

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

ADDITIONAL REPORTS FROM OTHER CHURCH ASSEMBLIES

Church of Ireland General Synod (2022)

The Very Rev Dr William Henry reports:

1. It was a pleasure to attend, along with Mr Alan Martin (Elder, Maze) the first in-person meeting of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland since 2019. The venue was conveniently located in our own Assembly Buildings and run from 4th to 6th May 2022. As is likely to be the case with our own General Assembly in 2022, the spectre of the church's emergence from the pandemic was a feature throughout the Synod.
2. Archbishop McDowell in his presidential address remarked that the Church did its best when faced with the unique circumstances of Covid-19 and he gave thanks to everyone who had worked so hard to get us to where we are now, two years on. The Archbishop's address concluded with an appeal to Patriarch Kirill, the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church, to help to bring the war in Ukraine to a just end, and he led the members of General Synod in a prayer for peace in solidarity with the government and the people of Ukraine.
3. Coming from a relatively non-liturgical background, I found the report on the Liturgical Advisory Committee to be insightful highlighting the centrally led resourcing of local ministers and congregations enabling them to have something profitable with which to lead their worship. These liturgies and resources have a variety of uses and contexts - for use personally and in parishes and for wider civic, national and international use. I also note there were a mixture of online editable resources that could be tailored for use in a variety of settings. One of the advantages of their recently acquired ability to meet online was that liturgies could be developed quite rapidly in response to events.
4. We are well aware of the covenant arrangement between the Methodist Church in Ireland and the Church of Ireland. This has been further expanded with formal relations proposed with the Moravian Church. A motion was presented calling on the General Synod to recognise that conditions now exist for the implementation of arrangements providing for interchangeability of ministry with the Moravian Church. One complication for the Church of Ireland in this new scheme was that while the Moravian Church in Britain and Ireland was a single province, the Church of Ireland felt that as Anglicans they had a courtesy to the Church of England not to join in consecrations until they were sure they knew what the Church of Ireland was doing. The Church of England had subsequently indicated that it is content that Church of Ireland Bishops can participate in consecrations of Bishops, even in England, as long as they alert the local Church of England bishop.
5. A report from the Church of Ireland Youth Department was particularly encouraging sensing how much value they place upon a centrally funded and resourced youth ministry. The presenter noted that the church finds itself at a crossroads – the long

shadow of the past few years impacted youth ministry greatly with youth workers being furloughed, paid off or volunteers completely disappearing in some cases. Attention was drawn to the large-scale volunteer crisis across the entire youth network, in the UK and Ireland, expressed equally across secular and faith sectors. The church was encouraged to respond to this, knowing our task is to pass on the faith and show the relevance of a vibrant relationship with Jesus.

6. Recent research carried out across the island by Christ in Youth revealed that in Ulster there is one youth worker for every 2,821 young people. In Leinster there is one youth worker for every, 22,662 young people; in Connaught it is one for every 15,577 young people and in Munster one for every 21,120 young people. These are sobering statistics but remind us of the importance of ensuring we are investing wisely for the future.
7. There was also great focus on wider church planting initiatives as has been the case in PCI. The terminology used within the Church of Ireland has been on what they call Pioneer Ministry. The motion aimed to reach more people outside the Church in a way that complements existing ministry within the Church of Ireland.
8. Key proposals included: Establishing a National Leadership structure for Pioneer Ministry; Engaging with dioceses to promote and prepare pioneer posts; Partnership with Church Army to deliver training for pioneer ministers. Dedicating financial resources from the RCB and dioceses to train and deploy paid pioneer ministers.
9. Pioneer ministry was not viewed as a replacement for pastoral ministry in its current forms but that traditional and new models of church should complement each other offering choice. The report recommendations built on a range of church plants and outreach initiatives already in place in the Church of Ireland. These proposals drew heavily on the experience of Pioneer Ministry in other Anglican churches in the UK, Ireland and beyond. It's anticipated the first pioneer ministers would start training and deployment in 2024, and over the next decade up to thirty paid pioneer ministers and projects will be in operation
10. A major piece of research was the Mind Matters initiative. This is a three-year project to raise awareness of, and respond to, the mental health needs of communities across Ireland (launched in October 2020.) As part of this, the Church of Ireland has announced a Clergy Assistance Programme to help to improve mental health among leaders in ordained ministry. The Clergy Assistance Programme had been put together in response to, surveys of Church of Ireland clergy and lay members in May–June 2021, which were commissioned by the Church to document understandings of and attitudes towards mental health.
11. I express my appreciation for the warm-hearted welcome and generous hospitality extended by the Synod for the duration of the gathering. It was a splendid occasion to catch up with old friends and meet new acquaintances while being refreshed amongst God's wider family.

Methodist Conference (2022)

The Very Rev Dr Charles McMullen reports:

1. The 253rd Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland (9- 12 June 2022) was held in the familiar surroundings of our Assembly Buildings. It was a pleasure to bring greetings on behalf of the ecumenical guests and on a personal level to note many special friendships throughout the years of my ministry.
2. “Living wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world,” was adopted by the Methodist Conference in 2021 as a vision statement for the denomination. The term “wholeheartedly” comes from the Covenant Prayer used by Methodist churches at the beginning of each new year: “I am no longer my own but yours... I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.” Commitment to living wholeheartedly was expressed in the following ways:
 - “in how we passionately worship and pray;
 - in our commitment to small group intentional discipleship. In attending to the means of grace;
 - in our relationship with our families, our friends, our neighbourhoods and our communities;
 - in how we engage with and learn from those with whom we partner around the world;
 - in how we relate to the environment around us;
 - in our thinking and attitudes, whether that’s to politics or people with whom we differ, or in the moral and ethical issues of today;
 - in how we engage with wider society which groans waiting for God’s justice and mercy to be poured out.”
3. Apart from the theme, the special Methodist word “connexion” also stood out for me. After these two years of profound isolation and dislocation, so much of the Conference gave the participants the opportunity simply to reconnect and spend time together over coffee or in discussion groups. The overall atmosphere was warm, friendly and intimate. Of profound significance, were the two morning sessions given almost entirely over to worship, teaching, responsive prayer and ministry. For me personally, and so many others, a fresh encounter with the living God! I was transported back to the beginning of my ministry and the sense of God’s presence at our first Special Assembly in Coleraine, “Transformed, not Conformed,” which was simply life changing.
4. At an impressive service at the beginning of the Conference, Mr Thomas Wilson was elected and installed as Lay Leader, and Rev David Nixon as President. It was interesting to observe the dynamics of joint ordained and lay leadership of the Conference with sessions being shared together and both assisting each other in the leading of worship in an atmosphere of good rapport and mutual respect. The President spoke with refreshing openness and candour about coming to terms with the recent loss of his wife while at the same time trusting in the promises of God and being surrounded by the love of his Church family. I believe the President and Lay Reader will exercise an encouraging

ministry of pastoral care and healing as they travel together throughout Ireland, something particularly apt as the Church emerges from Covid-19.

5. The Methodist Church continues to consolidate organisational and structural changes in general with a view to becoming more efficient and effective for outreach. Pragmatism and flexibility were stressed. Congregations have been coalesced into three districts covering the North East, North West and Southern areas of the island of Ireland, each with Superintendents. The Governance Board, which has an ongoing rotation of elected members, seems to be in similar vein to our General Council and carries considerable weight for oversight with the Connexion implementing its decisions. Reports from Boards and Committees now come before the Governance Board and are printed in the Conference Blue Book. Only some of this material was actually discussed during Conference, which gave considerably more time for devotions. In our General Assembly there is a much greater sense of the celebration of the entire work of our denomination, but we can find ourselves under considerable time constraint.
6. Continuing this process of streamlining, a working party brought a report on the role of the President and Lay Reader. Conference tested the feasibility of a three-year-part-time term of Presidential office, with twenty-five per cent of the time given to those duties and the remainder to Circuit/Society responsibilities. It was felt that a longer-term appointment could lead to greater continuity and cohesion. The discussion, however, proved to be more cautious, realising, for example, that life never works out in such neat compartments. Pastoral ministry and being the Church's principal public representative were also seen in the debate as two very distinctive roles. The matter was left in abeyance for further discussion.
7. There were two areas of specific interest for us as Presbyterians. Firstly, Mr Lindsay Conway, OBE has been appointed Chair of the Connexional Safeguarding Board. Secondly, while sadness was expressed at the ending of the Alternating Ministry Scheme, PCI and the Methodist Church had worked together amicably in taking the necessary decisions. It was very much hoped that cooperation would take on a new shape for the future.
8. There are many overlapping issues between our denominations, including general numerical decline on the one hand, but individual stories of growth and encouragement on the other hand, including church planting and mission projects. In the Blue Book, there is a report from Carnlough which because of an ageing congregation and the effects of the pandemic was facing closure. However, six young people who were recently confirmed, have committed themselves to the Church and the doors remain open. We all pray for those new shoots and new beginnings.
9. The Faith and Order Committee has an extensive remit, but most of the discussion revolved around the vexed topic of same sex marriage. The Methodist Church has taken its discussions at a slower pace, concentrating on the idea of a pastoral conversation. Bible study material and pastoral guidelines have been prepared over the years. Printed in the Reports is the statement that the Scriptures are of fundamental importance as the inspired Word of God for all our Christian thinking and practice. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the Church for Christian mission and witness. The historic position of the Methodist Church is re-affirmed, but acknowledgment made to "faithful Christians rooted in Scripture (who) might validly hold different views on human sexuality."

Questions were asked about the overall direction of travel and whether the Methodist Church in Ireland would adopt the same stance in relation to same sex marriages as its Connexion in Great Britain. Altogether, I was very impressed by the high standard of sensitive debate, but I sensed underlying tension that an overall decision needs to be taken soon so that the Conference can clarify its position.

10. The Conference spent considerable time discussing the deepening cost of living crisis. A report was presented by the Council on Social Responsibility, which was written in conjunction with the Trussell Trust and Christians Against Poverty. Members of congregations involved in food bank ministries and Rev Brian Anderson from East Belfast Mission gave harrowing accounts of acute food and fuel poverty as well as homelessness. Some contributors to the debate spoke in tears! The Conference called on the recently elected Assembly to be functioning as soon as possible and to make the elimination of poverty its number one priority. The Council on Social Responsibility was directed to gather information and reflect prayerfully on the nature of poverty on the island of Ireland.
11. The Conference brought together reports, business and a powerful sense of the devotional Meeting for the first time in person since 2019, The Conference gave time and space for its members to reconnect and be renewed in Christian faith, love and outreach. The theme of “wholeheartedness” must surely lie very close to the roots of the Wesleyan movement, which are gracious, evangelical and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. That all our hearts would be strangely warmed and we would
12. desire to win Ireland for Christ!

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 3 – GENERAL COUNCIL (SECTION 1) Supplementary Report (Thursday Morning)

MEMORIAL RECORD

The **Rev Kenneth James Caldwell (Ken) McConnell MA, DipEd**, Minister Emeritus (Released) Dunfanaghy and Carrigart, died on 29 May 2022, in the ninetieth year of his age, and the sixty-third year of his ministry. He was born at Tully, Eglinton on 18 September 1932, the eldest of two children to James McConnell, a farmer, and his wife, Agnes, née Kee. He was brought up in association with the congregation of Ebrington, and received his primary education at Carmony, Eglinton and Ebrington, schools. He attended Foyle College, Londonderry, 1945-1950, and on leaving school, he worked on his father’s farm for two years. He then studied for his primary degree at the Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, from 1952 to 1956, graduating BA. Having decided to study for the ordained ministry, he took his theological course at New College, Edinburgh, and the Assembly’s College, Belfast, between 1956 and 1959. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Derry, 15 June 1958. After serving as an assistant in the congregations of First Derry and of Cooke Centenary, Belfast, Mr McConnell was ordained at Moville and Greenbank by the Presbytery of Donegal, 13 October 1959. During these years, he was employed also as a

temporary teacher in Clondermot Secondary School, from December 1961 to February 1968, and he proceeded MA with Trinity College, Dublin, in 1963. In 1968, he was called to the congregation of High Street, Antrim, and he was installed there by the Presbytery of Templepatrick, 17 April 1968. His ministry was of short duration, for he resigned, 31 August 1970, to take up a teaching post at Newry High School as head of RE. Then, in September 1976, he was appointed Vice Principal at Coleraine Boys' Secondary School, and in the same year he qualified DipEd from the Queen's University, Belfast. In 1988, he returned to full-time ministry and was assistant to the Moderator in Ballycastle congregation from 3 July until he was called to Carrigart and Dunfanaghy in the following year, and where he was installed by the Presbytery of Donegal, 8 September 1989. His friendly and caring nature commended his pastoral ministry to many. He was Moderator of the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster in 1997, in which year he also retired on 31st December to Gatehouse of Fleet, Scotland, where he had opportunity to continue in ministry on a part-time basis. Mr McConnell married Kathleen Elizabeth Yvonne Stewart, on 4 July 1960, at Ballylane, Co. Armagh, and they had three children – a son Stewart, and daughters, Cara and Bronia. To Mrs McConnell, her family, and Mr McConnell's sister, Kathleen, we extend our sympathy, praying they will know the comfort and assurance of the Gospel of the risen Christ.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 4 – CORRESPONDING MEMBERS & DELEGATES Supplementary Report (Thursday morning)

Church of Ireland: Rt Rev Dr Ian Ellis, Bishop of Clogher; Mrs Ethne McCord

Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev Billy Davison; Mrs Lynda Neilands

Religious Society of Friends: Mr David Gamble; Mrs Anne Gamble

Irish Council of Churches: Mr Damian Jackson; Ms Gina Copty

Reformed Church in Hungary: Rev Prof Zoltán Literáty

Church of North India, Gujrat Diocese: Mr Percy Patrick

Malawi: Mr Amon Chanika, Director of Scripture Union Malawi

Presbyterian Church of East Africa: Rev Edwin Kibathi; Mrs Anne Kibathi

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

**Item 6 – COUNCIL FOR TRAINING IN MINISTRY
Supplementary Report (Thursday afternoon)**

Omission: In Appendix 2 of the Council’s Report, page 116, insert:

Dromore

Rev James Todd, to be retained as minister without charge.

T DAVID ALLEN

**Item 8 – GENERAL COUNCIL (SECTION 2)
Supplementary Report (Thursday afternoon)**

SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) – Actuarial Valuation and Investment Strategy Review

1. The Committee reported to the General Assembly last year details of the actuarial valuation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) as at 31 December 2020. A resolution was passed, “That the General Assembly agree that the “employer” contribution rate to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) should remain at the rate of 24% until the next valuation of the scheme as at 31 December 2023, and that the General Assembly support the Scheme Trustees use, if necessary, of a further element of the Scheme surplus in finalising the investment strategy review for the Scheme”.
2. The Committee reports that the Actuarial Valuation of the Scheme as at 31 December 2020 has been formally completed by the Scheme Actuary and the related Schedule of Contributions was signed on behalf of the Scheme Trustees and Support Services Committee on 2 March 2022. In addition, the Committee reports that the Scheme Trustees have concluded their investment strategy review and implemented the recommendations of the engaged professional advisers which are aimed to further protect the funding position of the Scheme. The Schedule of Contributions records the “employer” contribution rate at 24% - an element of the Scheme surplus was used in finalising the investment strategy. This rate will apply until the next Actuarial Valuation of the Scheme as at 31 December 2023.

Retirements

Correction – Amended wording for Resolution 9(a) on page 260 should read:

Rev C.F.D. Clements (Second Castlederg & Urney), on or after 29 October 2022

TREVOR D GRIBBEN

Item 9 – CODE REPUBLISHING PANEL

1. The Code Republishing Panel continues to meet to complete the task of finalising the initial draft of the new Code to be sent to Presbyteries for discussion this autumn (see Reports page 192, paragraphs 1-3). As outlined in the report, it is important that the views of the whole Presbytery are garnered, and not just the opinions of a few ‘interested individuals’. However, the draft Code will be an extremely lengthy document, and the question has arisen as to how many copies of it should be provided for each Presbytery.
2. The Panel therefore recommends the following:
 - a. That twelve printed copies of the draft of the new Code be made available to each Presbytery, to facilitate each Presbytery appointing a small task group of up to twelve people to draw up a report for Presbytery highlighting key issues for debate in Presbytery, with recommendations for possible amendments (if deemed necessary).
 - b. That an electronic copy of the draft of the new Code be made available to all members of Presbytery, to enable each member to consider it and to raise issues with their Presbytery Task Group and/or at the time of the Presbytery’s consideration of the Presbytery Task Group’s report.
 - c. That printed copies of the draft of the new Code also be made available for each member of the Judicial Commission.

Revised Resolution 3:

3. That the report of the Code Republishing Panel be received and the recommendation in paragraph 2 of that report, regarding a revised time-table and in the Supplementary Report regarding the printing of the initial draft of the new Code, be adopted.

DONALD J WATTS

Item 23 - COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS **Supplementary Report (Saturday afternoon)**

Legacy and dealing with the past

1. Since the 2022 Reports went to print, the UK Government has introduced the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill. This follows its engagement on its July 2021 Command Paper which indicated an intention to move away from the arrangements for dealing with the past as proposed, and agreed, in the Stormont House Agreement (SHA).

2. Over this period of time, the Council for Public Affairs through its Officers, along with others, has continued to engage with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Office officials seeking to keep the Gospel values of healing, love, justice, repentance and hope for the future to the fore of any discussions about dealing with the past.
3. While there have been some shifts in what the UK Government has now brought forward, they are still removed from the four-strand framework of the SHA (although in themselves imperfect) which continued to offer victims and survivors, many of whom are within our Presbyterian family, the opportunity to seek due process and justice in the courts.
4. The word ‘reconciliation’, although included in the title of the legislation, is not defined within it. In considering what a Christian and theological definition of reconciliation might be, we reflect on the words of the Moderator at *On These Steps* in Union Theological College on 17th September 2021 when he said:

“Reconciliation – repeatedly affirmed in statements and agreements from both churches and governments in the past - does not suffer from amnesia. Reconciliation is not soft or forgetful. Setting the past aside as if it didn’t happen is no basis or foundation for healing. Reconciliation that has the grit and grip to re-write a life is that which names a wrong as the wrong that it is, whether perpetrated by the state or by an agent of terror. Such naming and then acknowledgement of a wrong presents a choice to those at the table.

If they have the courage and good sense and moral backbone to repent of it, to lament that it ever took place, to say so and face the guilt that lies at its heart, then a door is opened to a new future. Reconciliation that grows to fruitfulness in this precious soil produces a brand of person that the world cannot ignore, and the critics cannot answer. There is a deep-seated heroism, at peace not only with themselves, but incredibly, with their enemies. As the Psalmist puts it, “You prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies.” God’s vision for us is that we, friends and enemies alike, can sit together and eat together at the table.”

Northern Ireland Protocol

5. Northern Ireland has unique vulnerabilities in the context of the United Kingdom’s changing relationship with the European Union. The extension of the grace periods in relation to checks on some goods entering NI, albeit unilaterally by the UK Government, has served to partially mitigate some of the impacts on business. However, should those mitigations end, the true extent of the barriers to trade will be realised. The EU has already demonstrated some flexibility on its part in relation to decisions it has made to ensure the continued long-term supply of medicines to NI.
6. For many people from a unionist perspective, the Northern Ireland Protocol has resulted in a diminution of NI’s links with the rest of the UK, and consequently has unsettled the finely balanced settlement that came into being at the time of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

7. As an all-island denomination, PCI recognises the importance of good relations amongst and between governments across these islands, and expresses regret at reports that relations between the UK and Irish governments are at an all-time low.
8. This is a deeply serious political moment, the outworking of which has made the delivery of the excellent aspirations of the Agreement much more challenging. Like almost everyone else, it is PCI's view that the best way forward is a negotiated settlement between the EU and the UK Government. The EU should come to those negotiations ready and able to discuss and deal with all of the legitimate issues, presenting problems and real concerns of others. If their negotiating mandate is too narrow to enable this to happen, then that surely needs to change. Likewise, the UK Government must enter into such negotiations in good faith, in order to find workable solutions, and not let other matters on its domestic agenda distract from finding solutions.

Devolved institutions

9. PCI has long supported the existence of functioning devolved government in Northern Ireland, recognising the complexities involved in the delicate balance of power-sharing by way of a mandatory coalition involving diametrically opposed political opinions and perspectives.
10. It is therefore deeply regrettable that the political circumstances are such that it has not been possible to restore the devolved institutions following the May election, and notes the frustration felt by many in light of the significant challenges presented by the current global and economic crises.
11. There is no doubt that it is the most vulnerable in society who suffer the most during such periods of uncertainty, compounded by a lack of clear political decision-making. Where means exist to allow Executive Ministers to work together to address the current crisis, and take other important decisions, even if not optimal, then these should be utilised.

Additional Resolutions

- 5 (a) That the General Assembly note the overwhelming opposition on all sides of the community to the UK Government's proposals as laid out in the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill; and call upon the Secretary of State, not only to take account of the legitimate views of those who feel that access to justice is being denied by these proposals, but also make necessary amendments during the legislative process to address these concerns.
- 5 (b) That the General Assembly call upon the European Union to take steps to enable the necessary negotiations with the UK Government to take heed of, and seek to understand, all the areas of concern to significant numbers of people within Northern Ireland; and call upon the UK Government to enter in to those negotiations as a matter of priority.

- 5 (c) That the General Assembly deeply regret that the present circumstances are as such that all parties have not found themselves in a position to re-form the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive; and call on all to take the necessary steps to seek honourable accommodations focused on the common good, thereby creating the circumstances through which devolution can be restored. Until such a time as this is possible, the General Assembly call upon all current Executive Ministers to find ways of working together collaboratively to address significant issues like healthcare reform, budgetary allocations, education and the cost of living emergency.

DANIEL J KANE

**Item 24 – GENERAL COUNCIL (SECTION 5)
Supplementary Report (Saturday afternoon)**

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Revised Resolutions 17(a) and 17(d):

17 (a) the resignation of the Rev DTR. Edwards as Convener of the Home Mission, Irish Mission & Deaconess Committee, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev JR Lambe be appointed in his place.

17(d) the resignation of Mr James Livingstone as Convener of the Linkage Commission, that he be thanked for his services, and that the Rev RK Graham be appointed in his place.

T DAVID ALLEN

AD-HOC AREAS OF WORK UNDER THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Joint Task Group set up by 2021 General Assembly

1. At the General Assembly of 2021, it was agreed that “a joint task group be formed between the Council for Training in Ministry and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, to assist ministers and youth workers/leaders in the outworking of ‘Guidance for pastoral care of same-sex attracted people and their families’, and that the Council for Training in Ministry provides support for ministers in using ‘Credible profession of faith and admission to the sacraments: a framework for discussion for kirk sessions’” (GA Reports 2021, p.306).
2. The Task Group has been established, and is taking forward its remit, under the convenership of the Rev Albin Rankin.
3. One matter that was discussed related to the remit of the Task Group and led to the consensus that, along with the pastoral guidelines re same-sex attracted people and their

families, the Task Group should also incorporate training and resources regarding gender identity. As the original resolution of 2021 General Assembly referred only to the former but not the latter, an additional resolution is appended approving this expansion of the Task Group's remit.

4. It has been agreed that, because of the nature of the Task Group's work, in-person meetings are preferable to remote or on-line events. It is proposed to commence these in the church year of 2022-23, ideally in the January – Easter 2023 period, when, God willing, 'normal' congregational life will be re-established.

New Joint Task Group

5. During the last year there have been discussions regarding the role of Auxiliary Ministry within PCI. It has been recognised that while PCI has trained a significant number of potential Auxiliary Ministers, only two part-time posts have ever been created and in fact there are currently none in post. At a time when PCI is experiencing a "shortfall" in terms of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, the use of Auxiliary Ministry posts in a creative manner may be of great value.
6. There is however a lack of clarity in terms of how the current Guidelines operate and indeed as to the role and purpose of the Scheme. As a result, the Linkage Commission has written to the Clerk of Assembly to request that a Task Group be established, to sit under the General Council, with the remit to look again at the current Guidelines as they apply to the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme.
7. It would be useful if such a Task Group not only reviewed all aspects of Auxiliary Ministry Scheme but also looked at its overlap/duplication with other General Assembly approved schemes, such as the Additional Pastoral Personnel Scheme. It should bring together representatives from a number of stake-holders, namely the Council for Training in Ministry, the Linkage Commission, Council for Mission in Ireland and the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. An appropriate resolution is appended.

Additional Resolutions

22(a) That the remit of the Task Group seeking to assist ministers and youth workers/leaders in the outworking of 'Guidance for pastoral care of same-sex attracted people and their families' be expanded to incorporate training and resources regarding gender identity.

22(b) That a Task Group be established under General Council to carry forward the review of the Auxiliary Ministry Scheme as outlined in the Supplementary Report and that the office bearers of the General Council be authorised to appoint its initial membership.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN