully when it comes to decision-making and priority setting.
17. While mindful of current funding challenges, this time of recovery is seen as a holding phase in which to sustain the number of global mission workers, global mission partners and grants, with budgets for 2021–22 having been set at the absolute minimum funding level required for the work to progress. This enables the Council to honour existing commitments both to global mission workers who are under the Call of God and of the Church, and to the partners with whom they serve. At the same time, key questions are emerging for the vision casting and strategic planning for partnering and sending in a reconstruction phase from 2023 to 2025 when more significant changes may be necessary. Guiding principles will need to be reviewed, especially when it comes to the place of prayer, discipleship, and communicating the story of mission. Questions will be addressed such as: Where to work? Who to work alongside? How to work together effectively? How to better resource the work? In considering this last question, it is hoped that in

consultation with the United Appeal Committee, the funding model for the sending of global mission workers will be reviewed.

HEATHER CLEMENTS, Convener

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

18. **World Development Appeal 2019:** The Appeal raised a total of £497,174 with funds being transferred to Christian Aid Ireland and Tearfund, except for £9,807 retained to promote the next appeal, and £30,000 allocated to partner church projects as follows:
 - £5,000 to the CCAP Livingstonia Synod Health Co-ordination Department, Malawi
 - £5,000 to Minority Focus, Nepal
 - £10,000 to the Evangelical Church of Halmahera, Indonesia
 - £7,000 to the Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor, Indonesia (Cyclone Seroja)
 - £3,000 to the Christian Church in Sumba, Indonesia (Cyclone Seroja)
19. With regard to development projects being supported in Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola, the Global Mission Standing Committee approved requests from Christian Aid and Tearfund to reallocate small portions of funding received with a view to covering emergency needs arising due to Covid-19.
20. **Moderator's Christmas Appeal 2020:** In April 2020, recognising the growing global impact of the Covid-19 crisis and anticipating a church wide appeal later in the year, the Global Mission Standing Committee approved an initial emergency response by PCI, advancing £60,000 to be split three ways between Christian Aid Ireland, Tearfund and PCI's partner churches and organisations.
21. Given the significant financial challenges unfolding within congregations during the pandemic, prayerful consideration was given to the nature and timing of the next church-wide appeal. The Global Mission Standing Committee presented a report with options in this regard to the General Assembly Standing Commission in September 2020 where it was agreed that instead of launching a World Development Appeal in October 2020, there would be a Moderator's Christmas Appeal launched at the start of Advent entitled, 'At Home for Christmas?' The aim of this Appeal was to express PCI's solidarity with the great needs found in the majority world due to Covid-19, pointing to its impact on national economies, healthcare systems, and the plight of refugees and migrant workers.
22. By June 2021 the Appeal had raised £361,306 with funds being split three ways between Christian Aid Ireland, Tearfund and PCI's partner churches and mission organisations as follows: Diakonia,

Transylvanian Reformed Church District, Romania; the Compassion Protestant Society, National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon; the Christian Church of Sumba, Indonesia; the United Mission to Nepal; the Livingstonia Synod Health Co-ordination Department, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Malawi; the Presbyterian Relief and Development Association, Presbyterian Church of South Sudan; and the Gujarat Diocese, Church of North India.

23. **World Development Appeal 2021:** Mindful of the 26th U.N. Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) taking place in Glasgow in November 2021, along with the report being brought to the Assembly encouraging fossil fuel divestment, the Council agreed that the World Development Appeal 2021 should adopt the broad theme of climate justice in a way that would highlight this issue as one of global Christian discipleship, as well as embracing young people who have been expressing great concern on the matter. It was further agreed that the lead project for the Appeal would be Christian Aid's partner in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Services Commission. The second project would be a Tearfund one in Haiti with their partner, FOKA (Fondasyon Kominote Kreyen An Aksyon (Christian Community Foundation in Action). Appeal resources focusing on the important issue of climate justice will be highlighted. It is planned that the launch of the Appeal will take place in Assembly Buildings on Thursday, 21 October 2021.
24. In July 2020 Dr David Bruce, PCI's Moderator, wrote to UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to express PCI's deep concern over the UK Government's plans to merge the Department for International Development (DFID) with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), jeopardising support for the world's poorest communities at the time of the Covid-19 global pandemic. The Moderator's letter was followed up by a press release which gained local coverage in the newspapers and Rev Dr Liz Hughes addressed the matter on Sunday Sequence.
25. **Global Issues:** Four agents have been appointed by the Council for Global Mission, each with the important role of being a catalyst for the effective functioning of the Global Development Committee. They will seek to contribute to thinking from a biblical perspective on key global issues, promoting interest and action locally, endeavouring to recognise the implications for Christian discipleship. This may mean working with strategic partnerships, collaborating with other PCI Councils, and bringing updates to the Committee from time to time.
26. **Inter-cultural Relations:** Rev Helen Freeburn, agent for inter-cultural relations, is exploring a range of what are cross-cutting issues for PCI, in consultation with other Councils, especially the Council for Public Affairs.
27. Racism and inclusion are very challenging issues that appear in many forms and guises. Through following up on research initiatives, one aim is to keep abreast of the experiences of ethnic minorities in churches

on the island of Ireland, with a view to ensuring PCI's own house is in order before seeking to call society to account. In addition to grappling with issues such as colonialism, empire, and the spiritual battle against fear, prejudice, and segregation, PCI will need to reflect on the place of ethnic minorities in leadership roles within the Church.

28. Direct Provision Legislation (Republic of Ireland): Migrants require great resilience to endure the challenges of the current system of direct provision, despite the security it seeks to offer. What can PCI be doing to encourage the development and implementation of a new International Support System being put forward and respond more meaningfully to the related housing crisis affecting those given leave to remain in the Republic of Ireland?
29. Migration to the UK: The Global Development Committee looks forward to strengthening links with Embrace Northern Ireland, not least to glean up-to-date information on the current migration rules, with concern for the most vulnerable migrants and developments at the detention centre, Larne House. There is the possibility of around 130,000 UK passport holders coming to live in the UK from Hong Kong in the course of this year and the Church needs to consider how it will prepare for this.
30. £5,000 has been donated to Embrace Northern Ireland, being the third of three payments approved towards the funding of their development officer.
31. Churches of Sanctuary Movement: This movement seeks to encourage churches to consider how they provide a real welcome and hospitality, an important area of focus for PCI going forward. In this regard, congregations should be encouraged to take up the 'Home' Bible Study Series on the book of Ruth, perhaps as they plan Bible studies for the year ahead.
32. **International Relations:** Rev Dr Donald Watts is the agent for international relations where there is potential for wide-ranging engagement and for any one of a number of international situations to move centre-stage, e.g. Yemen, Myanmar, and the plight of the Uighurs in China. Nevertheless, the Committee recognises its need to prioritise and maintain focus, and for now that is on the Middle East, specifically Israel and Palestine, exploring sensitive yet effective means by which PCI can engage with this ongoing crisis.
33. The 'Faith and Freedom in the Middle East' Conference planned for April 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19. Instead, the keynote speaker, Rita El-Mounayer, CEO of SAT-7, prepared a video message which was placed on the PCI website in early June, along with a blog entitled 'Faith & Isolation'.
34. Bethlehem Bible College ran a webinar on 13 June 2020 entitled, 'Hope and Resilience in a Broken World'. This took the place of the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' tenth anniversary conference which has been postponed indefinitely due to Covid-19.

35. In July 2020 Kairos Palestine, an international movement responding to a call to solidarity with Palestinians, published a statement entitled, “Cry for Hope: A call for decisive action”. In follow-up to this Kairos Ireland has run a series of webinars in 2021.
36. During 2021, as tensions in the region grew, Christian Aid Ireland held a webinar on Israel and Palestine featuring their partners, B’tSelem and Al Haq. They also held a breakfast briefing involving William Bell, Christian Aid’s Head of Middle East Policy and Advocacy, along with a representative of their partners in Gaza.
37. When it comes to making statements and lobbying government, the Global Development Committee acknowledges the many sensitivities associated with Israel and Palestine, the need to be able to back up statements with wise and well-informed comment, and to draw alongside diaspora communities here in Ireland. In wrestling with these questions, there is much need for prayer for both Israelis and Palestinians, and to facilitate learning in the wider church through events and seminars on related issues e.g. Christian Zionism.
38. **World Faiths:** Rev John Faris is the agent for world faiths. While in recent years the Mission Department has provided a limited number of copies of the prayer guide, ‘15 Days of Prayer for the Hindu World’ which is designed for use in and around Diwali each year, this year congregations were encouraged to order copies online via the following link: www.15daysprayer.org.uk. Having given significant time to reporting on Islam in recent years, the focus moving forward will be on Hinduism, considering it in the Irish context but also listening to and learning from those overseas partners with significantly more experience of relating to those of other faiths. With regard to relating to Hinduism, there is much to learn from PCI’s longstanding partner, the Church of North India, Gujarat Diocese.
39. **Stewardship of Creation:** Rev Allen Sleith is the agent for stewardship of creation working on a number of fronts, also bringing a particular interest in eco-theology and having written an article for the summer 2021 edition of the *Presbyterian Herald* focusing on climate justice in the build up to the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26).
40. In response to an invitation from the Trustees (responding to a letter from members of Waringstown Congregation), the Council for Global Mission’s report to the General Assembly in 2020 invited a review of PCI’s investment policies, particularly in relation to fossil fuels. This report was remitted by the General Assembly Standing Commission to be considered by the General Assembly 2021 (See Appendix C attached).
41. Helpful conversations have been held with Stephen Trew who brought in the Private Members Bill which enabled the Church of Ireland to take the decision to divest from fossil fuels. He demonstrates how trustees of a company can maintain their highest fiduciary responsibility and still divest from fossil fuel extraction companies. According to the IEA (International Energy Agency), investments by oil and gas companies

in low-carbon initiatives represent less than 1% of their total capital expenditure, and even leading companies spend only 5% on projects outside of oil and gas. It is essential that oil majors transition to survive but they may not be the best investments for the future. Evidence is available that oil majors will be stuck with stranded assets that will put their operations at risk. Coal is already a stranded asset and oil and gas are increasingly at risk. In 2019 the Bank of England warned that \$20 trillion of assets were at risk. (source www.theasset.com/article-esp/43697/transition-risk-becomes-more-real-for-oil-and-gas-firms).

42. It is hoped that discussion on the way forward can be facilitated with PCI's Trustees. How PCI invests is a reflection of the value that is being placed on God's creation and is an outworking of Presbyterians' discipleship as followers of Jesus Christ.
43. PCI is a member body of Eco-Congregation Ireland, making a grant of £600 in 2021, and represented at meetings by Rev Allen Sleith and Mr Joe Furphy. At present its focus has been on local initiatives, mainly in the Republic of Ireland. It was recognised that initiatives work best when they have taken root at local congregational level.
44. 'Climate Sunday' www.climatesunday.org is a Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) initiative, designating 5 September 2021 as Climate Sunday. The Council has agreed that PCI congregations should be encouraged to set aside one Sunday during the autumn, possibly their Harvest Thanksgiving Service, as Climate Sunday mindful that COP26 will take place from 1 - 12 November 2021.
45. Rev Allen Sleith and Dr Ethel White represented the Global Development Committee at the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) General Assembly Network Conference held online from 31 May to 1 June 2021. The theme was "Reconciled with creation: A call for urgent action on climate and biodiversity."
46. With regard to the Climate Change Bill of the Northern Ireland Assembly, concern was expressed that only a small proportion of the Bill is devoted to the details of climate change, the majority dealing with legalities and house-keeping. Rev Allen Sleith and Miss Karen Jardine, PCI's Public Affairs Officer, will be taking a closer look at the contents of the Bill, keeping in mind that any submissions need to be made by 15 July 2021.
47. **Looking forward:** In progressing work on global issues it is recognised that there is particular importance in listening to partners who are wrestling with these issues and being open to what the Holy Spirit is saying regarding the global church's deep concern for biblical justice as reflected in the vision of God's upside-down Kingdom of justice, equality, and dignity in Mary's song. Luke 1:52-53.
48. 'Principles of engagement' by which the Committee grapples with global issues need to be further developed and shared with the wider church, as does a protocol for dealing with particular global crises as and when they emerge, whether or not this results in a Moderator's Appeal.

49. The Global Development Committee received a paper outlining global issues, many of them intersecting, that the Committee will be considering in the autumn 2021, keeping in mind that each issue ought to be tied in with the call to be disciples of Jesus Christ. The challenge of getting key global issues discussed more widely in PCI congregations has been highlighted and needs to be revisited. A schedule of priorities will be brought to the General Assembly 2022.

LIZ HUGHES, Acting Convener

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

50. **Finance:** The Council records its deep appreciation for the United Appeal funding received each year that makes possible so much of its work, together with the whole-hearted support and generous grant received annually from Presbyterian Women. Council for Global Mission accounts for the year 2020 indicate a net surplus of £164,075 on the Income and Expenditure Account, a figure that reflects the sale of fixed assets during the year. A United Appeal grant of £1,061,500 has been approved for 2021, with the Council requesting a grant of £1,000,000 in its budget for 2022.
51. **Property:** The sale of the property at 44 Marlborough Park North completed just prior to Christmas 2020 and net proceeds of £422,193 are reflected in the 2020 accounts.
52. **Staffing:** Whether working from home or office, or finding themselves furloughed, the Mission Department staff team have served with great dedication, flexibility and gracious resilience over this past year, ensuring the work of the Council has been able to continue steadily. Regrettably, mainly due to a lower volume of work during the Covid-19 pandemic, difficult decisions have been necessary and redundancies made. While a smaller staff team will take forward the work of the Council in the year ahead, the Mission Department's capacity will be reviewed as it responds to the new challenges and opportunities that undoubtedly lie ahead.
53. **Convenerships:** The Council expresses its deep appreciation to Rev Fiona Forbes who stepped down from the convenership of the Global Development Committee during 2020. While circumstances led to this convenership being much briefer than anyone wished, the Council acknowledges the tremendous amount Fiona brought to the role in a short time, not least in terms of hard work, spirituality and vision for grappling with global issues.
54. The Council very much values the prayers of the church as it looks forward to the appointment of a new Global Development Committee Convener and as the process gets underway for identifying a new Council Convener for appointment in 2022.

LIZ HUGHES, Convener

APPENDIX A

GLOBAL MISSION WORKERS

Global mission workers: the names, spheres and category of service are listed below:

INTEGRATE PROGRAMME – service of two or more years

Brazil

Naomi Keefe	2004	Outreach programme, The Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB), Recife
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Great Britain

Edwin and Anne Kibathi	2009	Ministry among East Africans in East London
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KENYA

Stephen and Angelina Cowan	1985 1989	Outreach and development work, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Tuum
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Naomi Leremore	1991	Development of Theological Education by Extension materials, PCEA, Nairobi
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Gary and Mary Reid	2000	Outreach and development work, PCEA, Olkinyiei
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Central and Southern Africa

Volker and JinHyeog Glissmann	2010	Consultant to Theological Education by Extension in TEEC – South Africa Music Teacher in Phoenix International Primary School in Blantyre - Malawi
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Middle East

Two global mission workers	2016	Theological education
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Nepal

Peter and Valerie Lockwood	2012	Programme Advisor United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Kathmandu
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Peter and Jayne Fleming	2017	Integral Development Advisor UMN, Kathmandu Teacher, Kathmandu International Study Centre
Portugal		
James and Heather Cochrane	2008	Church planting – Comunidade Pedras Vivas. Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal (ICPP) in Senhora de Hora, Porto (since 2013)
Chris and Rachel Humphries	2019	Church planting – Comunidade Pedras Vivas Christian Presbyterian Church of Portugal (ICCP) in Senhora de Hora, Porto
Romania		
Csaba and Ilona Veres	2001 1993	Co-ordinator – SERVANT Mission of Diakonia, Cluj Mera children's project
Steve and Rosie Kennedy	2020	Outreach ministry with Cluj Christian Fellowship of the Tóvidéki congregation of the Hungarian Reformed Church (Transylvania District)
Russia		
Two global mission workers	2019	Theological education
Spain		
Derek and Jane French	2000	Student outreach with Grupos Biblicos Unidos (GBU), Bilbao
Zambia		
Diane Cusick	1995	Early Childhood Development Officer, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Zambia Synod (since 2016).

APPENDIX B

Global Mission Partnerships

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

Europe

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

Africa

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

Middle East

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

Asia

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

- Association for Theological Education, Nepal
- Minority Focus, Nepal
- The Presbyterian Church of Myanmar

Caribbean and Latin America

- The Presbyterian Church of Brazil

APPENDIX C

‘Reviewing PCI’s Investment Policy’¹

“The Lord God put the man in the Garden of Eden to take care of it and to look after it.” Genesis 2:15 (Contemporary English Version).

The General Assembly of 2018 passed a resolution commending the Stewardship of Creation Report on Climate Change and encouraging congregations to consider how its conclusions might challenge lifestyle choices.

The Report has provided a biblical and theological foundation to guide PCI as it approaches issues relating to the care of God’s creation. It affirms God’s creation as being good and reflects on the importance of God’s people being good stewards of that same creation. This is understood as both an outworking of and a witness to the Christian faith. By implication, failure to look after the gift that God has entrusted to people conveys a disregard for God; as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Further, climate change disadvantages PCI’s brothers and sisters in other parts of the world disproportionately. Those who live in more vulnerable locations or who do not have adequate safety nets are especially susceptible to the impact of rising sea levels, droughts and floods. If God’s people in the West are to carry out Jesus’ command to love their neighbour as themselves, serious consideration needs to be given to consumption and the impact it has on neighbours in the wider world.

Commending a report is one thing. How Presbyterians allow that report to change their practice is another. Perhaps most challenging is how it impacts lifestyle choices; not least regarding how money is invested. Indeed, in their use of money, God’s people demonstrate how seriously they take what they claim to believe regarding creation, stewardship and discipleship.

1 Report referred to the General Assembly 2021 by the Standing Commission of the General Assembly, February, 2021

Presbyteries, congregations and individual members have raised this challenge; particularly, but not limited to, the investments we hold as a denomination. More specifically, the issue of investment in fossil fuels was raised in a letter from members of Waringstown congregation to the Trustees of PCI. This letter was in turn referred to the Stewardship of Creation Panel for consideration.

Over the past few years other Irish and European church bodies and PCI partners, including Christian Aid and Tearfund, have chosen to move towards divesting from fossil fuels. While this cannot in itself be a reason for PCI to do likewise, it does seem timely to examine PCI's policies in this regard.

Historically, PCI has chosen to divest from companies that could not be defended morally, including those in the armaments, gambling, alcohol and tobacco industries. These positions have necessarily evolved as PCI become more aware of the inherent moral inconsistencies. The same can be said of our growing understanding of climate change. Continuing to support investment policies which contradict our understanding of the damage being done to the earth clearly provides an inconsistent witness.

Scientists inform us that present fossil usage is a major contributor to global warming. Bob (Robert) White, Professor of Geophysics in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Cambridge and a member of Christians in Science says:

“It is increasingly clear that our use of oil and gas in the West is driving rapid climate change in the whole world... The effects of more extreme weather events will fall disproportionately on the very young and very old, on the poor and the marginalised in places such as sub-Saharan Africa. One quarter of the planet's population lives in poverty and is extremely vulnerable to changes caused by drought or flooding, to the failure of agricultural crops or to rising sea levels. If we take caring for our global neighbour seriously, we need to consider the impact of our lifestyles on them.”²

At the Paris Climate Conference of 2016 there was widespread agreement to address the climate “crisis” by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. Studies show that the carbon contained in existing fossil fuel using, if allowed to run its course, would take us beyond the globally agreed goals of the Paris Agreement.

Some have argued that divestment from fossil fuels is not possible because of the legal obligations that require trustees to act in the best interests of their members (fiduciary duty). However, on the other

hand some specialists in charity law have argued that carbon intensive investments may create a conflict between a church and its mission. In this case divestment from fossil fuels may be the only morally sustainable option.

Good stewardship of creation can have positive financial benefits for us too. Academic research and market trends suggest that divestment may not necessarily hurt our pockets. With the need to meet targets on greenhouse gas emissions, profit margins for fossil fuel companies may well be compromised. Government policies could also have an impact. For example, the United Kingdom government have made a commitment to phase out coal by 2025.

Divesting from fossil fuels may provide opportunities for PCI to take a lead in investing in positive alternatives including renewable energy and clean technologies. Examples may include solar and wind power, and the use of electric vehicles. Adequate investment in these areas is urgently needed to ensure a rapid transition to an economy which considerably reduces carbon.

In summary, PCI's investment policies must flow from a biblical basis and theology of creation, a commitment to God's world and to those whom Jesus Christ described as neighbours. The broad consensus of scientific thought supports the view that fossil fuel production contributes to climate change. It is therefore morally questionable to invest in companies deriving revenue from fossil fuels.

PCI's response should reflect a consistency of witness and provide a lead to church members and wider society. Most importantly, how PCI invest reflects how we value our Heavenly Father's creation and is an outworking of what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ.