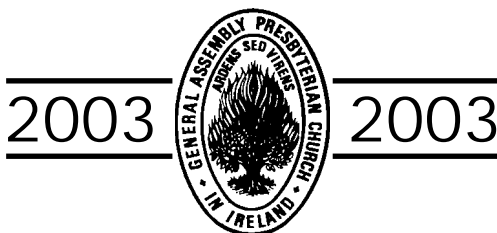




GENERAL ASSEMBLY



ANNUAL REPORTS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Notes: Business commences at 9.30 a.m. each morning.

Luncheon adjournment at 1.00 p.m. each day.

The figures printed in brackets are page references to the Annual Reports.

References to the Minutes of Assembly are given in full.

Tuesday

Business Board

Ministry & Pensions

Shankill Road Mission

PWA

Nomination Board

Inter-Church Relations Board

Education Board

Union Commission

Wednesday

Church & Gov.

General Board (Other C'tees.)

Social Witness

Youth Board

Board of Mission in Ireland

Thursday

Board of Studies & Christian Training

United Appeal

Overseas Board

Residential Assembly 2004

Judicial Commission

Priorities

Friday

Trustees

Trusts

Finance and Administration

Communications Board

NOTES

MONDAY, JUNE 2

Within Church House

7.00 p.m.—

Divine Service
Constitution of Assembly
Memorial Roll
Election of Moderator

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

Within Church House

9.30 a.m.—

1. BUSINESS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (90-97).
Arrangements Committee.
2. Reports of Synods and Presbyteries (80-89).
- (10.00) 3. Reception of Corresponding Members and Delegates.
Church of Scotland: Right Rev. Prof. Iain Torrance, Rev. Dr. Iain C. Barclay, Prof. Trevor Salmon.
United Reformed Church: Rev. John D. Waller, Rev. Dr. David Cornick.
Presbyterian Church of Wales: Rev. Meirion Lloyd Davies.
Church of Ireland: Rt. Rev. Kenneth Good, Mr. F. Rankin.
The Methodist Church in Ireland: Rev. Harold Good, Mrs. Louise Wilson.
The Presbyterian Church of Australia: Rt. Rev. John Knapp.
W.A.R.C: Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi.
I.C.C: Dr. David Stevens.
Église Réformée de France:
- (10.30) 4. BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS: Report and Resolutions (283-295).
Central Ministry Fund, Committee on Retirements and Pensions, Retired Ministers' House Fund.

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

5. Overtures on the Books anent Pars. 326(1)(b) and (c) of the Code (295).
6. Overtures anent Pars. 288(2) and 288(3) of the Code (295).
7. Committee on Memorial of the Tyrone Presbytery: Report and Resolutions (302).
8. SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (211-212).

Lapsed Business.

(11.30) Intermission

12.00 noon Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

2.00 p.m.—

9. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION: Report and Resolutions (186-189).
- (2.30) 10. NOMINATION BOARD: Report and Resolutions (117).
- (3.15) 11. INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (118-138).
Irish Church Relations, World Church Relations, World Development, Race Relations Committees.
- (4.00) 12. BOARD OF EDUCATION: Report and Resolutions (222-239).
Church Education, State Education, University Education Committees.
- (5.00) 13. UNION COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (61-77).
Personnel/Planning Committee.
14. Memorial of Kirk Session of Macrory Memorial (77-78).
15. Memorial of Presbytery of Belfast East (78-79).

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

Lapsed Business.

(6.30) Close of Business.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

9.30 a.m.—

16. CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE:
Report and Resolutions (31-58).

(11.00) 17. GENERAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions
(9-29).

Moderator's Advisory, Forces, Chaplains, Doctrine,
Recognised Ministries, Peace and Peacemaking
Committees.

18. Overtures on the Books anent Pars. 90(1) and
95(d) of the Code (29).

19. Overture anent Par. 93(2), of the Code (29).

20. Memorial of the Presbytery of Tyrone (29-30).

Lapsed Business.

12.15 p.m.

Worship.

2.00 p.m.—

21. BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS: Report and
Resolutions (190-210).

Alcohol and Education Services, War Memorial
Hostel, Kinghan Mission, Presbyterian Residential
Trust, Marriage and the Family, Social Issues and
Resources Committees.

22. Overture on the Books anent Par. 132(4) of the
Code (210).

23. Notice of Motion (210).

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

- (3.30) 24. YOUTH BOARD: Report and Resolutions (213-221).

Youth Events, Youth Training and Resources, Youth Home Mission, Youth Overseas, Youth Centres, Committees.

- (4.15) 25. BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND: Report and Resolutions (168-185).

Home Mission, Church Extension, Evangelism, Irish Mission, Divine Healing.

Lapsed Business.

- (5.30) Close of Business.

7.45 p.m.— Evening Rally.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

9.30 a.m.—

26. BOARD OF STUDIES AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING: Report and Resolutions (240-249).

Ministerial Studies, College and Magee Management, Resourcing Christians for Ministry, Committees.

- (10.00) 27. UNITED APPEAL BOARD: Report and Resolutions (276-282).

- (10.45) 28. OVERSEAS BOARD: Report and Resolutions (139-167).

- (12.00) 29. 2004 Assembly Conference Committee: Report and Resolutions (303-305).

Lapsed Business.

12.15 p.m.—

Worship

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

2.00 p.m.—

In Private

30. Committee on Reception of Ministers and Licentiates: Report and Resolutions (250-251).
31. Overture anent Par. 219(5)(a) of the Code (251).
32. Memorial of Rev. L. Kennedy-Ritchie (252).
33. JUDICIAL COMMISSION: Report and Resolutions (59-60).

In Public

34. Ad hoc Committee on Priorities: Report and Resolutions (306-315).

Lapsed Business.

(6.00) Adjournment.

7.00 p.m.—

Lapsed Business, if any.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

9.30 a.m.—

35. TRUSTEES: Report and Resolutions (296-301).
36. Overture anent Par. 318(A)(2)(c) of the Code (301).
37. COMMISSION ON TRUSTS: Report and Resolutions (253).
- (10.00) 38. BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION: Report and Resolutions (254-275).

Finance and Staffing, Incidental Fund, Assembly Buildings Committees.

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

(10.45) 39. BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS: Report and Resolutions (98-116).

Communications Administration, Media, Public Worship, Church Architecture, Historical Society Committees.

(12.15) Worship.

Late Business, if any.

Lapsed Business.

BUSINESS BOARD, Final Report.

CLOSE OF ASSEMBLY.

7.45 p.m.— YOUTH NIGHT

Times in brackets may be anticipated but should not be passed.

NOTES

BUSINESS BOARD

A Guide to Assembly Procedure

1. **Members** of Assembly consist of all ministers in active duty or retired and some elders, ex officio, together with a representative elder from each established congregation plus other elders commissioned by Presbyteries to correspond with the number of ministers serving in special appointments. Deaconesses, representatives of the Women's and Youth Movements and some others have now been invited to "sit and deliberate" as associates — i.e., to take part with members freely in debate but without voting. The Assembly quorum is fifty members.

2. While members should bear in mind any opinions or concerns of their Congregations, Kirk Sessions or Presbyteries, neither ministers nor elders attend as "delegates", obliged to vote as instructed by any of these. The Assembly should be a gathering of fully responsible, free Christian men and women, always open to spiritual guidance and information on a Church-wide basis, not a device for counting up decisions already made elsewhere.

3. **The Moderator** is chairman of the Assembly, in charge of proceedings, but he should not take sides in debates. **Former Moderators** may deputise from time to time at his request, should he wish to take part in debate or to withdraw from the House. When the Moderator rises to speak at any point all other members must yield to the Chair. Members should stand when the Moderator enters or leaves at the beginning or end of proceedings. Members may enter or leave at any time during proceedings, but should do so with as little disturbance as possible. It is a courtesy in so doing to give a slight bow to the Chair.

4. With the changing composition of the Assembly the recommended form of address to the House is simply "Moderator" (not "Mr." Moderator, etc.). Speakers should face towards the House and the microphones, not towards the Moderator.

5. **Work for which the Assembly** is responsible is generally entrusted to various permanent or temporary (“ad hoc”) committees. These must each present a report to the Assembly. Working Committees concerned with related matters are grouped under a supervising Board. A Commission of Assembly is a committee entrusted with the executive powers of the Assembly, within the terms of its appointment. Members of committees, etc., are appointed by the Assembly on the nomination of various bodies and have a Convener (i.e., executive secretary, in Irish usage) in charge.

6. **Reports.** While the Assembly is obliged to “receive” the report of each committee, etc., it does not “adopt” or accept responsibility for the contents of any report. Reports carry only the authority of the committee concerned and not of the Assembly. If found too unsatisfactory, the report may be received and referred back. Any matter to which the Assembly is to be committed must be stated in a specific resolution. Resolutions should be kept to conclusions, rather than include arguments in support such as are appropriate to speeches. Similarly, speeches in the Assembly carry the authority only of the speaker.

7. Reports, together with any appended resolutions, are first of all “presented”, usually by a Board or Committee Convener. There is then an opportunity for **questions** to be asked. These should quite strictly be asked only for further information or explanation, whether of something in the report or not in the report but for which the Board, etc., carries responsibility; they should not be rhetorical or debating “questions”, to score a point.

8. **Questions**, which should be written out and placed in the box provided in good time, will normally be limited to two per person and ten minutes in all, unless the Moderator judge that a particular subject merits an extension of these limits.

9. After Questions, the presenter of the report formally proposes the appended resolutions in block and another person seconds, with a speech taking up any other aspects requiring treatment.

10. **The Resolutions** are then taken in succession. The first of these is always “that the report be received”. This is the point where members may discuss (not ask questions about) any matters in the report or for which the Board, etc., should bear responsibility, but which do not arise under any subsequent resolution.

11. Unless otherwise arranged, speeches are limited as follows:—

Presenting a group of reports and resolutions 10 minutes
Seconding a group of reports and resolutions 7 minutes
All other speeches 5 minutes

If lapsed business accumulates, the normal abbreviated timings are as follows:—

Proposing a group of Reports – 10 minutes reduced to 7
Seconding a group of Reports – 7 minutes reduced to 5
Other speeches – 5 minutes reduced to 3.

A flickering light is given 1 minute before the end, a steady light at 30 seconds and a buzz when the time is up. Before commencing, speakers should announce their name and congregation, or for Women’s and Youth representatives, their name and Presbytery. Apart from the proposer (or alternatively the seconder) having the right to speak again in closing the debate, no one may speak twice in debating any one resolution or amendment, except to clarify some misunderstanding.

12. Resolutions are called by number. Those wishing to speak should at once come forward, or otherwise indicate their desire to speak.

13. **Amendments** may be moved without prior notice by any member so as to change the terms of a resolution with its general scope but not so as to introduce another subject. Before debating proceeds the amendment should be given in writing to the Clerk’s desk. Any amendments previously received and licensed by the Business Board, however, have precedence. At least one day’s notice must be given of an amendment which would substantially affect the scope of a motion or overture. A plea for the outright rejection of a resolution is not an amendment.

14. An amendment, if seconded, must be dealt with before further debate on the original resolution or consideration of any further amendment. If passed, the

amendment is then put as a substantive motion, when one more amendment may be considered. If the first two amendments are rejected, one more amendment may be considered before reverting to the original resolution.

15. **Additional resolutions**, concerning some matters not covered by an existing resolution, may be submitted by any member or associate as notice of motion for license. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, these should be received by the Clerk at least one week before the Assembly. Resolutions rescinding or reversing a previous decision of the Assembly require notice of motion to be first given and accepted at the preceding annual meeting. Those invited to sit and deliberate may “present” resolutions or amendments in the usual way, but these must be formally proposed and seconded by a member of Assembly before being debated.

16. In the “**Alternative**” format each Board is given 35 minutes for a “Presentation”, including not only the proposing and seconding of the Report but the introduction of guests, the showing of videos, etc as may be desired. Outside speakers require the permission of the Business Board. Assembly questions for clarification then follow, and finally the resolutions. The speeches of the proposer and seconder, and any comments from committee conveners, should all be included in the allotted period of time, and these officebearers should not speak again (except on a point of clarification or to close the debate on a resolution) otherwise the report is liable to overrun and cause business to lapse.

17. **Voting** may be by voice, when the Moderator calls for those in favour to say “Aye” and those against to say “No”, or by a standing vote to be counted by tellers; or by ballot, asked for by not fewer than twenty-five members or, at the discretion of the Moderator, by the showing of voting tickets, to be counted by tellers. Proxy voting for an absent member is not allowed. A member may intimate his personal dissent or protest against any decision immediately after it has been pronounced, but does not thereby free himself from obligation loyally to implement the decision taken.

18. An “**Overture**” is a proposal for a change in the “Code”, or law of the Church’s Constitution and Government. Changes in rules, of which notice has been given in the

printed Reports, may be adopted forthwith if approved by a two-thirds majority, or without such notice if approved nem. con. If approved by a lesser majority, it is "placed on the books", to be decided at the following Assembly. This applies also to rules governing the Central Ministry Fund and other Ministry Funds. In the Basic Code, where immediate operation is desirable, the change may be adopted temporarily during the intervening year as an "interim act". If an overture contemplates a constitutional change it must also be sent down to Presbyteries to be voted on during the intervening year.

19. A **"Memorial"** is a petition to the Assembly, usually from some person or body who is not a member of Assembly, such as a subordinate court of the Church, a Church member or group of members, or persons unconnected with the Church. Procedures and forms are laid down by which the circumstances of the Memorial are outlined and a definite request or "prayer" is stated. A Memorial is also the procedure by which someone, whether member of the Assembly or not, asks for exemption from some Church rule on the plea of special circumstances.

NOTES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND ACCOUNTS 2002 — PREFACE

A preface to the Accounts is submitted herewith.

This takes the form of a memorandum Central Income and Expenditure Account and a graphical illustration in relation to this Income and Expenditure.

This Income and Expenditure does not form part of the Audited Accounts of the Church.

2001 Column is period to 31 December 2001.

2002 Column is year to 31 December 2002.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
CENTRAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2002

	2002 £	2001 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Received from Congregations		
– Assessments	3,611,597	3,713,525
– United Appeal	2,890,120	2,838,092
– World Development	482,038	439,537
– PWA	622,378	607,495
– PWA Deaconesses	132,202	147,676
– Moderators Appeal	233,518	724,951
– Other	119,800	85,934
	8,091,653	8,557,210
Trust and Investment Income	1,347,825	1,620,109
Interest Receivable	487,503	552,912
Donations and Bequests	2,739,300	2,410,754
Residents fees	3,315,477	3,042,599
Church Publications	297,396	298,110
Funding from Outside Agencies	846,663	738,029
Property Rental Income	433,605	434,935
Union College Student Fees	238,465	172,987
Café and Shop Receipts	141,381	124,878
PWA & YWG Membership Fees	55,921	50,662
Fees from Youth and Other Events	64,559	78,025
Cost allocated to Trustees	71,914	70,957
Other Income	418,270	283,665
	18,549,932	18,435,832
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
General Board	43,683	53,469
Business Board	14,107	12,170
Communications Board	299,411	369,793
Inter-Church Relations Board	479,288	460,918
Overseas Board	2,519,878	2,083,554
Board of Mission in Ireland	1,307,787	1,122,877
Board of Social Witness	4,370,271	4,138,266
Youth Board	559,791	556,869
Board of Education	412,328	416,090
Board of Studies	765,494	914,935
Finance and Administration	898,228	719,927
United Appeal Board	30,699	29,267
Board of Ministry and Pensions	3,630,258	3,692,043
Shankill Road Mission	206,392	197,899

Presbyterian Women's Associations	711,892	695,884
Local Bible Fund	1,699	912
Moderators Appeal	655,787	105,756
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	16,906,993	15,570,629
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	1,642,939	2,865,203
Gains (Losses) on disposal of Fixed Assets	1,200,652	176,040
Transfer to Restricted Funds	(1,228,649)	(371,574)
Transfer to Designated Funds	182,765	(1,375)
	1,797,707	2,668,294
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	26,825,503	24,157,209
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	28,623,210	26,825,503

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 31 December 2002

	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
	£	£
1. Congregational Assessments		
– Central Ministry Fund	1,691,480	1,805,589
– Retired Ministers Fund	859,259	894,891
– Widows of Ministers Fund	605,535	503,385
– Sick Supply	7,990	7,981
– Incidental Fund	388,985	371,631
– Ministerial Development Fund	58,348	130,048
	<u>3,611,597</u>	<u>3,713,525</u>
2. Church Publications		
– Herald	108,466	118,824
– Herald Advertising	35,895	27,687
– Points for Prayer	19,977	19,068
– Public Worship	–	743
– Wider World	46,336	46,548
– Christian Irishman	63,566	64,760
– Christian Irishman Calendars	19,370	17,240
– Scriptures	3,786	3,240
	<u>297,396</u>	<u>298,110</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**CENTRAL BALANCE SHEET**

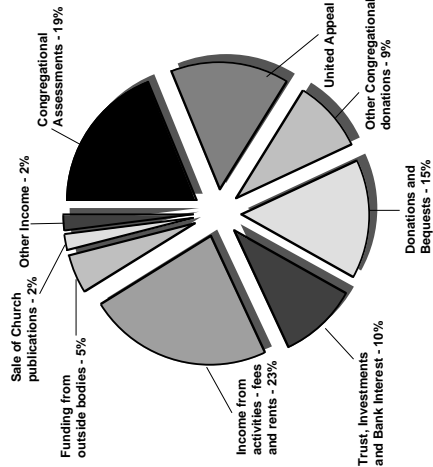
As at 31 December 2002

	2002 £	2001 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Land and Buildings	17,702,835	16,471,082
Computer Equipment	91,822	111,883
Fixtures and Fittings	878,562	423,896
Motor Vehicles	119,640	88,370
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	18,792,859	17,095,231
	<hr/>	<hr/>
INVESTMENTS	2,876,858	2,957,625
	<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Northern Bank No. 3 Account (Statement of Liquid Funds)	11,257,192	9,836,679
Other Bank balances and cash in hand	1,923,736	1,761,305
Debtors and Prepayments	2,050,517	2,142,782
Stock	7,839	7,436
Loans	690,660	611,162
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,929,944	14,359,364
	<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Accruals	878,424	532,154
Loans	331,049	317,405
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,209,473	849,559
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	14,720,471	13,509,805
	<hr/>	<hr/>
DEFERRED INCOME	278,630	294,693
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL ASSETS	36,111,558	33,267,968
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Represented By		
Unrestricted Funds	28,623,210	26,825,503
Restricted Funds	6,439,365	5,210,717
Designated Funds	1,048,983	1,231,748
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	36,111,558	33,267,968
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Income and Expenditure 2002

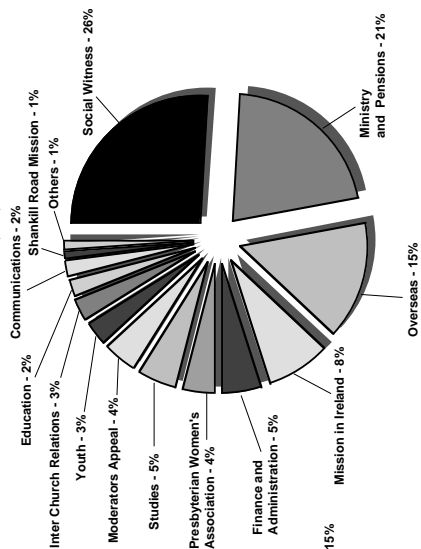
Income

Total £18,549,932



Expenditure by Board

Total £16,906,993



PRESBYTERIAN MEMORANDUM CENTRAL

Board/Agency	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
	Congregational Assessments		Other Income from Congregations		United Appeal Grants		Investment and Interest Income	
General Board					5	22	1	1
Business Board								
Communication Board					170	150	7	2
Inter Church Relations Board			482	440			6	7
Overseas Board					930	900	233	205
Board of Mission in Ireland	8	8			740	569	161	161
Board of Social Witness					138	290	95	107
Youth Board					212	241	12	10
Board of Education					230	235	2	3
Board of Studies					265	275	173	206
Board of Finance & Administration	447	502					33	20
United Appeal			2,890	2,838			52	332
Board of Ministry and Pensions	3,156	3,204					973	977
Shankill Road Mission					5	10	24	24
PWA			755	755			49	91
Local Bible Fund							2	2
Moderators Appeal			234	725			15	26
Total	3,611	3,714	4,361	4,758	2,695	2,692	1,838	2,174
Less Inter Board/Agency Income					(2,695)	(2,692)		
Less Gain on disposal of Fixed Assets								
Per Income & Expenditure Account	3,611	3,714	4,361	4,758			1,838	2,174

CHURCH IN IRELAND INCOME 2002

2002 £000's	2001 £000's	2002 £000's	2001 £000's	2002 £000's	2001 £000's	2002 £000's	2001 £000's	2002 £000's	2001 £000's
Donations and Bequests		Residents Fees		Funding from Outside Agencies		Other Income		TOTAL	
				26	34			32	57
						15	11	15	11
						339	168	492	449
4	2					517	292	2,715	2,252
1,035	885					72	240	2,059	1,507
1,078	530					195	119	4,563	4,654
327	577	3,244	2,972	565	589	102	173	499	585
2	6	63	61	108	94	56	47	412	402
96	87	8	10	20	20	73		1,849	793
11	10			55		473	475	1,030	1,022
22	26					175		3,121	3,174
5	4					78	113	4,221	4,411
13	117					83	93	197	204
85	77					125	121	990	1,086
61	119							2	2
								248	751
2,739	2,410	3,315	3,043	847	737	3,557 (515)	2,154 (377)	22,960 (3,210)	21,680 (3,069)
						(1,201)	(176)	(1,201)	(176)
2,739	2,410	3,315	3,043	847	737	1,841	1,601	18,549	18,435

REPORTS: JUNE, 2003

BELFAST

GENERAL BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. At no time in the Church's history has it been more important to "think globally and act locally" than now. Globally, our world has become a more dangerous place; terms like "September 11", "Al Qaeda" and "ricin" have been added to our every-day vocabulary; conflicts in Iraq and Israel/Palestine pose a threat far beyond their immediate borders, while the rise of militant Islamic extremism, East and West, is also a source of anxiety. Vicious attacks on the elderly outside and inside their homes seem to be increasing. Such is the world in which all people now live and work.

2. The Christian Church, however, faces another threat, namely secular fundamentalism. "Militant secularism becomes as dangerous for religion as militant atheism. Both aspire at casting religion out of the social and political spheres, driving it into a ghetto, reducing it to the realm of private devotion. Unwritten rules of political correctness are also more and more often applied to religious institutions." (*Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev in "Europaica", December 2002*).

3. The European Union is not immune to these trends. The EU is growing in both size and power, causing some to fear that it is sliding towards a European Super-State, with a European Parliament, a European Court, the Euro currency, an embryonic police force in Europol, a new "Constitution for Europe" etc, with a consequent erosion of national sovereignty, though there are many other observers who are not concerned at these trends.

4. While the vision of a peaceful, unified Community of humane values is a noble one, the reality is more complex. There are signs that "Europe" is increasingly inclined to adopt "one-size-fits-all" policies, not only in such matters as interest rates in the Euro zone, but in areas like employment law, sexual orientation etc, which is a cause for concern. "If the European Union is called to be a common home for many people, does the liberal humanistic model of political structure have the right of monopoly in it? The partisans of the humanistic liberal vision must accept true pluralism of ideas and views in the entire European space; they must recognise the right of various communities to preserve their cultural and spiritual identity, whose nucleus is very often constituted by religion." (*Bishop Hilarion*).

5. Our Church has therefore been monitoring developments in Europe, including the proposals for the new Constitution for the EU and the way in which the Directive on Employment will be implemented in Northern Ireland.

Detailed representations have been made, both in writing and in person, to the Equality Commission, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister, and we appreciate their willingness to meet with our representatives and consider our concerns sympathetically. Churches in the Irish Republic already have reasonable protection.

6. In addition steps are being taken, along with the Church of Scotland, to help fund a Presbyterian representative in the Brussels office of the Church and Society Commission, who could keep us informed of developments and make appropriate submissions to the EU at an early stage in the development of policy and legislation. At the time of writing this report the post is being advertised.

7. Locally, the farming community (one of the foundation stones of our Church) has been experiencing difficult times; we sympathise with them and support their pleas for help. There has also been a certain disenchantment with the outworking of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, though it is recognised that the situation on our streets is much less violent than a decade ago. As in previous years, the Church and Government Committee, and its joint conveners, Very Rev Dr John Dunlop and Mr George McCullagh, have done a massive amount of excellent work during the last twelve months. The whole Church is greatly in their debt.

8. The General Board can take a general overview of the Church's work, which is not without its problems. Many of our Church buildings, especially in Belfast, are large and are still located where the people were, a challenge the Union Commission is now considering. A drop in applications for the ministry a few years ago means that at present there is a shortage of licentiates eligible for call to vacant congregations, and there is the continuing slow seepage of members from the Church.

9. However, this year's Book of Reports will also reveal many encouraging signs; there is now an upturn in the number of students for the ministry, Union College is greatly expanding its activities, not only renovating the building but developing new and imaginative programmes of study, while the generosity of our members continues unabated, not least to the United Appeal and disaster relief. The Church has also become much more professional; modern technology is widely used; we have an expert Personnel Department, an efficient Communications Office and proposals for a Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund. Our mission boards are actively seizing opportunities for outreach in Ireland, overseas and in the realm of youth and social need, with the willing and expert assistance of the various central "support" boards and offices.

10. Numerous appointments of Youth Pastors/Youth Workers/Additional Pastoral Personnel have been made in congregations, and formal schemes for such appointments are now being developed. The result is that we have many congregations that are strong and vibrant, as well as countless others that are maintaining a faithful Christian witness in difficult situations. Our 400 parish ministers, many of whom are working under considerable pressure, deserve our warmest thanks for their devotion to duty.

11. It is a reasonable conclusion that, faced with the stern challenges of today, our Church has no grounds for complacency but neither has it any reason for pessimism.

12. The various Assembly Committees and other Panels that serve directly under the General Board have continued to work steadily through the past year. The Board exercises a general supervisory role over their work but rarely, if ever, does it have to amend their proposals. We appreciate their diligence.

Church House Staff

Very Rev Dr D H Allen reports:

1. The General Board appointed an ad hoc Committee in 1999 to advise on the situation arising when, in addition to other important changes, three senior members of Church House staff were due to retire around the same time.

2. Now that a Clerk Designate of the General Assembly and a Secretary of the Overseas Board have been appointed, and interviews are taking place for the nomination of a new Deputy Clerk, the work of the Committee on Church House Staff is complete.

3. The Committee has therefore been thanked and discharged.

Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson

Very Rev Dr D H Allen writes:

1. The General Board wishes to submit this tribute to the outstanding work of the Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson as Clerk of Assembly and General Secretary from 1990-2003 and Deputy Clerk and Assistant General Secretary from 1985-1990.

2. Dr Hutchinson was born at Belfast in 1937 and was brought up in connection with Berry Street congregation. He studied at Queen's University, Belfast, where he graduated BA in Classics and proceeded to the Presbyterian College, Belfast. There he gained the further degrees of BD and MTh from QUB.

3. He was Assistant Minister in Oldpark Congregation and in 1966 was installed in Gilford, taking on added responsibility for Clare congregation in 1967. After a fruitful and faithful ministry there he was appointed Deputy Clerk of Assembly in 1985. On the retirement of the Very Rev Dr T J Simpson in 1990 Dr Hutchinson was appointed as Clerk of Assembly, a post he has held with distinction until his retirement this year.

4. He served as Clerk of the Iveagh Presbytery from 1977-1985 and as Clerk of the Synod of Armagh and Down from 1983-1986. He was Convener of the Jewish Mission from 1977-1984, thus following an area of interest close to his heart and contributing much to its success. Amongst other convenerships were those of the Racism Committee (1979-86) and the Peace and Peacemaking Committee (1987-90).

5. In 1997 he was elected to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and was honoured by the

Presbyterian Theological Faculty of Ireland by the conferring of the DD degree. He also was a joint secretary to the Four Church Leaders. This meant that he came to the Moderatorial office with a wealth of experience seldom found in such high leadership.

6. Dr Hutchinson is a person of many parts and various gifts. Widely read, he is quietly gracious, a soul of discretion, wise in advice, sound in judgement, careful in counsel, loyal to his church and to its office-bearers at every level. He is a peacemaker par excellence. What he does not know about PCI is hardly worth knowing. A man of deep personal faith and commitment to his Lord and Master, he instilled confidence and calmness to all whom he met. His was a steady hand and a wise head that guided our Church through the 18 years of his service as Deputy Clerk and Clerk.

7. Dr Hutchinson is a distinguished historian; his grasp of the history of PCI is extensive and he is always ready to share his wealth of knowledge with others. His understanding of the various areas of responsibility within PCI and the ease with which he moved through the Code or the Reports and Minutes of past Assemblies, often left people amazed at the sheer extent of his knowledge and the depth of his understanding.

8. Our Church is deeply indebted to him for the selfless service given over the years. In this he was most ably assisted and supported at all times by his wife Margaret. We thank her for her loving, gracious and faithful support on so many occasions. We wish both Dr and Mrs Hutchinson many years of happy, healthy and busy retirement in the years ahead.

Overview of Funding

1. The 2002 General Assembly decided that, pending a report from the ad hoc Committee on Priorities, there should be a general moratorium on new posts and projects. However, the General Board, on the recommendation of the Panel on the Overview of Funding, was empowered to lift the moratorium in certain circumstances and was required to approve all new significant expenditure, even if coming from existing or outside sources (Mins p 74).

2. During the year, approval was given to the War Memorial Hostel Committee to purchase No 14 Elmwood Avenue (next door to The Bush Chaplaincy Centre) which was then on the market and for which ample funds were available.

3. Approval was also given to the Church and Government Committee to contribute towards the appointment of a Presbyterian representative to work with the Church and Society Commission in Brussels (approximately one quarter of the total cost of £40,000 per annum), the arrangement to be reviewed in three years. Half the salary will be raised by the Church of Scotland and the remainder from sundry sources.

4. Many requests are being received from congregations for guidance on employment matters, which would require a larger personnel function than that presently available in Church House. The Panel decided that, if a request is received by the Board of Finance and Administration for an additional staff person, it should be treated sympathetically.

5. The Panel approved an application from the Presbyterian Residential Trust for an existing temporary part-time post in the Cash Office to be made permanent.

6. Requests were received from the Youth Board for the Youth Development Officer, who is on a fixed term contract, to be given a permanent post, and for a second Youth Development Officer to be appointed. A decision on these requests was deferred until the ad hoc Committee on Priorities has reported on future Board structures and the present moratorium is lifted. The matter will, however, be reviewed no later than next March, and earlier if possible.

7. At the request of the Board of Mission in Ireland approval was given for the use of that Board's funds for the salary and accommodation of an Associate Minister in the Liffey Valley project.

8. The cost of repairs to the stonework of Church House will be greater than originally estimated, because further defects are coming to light as the work progresses and the government grant receivable will be less than expected. However, the work is essential and the Assembly Buildings Committee hopes to meet all costs out of its own future income. Should that not prove possible, the Panel will consider the matter further.

9. The Panel is available to advise the United Appeal Board on financial issues arising in its work, but this year there was only one matter on which it sought advice. The Church Extension Account had a very substantial credit balance, as some grants given in earlier years had not been used. One repayment was willingly made and further discussions are taking place.

Familybooks Ltd

1. The Trustees Executive Committee advised the General Board at its February meeting of their approval of the decision of the Directors of Familybooks Ltd to sell the business to another Christian bookseller (for details see the Report of the Trustees later in this Blue Book). The Board received the report but "expressed concern at the lack of consultation".

Prolonged Disability of Ministers

1. At its February meeting the Board gave approval in principle to the proposals for a Prolonged Disability Fund for Ministers (for details see the Report of the Board of Ministry and Pensions).

2. No request was received for the General Board to act on an application under Par 222(3) of the Code. (See Mins 2002 p 62 res 2a).

Child Protection

1. On the recommendation of the Child Protection Monitoring Group last Assembly appointed Mr Norman Chambers as "the Designated Person for Child Protection at Church House and General Assembly level."

2. However, in February of this year Mr Chambers indicated his wish to retire from that position. The General Board, acting on behalf of the Assembly, accepted his resignation, thanked him for his services and appointed Mr Lindsay Conway OBE in his place.

3. In view of the sensitive issues that can arise when dealing with these matters Mrs Margaret McGuiggan MBE, a member of Rosemary congregation, was appointed as Co-Designated Person.

Ad Hoc Committees of Assembly

1. In recent times the General Board has received interim reports during the year from ad hoc Committees of the General Assembly, so that major issues arising can be discussed before the Blue Book is printed.

2. Such reports were again received during the year 2002-2003. In particular, the ad hoc Committee on Priorities submitted detailed reports on their proposals, which were discussed at length along with expressions of concern submitted by various Boards and Committees likely to be affected by the proposed changes. The General Board expressed reservations about certain proposals regarding its future structure.

Call

1. The 2002 General Assembly received a Memorial from Rev Dr Paul Swinn (Reports 2002 p 264), granted its prayer and placed him under the care of the Presbytery of Dromore as a Minister Without Charge.

2. Subsequently the General Board, acting through a committee appointed for the purpose, issued a Call to him for service as a chaplain with HM Forces, and transmitted it to the Presbytery of Dromore, which duly installed him.

Panel on Boards and Committees

1. This year the main work of the General Board's Panel on Boards and Committees was to consider the future of Synods.

Synods

1. Following last year's submission on the subject (Reports pp 13-15) a consultation paper was sent down to Synods asking for their views on the future of that court. Returns showed majority support for their abolition.

2. The nominating functions of the Synods could be redistributed in various ways, of which the following is one possible example:

- (i) Presbyteries could nominate one person each to the United Appeal Board, the Nomination Board and the Union Commission.
- (ii) Like the Judicial Commission, the Nomination Board could hold office for five years, so providing more continuity of membership and experience.
- (iii) As the next appointment of the Judicial Commission is not due until 2008, there is time to give further thought to its constitution.
- (iv) When a new Trustee is required a nomination could be sought from one or more of: the existing Trustees, the Business Board or the General Board. While a geographical spread is desirable, it is also necessary to have persons eminently qualified in e.g accountancy, law, banking, property, etc. No amendment of the 1871 Act or the Code would be involved.

3. Further thought should be given to the Education Board of the Synod of Belfast; the former Presbytery of Belfast could be reconstituted, or a skeleton Synod could be retained for the purpose of appointing members to the Education Board.

4. The abolition of Synods, being a change in the Church's constitution, would involve Barrier Act procedure. Many changes to the Code would be necessary, but they could be drafted if the principle of the abolition of Synods were approved. A resolution is appended to test the mind of the Assembly on this matter. The term "regular Synods" (Code Par 93(1)) is used to distinguish the regional Synods from the "historic Synods" (the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod), which are not affected by this proposal.

5. Following the decision of the 2002 General Assembly "That the two historic Synods be advised that it is no longer necessary to continue their formal annual meetings" (Mins p 46 res 6) an overture is transmitted to give effect to that decision.

Presbytery Visitations/Consultations

1. Last Assembly discharged the sub-committee that had been working on Visitation/Consultation procedures, but resolved "That the General Board initiate a review process on an ongoing basis and report to the General Assembly within three years, after which overtures to amend the Code should be prepared."

2. During the year a detailed comment was received from the Presbytery of Ards, who welcomed many of the innovations in the new approach but made some other comments, including the following.

3. They suggested the re-introduction of the question concerning the teaching and doctrine of the minister, in recognition that there are specific doctrines that ought to be taught in a Presbyterian Church. They also felt that to have three major (10-year) consultations and at least three 5-year reviews of resources in any one year is a considerable demand on the people concerned. They added that "To have the process dragged out over a year, even with the best of intentions, is not constructive ... To have totally separate consultation teams, with potentially different approaches and emphases was not thought to be helpful ... To publicly invite written responses from members of a congregation is not a move we considered wise."

4. Comments on these and other points are invited from other Presbyteries during the next eighteen months, so that a considered report can be prepared for the following Assembly.

Conciliation Panel

Rev Dr D J Watts reports:

1. This has been a quiet year for the Conciliation Panel but their help has been appreciated when requests have been made. Thanks are expressed to those who have been involved with conciliation issues throughout the year. It is often time-consuming work, but important for the strengthening of the Church and its witness to the gospel.

Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland

1. The Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland, which consists of four representatives each from the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches in Northern Ireland and the USA, held its annual meeting in Belfast on 30 and 31 October, 2002. It discussed the recent suspension of devolved government and various related issues such as decommissioning and the apparent decline of support for the Belfast Agreement among the Unionist community.

2. Members of a panel from Armagh, who were personally affected by violence and who are now involved in cross-community work, described their experiences. The representatives from the USA found their message a most moving one and expressed admiration and respect.

3. The Irish Summer Institute (ie Study Tour), which took place during the summer, was very successful and enabled visitors from the USA to meet a wide cross-section of opinion in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

4. Messrs Price Waterhouse Coopers undertook an extensive evaluation of the Business Education Initiative, which enables students from Northern Ireland and the Republic's border counties to spend a year in the USA, and reported favourably on it. Last year 165 students were placed in 110 colleges, making a total of 1200 students since the scheme began. The Committee acknowledged the vital role of the Department for Employment and Learning in organising and funding the scheme, but emphasised that the programme needed to be reminded of its origins and its ties to the Christian liberality of the American churches, whose colleges generously waive all tuition fees.

5. The possibility of developing a similar arrangement for students of theological colleges is being explored. The Colleges would waive their fees.

6. Members of the PCUSA delegation generously presented a cheque for 4,000 dollars to the Vine Community Centre on the Crumlin Road.

7. The Committee recognises that much has changed since it was established in 1990 and is therefore reviewing its future, but will meet again in Belfast in October, 2003.

Non-Christian Religious Communities

1. The Presbytery of Dublin and Munster submitted a Memorial to the 2002 General Assembly expressing concern about how to relate appropriately to non-Christian religious communities, particularly when joint worship is proposed, and asking for guidelines to be prepared (Reports 2002, p 38).

2. The Assembly received the Memorial and asked the General Board to refer it to "an appropriate body," on the understanding that it would deal with matters other than inter-faith worship.

3. The General Board referred this matter to the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Board of Social Witness

1. Approval was given for the Board of Social Witness (i) to carry out a survey on Learning Disability through questionnaires sent to congregations; (ii) to conduct another survey throughout the Church with the help of Presbytery

Social Witness Agents; and (iii) to draw up a Directory of Social Witness Projects and Personnel in congregations.

2. Prior consultation with the General Board or the General Assembly on such matters helps to protect Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions from being overloaded with too many remits.

Reception of Ministers and Licentiates

1. In view of a proposal in the Church of Scotland that they should interview all ministers seeking to enter that Church, including ministers from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who are not normally interviewed at present, the Committee on Reception of Ministers and Licentiates decided to ask the General Assembly for corresponding permission to interview all ministers seeking to enter the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, irrespective of where they come from.

2. The Committee approached the General Board in October seeking its approval for the introduction, as an interim measure, of such interviews for any ministers who might apply before the 2003 General Assembly, but who would not be subject to interview at present.

3. The General Board considered this request but felt that it should simply be left on the books in the meantime.

GENERAL BOARD STATEMENTS

During the year the Board issued statements as follows:

General Board Resolutions 10 October 2002

1. That citizens of the Republic of Ireland be encouraged to vote in the Nice referendum.

2. That suitably qualified Presbyterians be encouraged to apply for membership of District Policing Partnerships.

3. That in the matter of Iraq, political leaders proceed with caution, deploying both courage and wisdom.

4. That the Church and Government Committee be asked to implement the request of the Overseas Board concerning a proposed third term of office for the President of Malawi.

5. That the General Board calls people to pursue the realisable dream of creating a society within which diverse people can feel at home and at peace, and to that end dialogue is important.

6. The General Board recognises that the reality of the stubborn and persistent existence of diverse people living in contested space in a divided society is a fact of life which has to be taken into account in any suggested political solutions to our problems.

7. The General Board, recognising that sin lies crouching at the door of resentful people and is liable to be the cause of their downfall, encourages the members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland optimistically and generously to pursue peace with their neighbours.

8. The General Board commends all persons under threat from Republican or Loyalist paramilitaries to the prayers of the church, bearing in

mind especially the present concerns of members of the Prison Service, and calls on people on all sides of the community to totally reject this kind of activity.

9. The General Board commends those who are seeking to mediate the current tensions within loyalism.

General Board Resolutions 27 February, 2003

1. That the General Board conscious

- (i) of the unwillingness of Saddam Hussein since 1991 to comply with the conditions laid down by the UN for the continuation of his Presidency
- (ii) of his history of aggression against citizens in his own country and against his neighbours
- (iii) of the unstable nature of the region
- (iv) of the need to marshal an international consensus before any war is embarked upon
- (v) of the need to put pressure on Iraq to comply with UN resolutions
- (vi) of the threat of asymmetrical warfare through international terrorism
- (vii) of the danger posed to Christian minorities in predominately Muslim countries and the implications for Christian mission as well as Muslim/Christian relationships

encourage

- (a) The Church to pray for political leaders, for men and women in the armed forces, for civilians and for a satisfactory resolution of these crises
 - (b) The United Nations to ensure that Saddam Hussein is disarmed, using force only as a last resort
 - (c) That the General Board encourage the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to pursue the creation of an international consensus to resolve the issue and to use their influence to discourage unilateral action on the part of the USA
 - (d) That the General Board encourage the international community to pursue a resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.
2. That the General Board express its deep concern about the proposal to establish an open-cast lignite mine in North Antrim and call for a public enquiry before any decision is taken to proceed.

General Board Resolutions 3 April, 2003

1. That the General Board call upon the members and congregations of the Presbyterian Church to pray for a swift conclusion to the war in Iraq, and expresses its sympathy to the relatives of those who have been killed and its prayerful concern for service personnel, their families and the military chaplains.

2. That the General Board believes that the current humanitarian concerns and the later reconstruction of Iraq must be carried through with long term and generous commitment, along with the rebuilding of fractured internal and international relationships as well as seriously addressing the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

3. That the General Board, concerned about long term environmental and community issues connected with the proposal to establish a lignite mine and power station and having received representations from the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine, call for this proposal to be immediately rejected by the Government.

INVITATIONS TO THE OPENING NIGHT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. When the Business Board reported to the Tuesday morning session of the 2002 General Assembly, a debate took place on the attendance the previous evening of the Lord Mayor of Belfast, who this year is a Sinn Fein Councillor. A request was then made from the floor that the question of invitations to the Opening night should be reviewed. The matter was subsequently raised in both the Business Board and the General Board, and a small committee was appointed to consider the matter further.

2. In the committee's discussions the Clerk of Assembly outlined the historical background to invitations to the Opening Night, Rev Wm Bingham described the concerns of those who felt aggrieved, and Very Rev Dr John Dunlop was asked to prepare a summary of the issues involved. Their comments are set out below.

The Clerk of Assembly writes

3. The "representation of leaders in public life" at the Opening Night of the General Assembly dates from 1964, and the next few years saw the attendance of the Governor of Northern Ireland, the Lord Mayor of Belfast, the Mayor of Derry, the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, a representative of the President of the Republic of Ireland, etc. When the Assembly met in Dublin in 1969 the President, Mr Eamonn de Valera, was among the public representatives in attendance. An incoming Moderator has sometimes invited the Mayor of his home town, while President Mary McAleese attended the Assembly in Belfast 2000 on the invitation of the incoming Moderator. It has never been the practice to invite purely political representatives, such as the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland or the leaders of political parties.

4. The Opening of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is a grand occasion of State, with the attendance of the [Lord] High Commissioner, the trumpeters, the Secretary of State for Scotland and other dignitaries, which is to be expected for the National Church of the realm. While the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has a different status, we may have been influenced to some extent by the practice of our mother Kirk in this matter.

Rev William Bingham writes

5. Many Presbyterians felt hurt and aggrieved at the official welcome given to, and presence of, a Sinn Fein Lord Mayor at the Opening Night. There were many in our church who felt that such hurt was unnecessary and avoidable.

6. Perhaps the time has come to rescind the decision of 1964 to officially invite the Lord Mayor of Belfast to the Opening Night of the General Assembly when meeting in Belfast. Three points are worthy of consideration.

- (i) The representative of HM The Queen is a sufficient representative of the state and is above party politics. The Lord Mayor of Belfast is first citizen of an ever decreasing number of Presbyterians who live within the City Council area. The position of Lord Mayor of Belfast is an irrelevance to 90% of Presbyterians.
- (ii) A move away from inviting elected representatives to the Opening Night should make the occasion less divisive as well as ensuring that there is less distraction from the main purpose of the evening, ie to worship God and install the Moderator.
- (iii) To give a place of honour to someone associated with a terrorist organisation is to set aside both the standards of scripture and the subordinate standards of the Church.

Very Rev Dr John Dunlop writes

7. The Presbyterian Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as both Head of the Church and Lord of creation. As invitations to the Opening Night should bear witness to Jesus Christ, it ought to be wider than a narrow church occasion.

8. The Presbyterian Church should maintain its Calvinist position and not withdraw into Anabaptist pietism and isolation. We need to avoid the temptation to retreat to a safe private religious corner delivering messages from a distance but without engagement. Worship and social engagement are two organically inter-related parts of Christian ministry, exemplified by many of the programmes run by the church and by what happens on the opening night.

9. When the church withdraws from public life, society loses its consciousness of God. When society becomes more secular the church gets marginalised and fewer people are influenced and fewer people think about God. The church therefore has to elbow its way into civil society, to be beside people, not above people looking down, not on top of people controlling them. The public witness of the church, in reminding people about God, is important for the good of society.

10. In issuing invitations beyond the boundaries of the church, the importance of civil society and its institutions is recognised and people who work beyond the institution of the church, many of them, but not all of them, Christians are affirmed and encouraged. Much of the work which they do benefits the whole society, including the church.

11. The church in all situations has to seek to build relationships across the various communities which make up our society. In our divided and fractured society building relationships with other people, and especially those whom we may think of as both neighbours and even enemies, is an obligation which is unavoidable.

12. The Moderator of the General Assembly, and through him the wider church, is recognised and affirmed through the many invitations which are received from national, civic and ecclesiastical bodies. Christians are enjoined to be hospitable, as God has proved himself to be. One of the simple but significant ways in which the church can be hospitable is by issuing similar invitations.

13. Who, representing what bodies, should be invited?

It has not generally been the practice of the General Assembly to invite people whose position is a result of locally discernible political affiliation. In the past, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland and, more recently, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister were not invited. The exception has been to invite the Lord Mayors of Belfast and Dublin, when the Assembly met in those cities. In recent years the mayoral elections in Belfast have taken place on the same night as the opening of the Assembly so the invitation could not be accepted. 2002 was an exception due to the Jubilee holiday.

14. The invitations could be widened to a larger number of church related bodies, as well as organisations in civil society, and the invitations could, where appropriate, be rotated.

15. The invitation list could be widened to include representatives of:

- (a) Church-related bodies like youth organisations.
- (b) Para-church organisations like Scripture Union, the Evangelical Alliance, ECONI, Belfast Bible College, Youth Link etc.
- (c) Representatives of Her Majesty the Queen and Her Excellency the President of Ireland. Since the Presbyterian Church lives its life in both political jurisdictions, both, or their representative, should be routinely invited, regardless of where the Assembly meets.
- (d) Trades Unions, Employers organisations, Area Health and Social Services Boards, Education Boards, Professional Associations, Community organisations, Universities, etc.
- (e) The Police and the Army were invited in the past but did not always either respond or attend. It would not be wise to withdraw those invitations at this time.

16. Having considered the option of sending the Report down to Presbyteries for discussion and comment; both the Business Board and the General Board eventually resolved, by majority votes, that the present policy of inviting a wide range of people from civil society to the Opening Night of the General Assembly should be continued, but that the list be widened, and representatives of some organisations invited on a rota basis. An appropriate resolution is appended.

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

1. At last year's General Assembly, it was agreed that Presbyteries should respond to the Report of the Doctrine Committee on Ministry. The Doctrine Committee considered these reports in the New Year and felt that, in light of detailed comments from many Presbyteries, more work should be done towards the production of a final Report than was possible by this year's General Assembly. Consequently, Presbyteries have been informed that the Doctrine Committee will request the Assembly to permit one more year for the production of the Report, during which period the Committee wishes to have an intensive process of consultation with the Presbyteries (presumably via the relevant sub-committees that produced responses) prior to the production of a substantial Report.

J P TAYLOR, Convener

FORCES COMMITTEE

1. At the time of writing this report our nation is on the verge of war in the Middle East. In common with other Christian Churches we have been engaged in debate about the best way forward in dealing with the situation in Iraq, reflecting on the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the just war doctrine and the ethics of modern warfare. The brief of the Forces Committee however centres on the care of chaplains sent out by our church to minister to the men and women of our armed services as they seek to carry out the objectives of our government. Regardless of anyone's personal feelings about the current conflict with Iraq, our chaplains serve a vital role in communicating the values of the kingdom of God into the frequently secular communities that are our Armed services.

2. We currently have six chaplains serving in the Regular Forces.

The Royal Navy. The Rev Terry Maze continues as our only naval chaplain and continues to enjoy a full and fruitful ministry in Portsmouth. The current deployments to the Middle East have put pressure on the Naval Chaplaincy Service who are committed to ensuring that every front line unit deploying on a war footing should have its own chaplain. This has led to a certain amount of "borrowing" of chaplains from shore and training establishments to fulfil the need, often at short notice and with all the domestic and professional upheaval that such moves bring. Recruitment is going well, though the fact that he retires from the Navy in the summer of 2004 means that he is very keen to get a replacement chaplain from our church into the Service before he departs. Any younger minister of our church [ideally under the age of 39] who would like to consider service in the Navy should contact either the Convener or contact him direct in Portsmouth.

3. **The Army.** Our newest member of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department is the Rev Dr Paul Swinn who joined us from the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Having completed his initial training at Ampthorpe House and Sandhurst he was posted to three regiments of the Royal Logistic Corps in Abingdon and Bicester with a pastoral responsibility for some 2,500 military personnel plus their families. He had settled in well with his wife Linda and their children and was no sooner over this hurdle when he was deployed with 23 Pioneer Regt RLC on Op Telic (the official name for our military deployment in the Middle East). At the time of writing this report he is in Kuwait along with some 40,000 other British troops awaiting developments.

4. Our other chaplains, the Rev Philip Patterson and the Rev Norman McDowell, are both currently posted to training establishments, Bassingbourn and Pirbright respectively. These postings have particular challenges associated with them. Chaplains meet up with young male and female recruits, some of them away from home for the first time, many of whom have had little or no contact with the Christian Church and have no idea who or what a chaplain might be for. Through their teaching programmes they will have an opportunity to make an impact on the lives of people who in ordinary circumstances never darken the doors of a church building. At the present time there is no indication that they will be required for service in the Middle East, though it is always

possible that by the time of the General Assembly we may be looking at a totally new scenario.

5. The Army continues to be in need of Chaplains. The Presbyterian side of the house appears to be well served for now but openings are constantly becoming available and any minister interested in this line of service could visit the RACHD website at www.armychaplains.com

6. Developments in the Middle East have also had an impact on the Territorial Army as members of the various units based in Northern Ireland have had personnel cherry-picked for service on Op Telic. This places additional pastoral responsibilities on TA Chaplains Rev Prof Patton Taylor, Rev Isaac Thompson, Rev David Latimer the Rev Stephan van Os, who each have a role to play in carrying out the Welfare Plan for spouses and families left behind. At the time of writing none of our TA chaplains have been earmarked for service in the Gulf. However, all of them have recently been to briefings and are aware of the responsibilities that will come their way should we enter a scenario where we take major casualties in the current conflict.

7. At the present time there are some 2500 Northern Ireland registered Next Of Kin for service personnel based in the Middle East across all three services. We would encourage ministers of congregations to be aware especially at this time of the special needs of the families of military personnel who are on active service in the Gulf.

8. **The Royal Air Force.** Our two chaplains in the RAF are the Rev Jonny Wylie and the Rev David Edgar. Jonny is currently stationed at RAF Brize Norton. He has now spent nearly three years in the RAF and the places he has visited and worked in sound like an advertisement for Wish You Were Here; Falkland Islands, Australia, Aldergrove. Brize Norton is the largest station in the RAF with some 4000 personnel and is the central transport hub for the Armed services. The station church has a reasonable attendance with a strong contingent of local retired members who help bring a measure of settled normality to his ministry. However, he writes: "my role places me in a designated deployable post and currently I am on stand-by for the Iraq crisis."

9. David Edgar is currently stationed at RAF Lyneham in Wiltshire. In May he takes over as Senior Chaplain working with a team of three chaplains and two civilian staff. He writes: "Things are very busy as you can imagine, but the work remains extremely satisfying. As ever we are grateful for the prayers of all for the work we do, particularly at this tense time. Training personnel in 'kinforming' and casualty reception, engaging with local schools about children affected by deployed fathers/mothers, and dealing with stressed individuals due to over work and/or personal difficulties, are all in a day's (or nights) work".

9. The Forces Committee seeks to encourage all our chaplains in their work and it also commends those organisations which frequently supplement their work and provide additional support during hard and difficult times. The work of the Sandes Homes, the Officers' Christian Union, the Soldiers' & Airmen's Scripture Readers Association, the Naval, Military & Air Force Bible Society all deserve our prayerful and practical support. Representatives from these organisations are available in Northern Ireland to speak at midweek meetings. Their insight into the challenges and problems of military life will

enable people in our congregations to pray more intelligently for our servicemen and women.

10. Each year the Royal British Legion, The Royal Air Force “Wings Appeal” and the Royal Irish/UDR Benevolent Fund seek our support. We bring these worthy causes before the General Assembly once again in our resolutions. Our congregations have in the past supported these funds with great generosity and the Committee hopes that this support will continue.

S W van OS, Convener

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

1. The Chaplains Committee has met three times during the year.
2. The Committee has responsibility for supervising the work of the chaplaincy service provided by the Church in hospitals and prisons.
3. There were two full-time and some fifty part-time chaplains working in hospitals throughout the island and in a few cases they were assisted and complemented by PWA deaconesses, also both full-time and the others part-time.
4. There were six chaplains working in prisons, one full-time and the others part-time – again throughout the island.
5. One of the larger hospitals has summarised the work of chaplains as helping patients, relatives and staff to see God’s care at work in their lives. The primary objective of prison chaplains is to see hearts and lives reorientated through commitment to Christ as Saviour and Lord.
6. The Committee wishes to record the Church’s appreciation and gratitude to all those who work in these challenging and difficult spheres of ministry for their witness, commitment and diligence, and would commend them to the continuing prayerful interest and support of the Church.
7. Once again, as in every year, through retirements or removal to different congregational charges, there have been resignations and Presbyteries have co-operated in nominating replacements. The Committee would wish these new chaplains every blessing and a real sense of fulfilment as they take up their new positions.
8. Early in the new church year the Church Leaders set up a Working Party representative of the four main Churches and the Hospital Chaplains’ Association to clarify the respective roles of the Churches and the Association in respect of chaplaincy services. Four meetings of this Working Party were held at which the Committee was represented by the Convener. The subject of training figured largely in the discussions – its desirability, its appropriateness, its organisation, its structure, its validation, its accreditation, its monitoring and its funding. A summary of the Working Party’s conclusions was transmitted to the Church Leaders in early March. The Committee awaits the outcome of their reaction with interest.

ROBERT J RODGERS, Convener

MODERATOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. During the year two requests were received from Presbyteries for the appointment of assessors to sit with them in dealing with difficult matters that had arisen.

2. Four assessors were therefore appointed under the provisions of Par 63 of the Code to sit with the Presbytery of Tyrone, and four other assessors were similarly appointed to sit with the Presbytery of Dromore.

3. Further advice was also given on a matter which had previously been before the Committee.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

RECOGNISED MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

1. In March the Committee reviewed the position of Ministers and Licentiates without Charge.

The Committee's recommendations are as follows:-

<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Ards	Rev C D Mawhinney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev Mark Spratt	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev David McKee	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
North Belfast	Rev W A Shaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev W M Smyth	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev C R J Brown	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev C I McKnight	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev J S Carson	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
	Rev F W Vincent	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Belfast East	Rev W G Stewart	To be retained as Minister Without Charge.
	Mr N Patrick	To be retained as Licentiate for a further year.
	Rev R A Crooks	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev Dr Eliz Jamison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).

	Rev Rex Pedlow	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev W J Harshaw	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Carrickfergus	Rev D R Byers	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Coleraine	Rev Wm Morrison	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev J D Mark	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Derry/Strabane	Rev J C Teeney	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Down	Rev R N Stewart	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
	Rev David Stanfield	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Dublin & Munster	Rev Ruth Gregg	To be retained as Minister without Charge.
Iveagh	Rev E G McAuley	To be retained as Minister without Charge (retired).
Route	Rev Dr Victor Dobbin	To be retained as Minister without Charge.

2. Returns are not required for licentiates who are serving an assistantship in a congregation, but only for those who are not in post.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON, Convener

PEACE AND PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE

1. The Peace and Peacemaking Committee continues to be concerned about unacceptable levels of violence and division in our own society and the threats presented to world security both by terrorism and the difficulty individual nations and the international community have in finding ways to address conflicts without resorting to warfare. The Committee believes such continuing difficulties highlight the need for churches to become even more actively engaged in exercising the biblical mandate of peacemaking.

2. The Spring 2003 issue of Peace and Peacemaking News was used as a vehicle for sharing two thought pieces on the question of going to war with Iraq, with ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Committee also forwarded to the Church and Government Committee points for consideration to be included in the resolutions on the Middle East crisis presented to the February meeting of the General Board. Limited personnel resources mean that the Committee has not been able to produce substantial material regarding the issue of war with Iraq. However, many websites contain background material, biblical and theological reflections, prayer material, and action suggestions that may be helpful for Presbyterian Church in Ireland

ministers and members. These include: www.pcusa.org/iraq (Presbyterian Church USA,) and www.sojo.net (Sojourners: Christians for Justice and Peace).

3. One danger of the continuing tension between, on the one hand, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and other western nations, and Iraq and Al-Qaeda on the other hand, is that it become couched in terms of a conflict between the 'Christian' West and Islam. The Committee, therefore, commends those congregations that have sought to engage in dialogue and relationship building with local representatives of Islam in recent months.

4. "Working With A Messy Peace" was the title for a day conference in November. The Committee is encouraged both by an attendance of 150 Peace Agents and others from congregations across the Assembly and by the strong message delivered by the Moderator recognising the key role Peace Agent have been given and encouraging them to persevere, even where they receive little support from the minister, Kirk Session or congregation.

5. The Peacemaking Committee of East Belfast Presbytery organised an evening conference in October attended by over forty representatives of congregations. A panel, which included a minister, community worker and church member who is an elected politician, addressed the challenges interface disputes present to congregations in the Presbytery and pinpointed some practical responses possible. As a result some individuals have become involved in the volunteer monitor scheme which has contributed to a reduction in interface violence. Others have set up opportunities for members of their congregations to meet with and listen to residents from both sides of the interface.

6. The Committee welcomes the fact that there has been a good response to the training of leaders for the Preparing Youth For Peace Programme of the Youth Board and that this programme is being delivered in a growing number of congregations and Presbyteries. The Committee commends it to all congregations.

7. The Committee once again encourages Presbyteries to support the work of congregational peace agents by providing occasions for them to meet and share information and experiences and by including time on the agenda at least once in the year for reports from Peace Agents within the bounds of the Presbytery.

8. The Committee once again offers thanks to all those at Congregational and Presbytery level who have accepted responsibility for peace-building and so "reassert the Church's own proper calling to seek peace and the things that make for peace in our own day" (Peace Vocation Statement adopted by the General Assembly in 1994.) The Committee also urges congregations which have still not appointed a peace Agent to do so, and those with Peace Agents to consider forming a Peacemaking Committee or Group to work with them.

D R BAKER, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Church House Staff

2. That the General Assembly accept the retirement of Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson from the position of Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Church with effect from 31 August, 2003, and that he be thanked for his services.

3. That Rev Dr Donald Watts be appointed Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Church with effect from 1 September, 2003.

Synods

4. That the General Assembly give approval in principle to the abolition of the regular Synods, and ask that detailed proposals be submitted in 2004.

Forces Committee

5. That the greetings of the General Assembly be sent to our chaplains serving with the Regular Forces assuring them of our prayerful concern and good wishes at this time.

6. That the General Assembly note the various openings becoming available for chaplaincy work in the Regular Forces and commend these opportunities for service to our younger ministers.

7. That the General Assembly commend the work done by our part time chaplains in the Territorial Army, the Army Cadet Force and by Officiating Chaplains to our Garrisons and Stations.

8. That the General Assembly recommend the customary observance of Battle of Britain Sunday and Remembrance Sunday in our congregations and that the appropriate offerings taken up on those days be given to the Royal Air Force "Wings Appeal" and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

9. That the General Assembly recommend that congregations continue to support the work of the UDR/Royal Irish Regiment Benevolent Fund by taking up an offering on the last Sunday in April or some other appropriate Sunday.

Peace and Peacemaking Committee

10. That a grant of up to £2,500 be made available from the Incidental Fund to the Peace and Peacemaking Committee.

Opening Night

11. That the present policy of inviting a wide range of people from civil society to the Opening Night of the General Assembly be continued, but that the list be widened.

Conciliation

12. That a grant of up to £3,000 be made available from the Incidental Fund to the Conciliation Panel

Recognised Ministries Committee

13. That the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the Recognised Ministries Committee on Ministers and Licentiatees without Charge.

General

14. That the General Board, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 272 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**Anent Par 90 (1) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 90 (1) of the Code the words “to take place in the month of March, at such place within its bounds as it may appoint” be deleted.

Anent Par 95 (d) of the Code (as re-numbered in 1999)

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that sub-paragraph 95 (d) of the Code be deleted and that sub-paragraph (e) be re-numbered as (d).

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 93(2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 93(2) of the Code be deleted, and that Par 93(3) be renumbered as Par 93(2).

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 2nd June, 2003.

The Memorial of the Presbytery of Tyrone Respectfully Showeth:

That the office of the diaconate is a biblical office;

That historically the congregational committee has been deemed to fulfil this role.

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to request the Doctrine Committee to assess to what extent the present congregational committee of the church fulfils this office.

And Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Adopted at its meeting of the 4th March 2003 in Cookstown and transmitted to the Synod of Derry and Omagh.

R A McLERNON, Moderator
T J CONWAY, Clerk

Licensed and transmitted by the Synod of Derry and Omagh at its meeting in Londonderry on the 13th March, 2003.

J L CASEMENT, Moderator
J B McCORMICK, Clerk

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Conveners: Very Rev Dr JOHN DUNLOP
Mr GEORGE McCULLAGH

1. Members of the General Assembly are asked to refer to the resolutions passed by the General Board which are contained within the Report of the General Board as well as the appendices to this report which contain the reports of the Committee to the General Board meetings in October, March and April. The details of these are not repeated here in this part of the report. Responses and submissions on a wide variety of issues constitute an increasing part of the work-load of the Committee.

2. This report is being written at the end of March. Such is the current state of uncertainty that it is likely that significant events will take place between now and the General Assembly, firstly in Iraq and also in Northern Ireland. Additional uncertainty is caused by the stock-markets of the world showing consistently heavy losses which have affected economic confidence as well as the savings and pension funds of millions of people. As well as all of that, there is the new threat from international "asymmetrical warfare" which is war waged by terrorist cells embedded within societies, which cells have the capacity to shake legitimate governments to their foundations and is an assault on current international order. Legitimate public authorities have the political and moral responsibility to protect their citizens against that threat. The 11th September attacks on the USA, the attacks on the theatre in Moscow and on a crowded disco in Indonesia are evidences of this international threat.

3. The armies of the United States of America and the United Kingdom have invaded Iraq, the intention being to enforce the United Nations' resolutions which Saddam Hussein has flouted for twelve years, the belief being that the regime was brutally oppressive and, in the possession and possible dissemination of weapons of mass destruction, a threat to global security. After long patience and partially successful containment the threat of force resulted in a greater measure of co-operation on his part with UN inspectors. Such threats involved the marshalling of military force on the Iraqi borders, the extensiveness of such activity may have been premature and thus made war almost inevitable. There was no unanimity in the United Nations' Security Council that such force was either necessary or authorised at this time, so the USA and the United Kingdom are leading a military campaign to enforce UN resolutions, without UN support for their actions. The predicted outcome that the regime of Saddam Hussein would collapse in a matter of days appears overly optimistic, perhaps even arrogant. One cannot read the Bible without being aware that wars have uncertain outcomes, that God alone is the Lord and the balance of political power within and between nations and empires is transient.

4. The unfolding crisis and the deep disagreements have caused very serious fracturing of relationships within the United Nations, within NATO, within the European Community and within the United Kingdom. New strains have been placed on Moslem/Christian relationships and Christian minorities within Islamic states are in a more precarious state than ever. Permission given by the Government of the Republic of Ireland for USA military aircraft to refuel

at Shannon airport has been controversial. While there has been widespread condemnation of Saddam Hussein, the churches, including our own, have issued statements recommending extreme caution, declaring that war ought only to be embarked upon as a last resort. Few church leaders have expressed support for the policies being followed by the USA and the United Kingdom. The General Board at its February 2003 meeting encouraged the United Nations to ensure that Saddam Hussein was disarmed, using force only as a last resort.

The Republic of Ireland

5. A lot of our committee time is taken up with the minutiae of change in Northern Ireland but, as a church of the whole island of Ireland we need sometimes to be reminded to look at the Republic of Ireland, its constitutional changes and its social fabric. We needed only Foot and Mouth disease to tell us that on an island problems are common to all. Since that we have had reminders through EU enlargement (The Nice Treaty), the UN (with Ireland on the Security Council) and the proposed Constitution for Europe. More recently and acute is Iraq and the stance of the Irish government on the use of Shannon for US aircraft refuelling en route to war.

6. Change is very evident throughout the whole island. After the general election in the Republic in May 2002 a new government was formed consisting of the two outgoing coalition partners: Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats. A “balance of power” party was not required and the prohibition on Sinn Fein being in government did not need to be reviewed. Sinn Fein is still not considered a constitutionally fit party to be in government in the Republic. It can hardly have come as a surprise to the Irish government later in 2002 when actions identified with Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland caused the Assembly there to be suspended. As the difficulty of restoring the Institutions continues it is clear that Sinn Fein must change, and the transparency by which others are judged will need to be applied to Sinn Fein / IRA. Their inadequacies are being exposed putting greater pressure on the Sinn Fein “front of house” leadership.

7. A new government immediately saw in 2002 what they failed to see or acknowledge earlier, viz public expenditure cuts were necessary on a big scale due to declining economies at home and abroad. The effect on services: health, education and infrastructure has been severe along with ward closures, further waiting-list delays for hospital admissions and attention, school-building programmes delayed indefinitely and postponement of many road projects. An affluent society with less than 5% unemployment is still causing the sick to suffer more and school classrooms to operate in very unhealthy and cold conditions.

8. The constitutional amendment necessary for EU enlargement (The Nice Treaty) was approved in a Referendum in October 2002 to the great relief of the government. EU enlargement is now proceeding to plan with ten applicant countries having their status cleared and their individual consents awaited. Enlargement to 25 countries in the EU is likely to be finalised by early 2004 when Ireland has the EU Presidency. One effect will be a greater freedom to move and work in Ireland after May 2004 for all citizens of the new countries.

9. A new constitution for Europe is the next EU aim. Proposals emanating so far place an emphasis on the secular without acknowledgement of

the religious, mainly Christian, values which have been the heart of Europe. The debate on the new constitution may also be affected by the divisions within Europe over the Iraq war.

10. Ireland has remained neutral as previously providing military support for UN mandated purposes only. Irish neutrality is though decidedly pro-US in the matter of facilitating US aircraft at and through Shannon Airport. This is government policy but is received with less than total approval by the people. The same policy was applied before with respect to USSR aircraft en-route to and from Cuba.

11. A feature of Ireland's economic progress has been industrial relations harmony. This has been achieved by a series of three year partnership agreements between all of the social partners: Government, workers, employers, farmers and various NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) representing the less well-off citizens. A new agreement covering just 18 months has been agreed in April 2003. This agreement has not been as well supported as earlier agreements, notably lacking farmers' support and lukewarm approval from the NGOs. The shorter term of this agreement will allow for improvements if the economy becomes more positive.

Northern Ireland

12. The Assembly and Executive remain suspended. Please refer to Appendix D which contains lengthy reflection on the issues connected with the suspension. At the moment, an election is planned for 29th May. When the General Assembly meets we will know the result of that election, but we may not, on the other hand, be any clearer about the shape of the future governance of Northern Ireland.

13. Strenuous efforts have been made by the British and the Irish Governments and the pro-agreement parties to resolve the difficulties which, in the opinion of the Committee, largely revolve around the unwillingness or inability of the republican movement to desist from activity which erodes trust and to be active in decommissioning weapons, which would, in turn, greatly assist in engendering trust.

14. While the Assembly has run into problems, local politicians have nevertheless shown willingness to accept responsibilities and to take decisions which were informed by considerations wider than those of their party supporters. Confidence and trust have thereby been increased which, while not easily quantified, are essential to good governance. Persuasive leadership, which has genuine regard for the legitimate concerns of political opponents, is in the long term interests of us all. Given the accessibility of locally elected MLAs and the competence of locally appointed ministers, it is to be hoped that a devolved administration will be restored.

15. Before the General Assembly meets the British and Irish Governments are due to issue a definitive paper mapping out the way ahead. Such maps sometimes fail to take account of rapidly changing political geography. There is no political solution which does not take account of the existence of diverse people living in contested space. Either we fight, continue to drift into different geographical areas or we share the available space. To agree policies which honour and protect diversity will be to the long term benefit

of us all but will mean both gains and losses. Anyone who promotes utopian dreams of peace which involve no difficult concessions to political opponents is a dangerous deceiver.

16. The “Quigley” Review of the Parades Commission (Summary of the Response of the Committee)

Over the years the committee has spent much time on the issue of parades and protests. An initial submission and a lengthy response were made to the Quigley review. In the vexed matter of parades we consider that the Quigley Review has a contribution to make and we are glad to offer these comments.

- (a) It has long been established that the problems associated with parades arise from the inability of our society to deal positively with difference and with shared space and time.
- (b) We, as part of the Church of Christ, are called by Christ to work for a peaceful society. We reject the spirit of triumphalism and we long for the day when all the people can relate to each other with respect, concern and generosity.
- (c) It is important therefore, then when a determination is made with regard to a parade, whatever it might be, that sufficient resources in policing are available to ensure that the determination is effected.
- (d) We would also put on record our concern with regard to the stewardship of public money. If the Parades Facilitation Agency works properly it should save a good deal of expenditure.

The Church and Government Committee:

- (a) welcomes the proposed formation of the Parades Facilitation Agency headed by a Chief Facilitation Officer supported by a local facilitation network.
- (b) acknowledges the fact that meditation may not be effective in all cases and that there is need for a Determining Body (“Independent Rights Panel for Parades and Protests”), as being proposed to make a final decision about any particular parade.
- (c) welcomes the proposed arrangements re notice of parades and of objections to parades.
- (d) welcomes the attempt being proposed to deal with the negative contribution that certain Bands make to the whole parading issue.
- (e) welcomes the proposed legislation to make it an offence for a person knowingly to allow alcohol to be carried on to a public service vehicle if he is the operator or the person to whom it is hired.
- (f) expresses concerns about the proposals made in the Review re traditional routes. We believe that there is some merit in allowing a Parade along a traditional route if it is the most convenient route from ‘A’ to ‘B’ and if it is an arterial road. We are all too aware of the difficulties over this matter in recent years.
- (g) welcomes the proposal that the staff of both the Facilitation Agency and the Rights Panel should be brought within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

17. Marriage Law Reform

- (i) As reported to the Assembly three years ago (Reports 2000 pp 62-67), major changes are being introduced in marriage procedures in Northern Ireland. A Bill was drafted for submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly, and during the Committee stage a delegation from our Church attended a hearing at Stormont, where they made a submission and answered questions.
- (ii) However, before the Bill could be enacted, the Stormont Assembly was suspended, and the matter was then dealt with under the provisions of direct rule.
- (iii) In addition to the primary legislation there will also be detailed regulations not yet issued. At time of writing it is unclear precisely when the new system will come into force, but it is likely to be operative before the next General Assembly. In the meantime ministers are asked to note the salient points of the new procedure.
- (iv) The system of marriage licences, both ordinary and special, is being abolished, as is the concept of buildings licensed for marriages.
- (v) Parties intending to marry will in future be asked to attend the office of the Registrar in the district where the wedding will take place and there give due notice. The Registrar will then issue a Marriage Schedule specifying the names of the parties, name of the officiating minister, the place and date of the wedding, etc. This Schedule will be signed by all parties on the day of the wedding and returned to the Registrar, who will keep the official records on behalf of the state. It will be up to the various denominations to decide what non-statutory records they wish to keep for their own internal purposes.
- (vi) The Marriage Schedule will permit ministers to conduct a wedding, but will not require them to do so. It is therefore vital that parties intending to marry consult their minister at the very beginning of the process, and agree all the arrangements before proceeding to the Registrar's office, otherwise confusion and disappointment may result.
- (vii) While most weddings according to Presbyterian Form and Discipline take place in a church, they may, for various reasons, be solemnised elsewhere, eg in a hospital, a residential home or a private house. At present that is possible only by special licence; in future the church authorities will be able in all cases to determine what they deem to be an appropriate venue for a religious ceremony and what is an adequate reason for not holding the ceremony in a church. It would be helpful if the Public Worship Committee, or some other committee, could issue guidelines for the information and protection of ministers, who may be asked to conduct marriage services in hotels or in unusual locations, especially if commercial entrepreneurs begin to offer comprehensive packages that will include a suitable "wedding chapel," an officiating minister, a reception, etc. It may also be necessary to consider in what (if any) circumstances ministers should marry those who belong to other congregations, other denominations

or no denomination. These will be matters for internal church discipline.

- (viii) Some changes are also taking place in the regulations for civil marriages conducted by the registrar. While these are not of direct concern to the Church, they will make it easier for a civil registrar to conduct marriages in locations outside the registry office, such as a hotel. This may ease the pressure on ministers from those who now seek special licence merely to have the wedding in a place where the civil registrar cannot officiate at present.
- (ix) The authorities in the Irish Republic are now considering the reform of marriage procedures in that jurisdiction, and some consultation with the churches has taken place. It seems likely that the Republic will introduce provisions broadly similar to those now planned for Northern Ireland.
- (x) **The foregoing paragraphs are a brief summary of the intended provisions, as they are believed to be at date of writing. They are not a full or authoritative statement of the new legislation or the new regulations, which are still to be published. Ministers are strongly advised to study any official documents that may be issued and to avail themselves of any training that may be offered.**

18. Europe

- (i) For many years the Church of Scotland seconded a minister who worked with the Church and Society Commission in Brussels and reported back on developing issues. Following the retirement of Rev Stewart Lamont last year the Church of Scotland felt it could no longer afford to fully fund the post (£40,000 per annum), but in view of the very secular ethos of the European Union, and the shift of power from national governments to Brussels, it was felt to be imperative that there should be a clear Reformed Church presence there to monitor developments and to provide a strong Christian presence.
- (ii) The Church of Scotland therefore agreed to provide half the costs, with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland providing one quarter and the remainder being found from various sources, the arrangement to be reviewed after three years. Even a relatively brief appointment should help the home Church to a better understanding of how the institutions of the EU work and how best to relate to them.
- (iii) The post has been advertised and it is hoped that a suitably qualified person may soon be appointed.
- (iv) Last year the EU established a Convention on the Future of Europe consisting of representatives of national governments and parliaments, the European Parliament, the European Commission and the candidate countries.
- (v) The Convention decided to draw up a Constitution for Europe, which would consolidate and supersede all the previous Treaties of Rome, Amsterdam, Maastricht, etc. The significance and importance of such a written Constitution should not be underestimated, as it will create a rigid framework within which all future legislation will have to be enacted. Matters like economics, foreign affairs, defence, justice could

become subservient to a powerful but un-elected European Commission, and once enacted the Constitution could not easily be changed.

- (vi) The churches therefore deemed it vital that its text should be subject to detailed scrutiny, as the citizens of Europe need to see clearly where they are going. When 16 articles of the first draft were published they caused concern to churches and religious bodies right across the religious spectrum. The Evangelical Alliance explained, "Secular France and humanist associations across Europe have industriously been pressing the Convention to excise all reference to Christianity, citing persecution, division, persecution, war, the Inquisition, etc as Europe's shameful religious heritage, which must now be finally disposed of. In contrast we are presented with the beatific vision of secular atheistic reasonableness and unity."
- (vii) Others observed that religion was perforce declared to be merely the private affair of an individual and to have no place in public life. The values listed in the documents, such as human dignity, freedom, the supremacy of law, etc, are certainly not alien to Christianity, but there is concern as to how those values will be interpreted when practical decisions are taken, for example in the field of sexual relations or the institution of marriage. A resolution of the European Parliament passed last January called for an all-Europe campaign in support of homosexual marriages. It seems that the values of the proposed Treaty are largely those of humanism, and that secular fundamentalism is now casting a lengthening shadow over public and corporate expressions of religion.
- (viii) The Churches believe that the Constitution should contain (i) an explicit reference to the Christian heritage of Europe; (ii) a mechanism for consultation between the European institutions and the religious communities of the EU; and (iii) Appendix 11 of the Treaty of Amsterdam on the status of churches. The final draft of the Constitution is due to be presented to the 15 governments of the EU in late June.
- (ix) Realising that in this situation inaction was not an option, the views of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and sister churches have been fed into the process through the Church and Society Commission in Brussels, and through Mr John Bruton TD, one of the Irish delegates to the Convention whom we thank for his representations on our behalf. Other church bodies have made similar representations through their own channels.

19. **Equality Legislation**

- (i) In the course of 2003 Northern Ireland Equality legislation is designed to do two things.
- (ii) First of all, by way of Regulations made at Westminster, to enact the anti-discriminatory provisions of European Directives in respect of sexual orientation, religion/belief, race, disability and equal pay issues.

- (iii) Secondly, by way of a Northern Ireland Single Equality Bill to harmonise all anti-discriminatory legislation, as far as practicable, and provide for the extension of equality protection to new groups.
- (iv) Our Church was concerned that the Equality Commission was attempting to go far beyond the requirements of the Directives, e.g. by extending equality legislation and monitoring to volunteers, which would have been a nightmare for the churches, who need many volunteers to operate effectively. It now seems less likely that such provisions will be introduced in the short term, and perhaps not in the long term either.
- (v) We have, however, had a continuing concern about the need for communities based on faith or other convictions to preserve their ethos. They should not be forced to employ those who by word, deed or lifestyle undermine what the organisation stands for. While the basic test in the event of a complaint will be the “essential nature of the job” we have argued, hopefully with some success, that it is reasonable, when determining that, to take into account the context in which that job is carried out.
- (vi) Our office-bearers, both alone and in co-operation with the other main Churches, devoted much time during the year to this issue. There were submissions to, and meetings with (i) senior officials from the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister; (ii) the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and (iii) the Prime Minister, and on all these occasions our representatives received an informed and sympathetic hearing from those now in office. The matter is still ongoing but there are now grounds for hoping that the churches’ ethos will be given some consideration in matters of employment law, while the question of the provision of goods and services may not be an issue in the immediate future.
- (vii) We cannot stress too often that our Church is fully supportive of the concept of equality and the right of individuals to be protected from unfair discrimination. The Churches do not seek special privileges for themselves, merely the same right as any secular organisation to employ those whom we deem to be the best people for the job, even if our criteria are different from those of industry or commerce.

Convenerships

Very Rev Dr H A Dunlop writes:

20. The convenership of the Church and Government Committee is always a busy and demanding one, but never more so than during the last seven years which saw a period of enormous change in Northern Ireland and the wider world. The Belfast Agreement led to new institutions, including among others a new Northern Ireland Assembly and power-sharing Executive, a Human Rights Commission, an Equality Commission, a Victims Commission, a Review of the Criminal Justice System, a Police Ombudsman, and a new Police Service of Northern Ireland. At the same time a number of contentious issues, including the

issue of disputed parades, continued to contribute to community tensions, while in the wider world global insecurity became a matter of major concern following the September 11 terrorist outrage. Our Church is greatly indebted to Dr Dunlop for his capable, wise and helpful leadership during this period. He worked tirelessly in the interests of the Church, meeting Government ministers and political leaders, attending conferences and drafting statements for the Committee and the General Board. He was particularly effective as a media spokesman, always articulate, clear and challenging. He was also involved in the Inter-Church Committee on Northern Ireland, which provides a link between church leaders here and those in the USA. It is a measure of his worth that he is widely respected by people of very diverse views, both within and without the Church. He has been an excellent convener.

21. After due consideration it is recommended that Mr George McCullagh should remain Co-Convener for one further year.

APPENDIX A

Statement issued following the meeting on 23rd August 2002

1. The continuing rioting in parts of Belfast which has now been sustained for more than fifteen months, along with the continuing terrorist threat and the need for the investigation of serious crime, are all placing an increasingly intolerable burden on exhausted police officers and on vulnerable citizens, all of which impacts on the wider society. There is widespread fear in many parts of Northern Ireland due to the absence of effective policing and the increasing influence of paramilitary groups.

2. The self-indulgent, fear-filled and aggressive interface rioting which destroys communities needs to stop right away. People of influence need to do all that they can to restrain people who are intent on creating trouble. People who are involved in rioting need to understand the destructive effect which rioting is having on their own communities and to cease either initiating or responding violently to provocation.

3. The rights of people who gather for the purposes of rioting cannot be allowed to take precedence over the rights of vulnerable people to live in their homes in peace.

4. The continuing complex underlying socio-political-cultural issues need to be addressed in a vigorous and sustained way, and we encourage and pray for all people who are placed in positions of responsibility and influence, especially the elected representatives of the people.

APPENDIX B

Report to the General Board: 10th October 2002

1. By the time the General Board meets the Committee will have met on four occasions since the General Assembly.

2. The first meeting of the Committee was in Dublin on 27th June. The members met at Dublin Castle at 11:00 am and attended the "Forum on Europe"

meeting being held there. The Forum meetings are being held on a regular basis in preparation for the Nice Referendum on European enlargement etc which is planned to take place on Saturday 19 October 2002.

3. The Committee's co-convenor, George McCullagh, participates in the Forum and spoke on the need for Europe to keep the churches in their planning and thinking for the new Europe, and avoid giving the impression that churches and their activities are being sidelined in favour of economic issues! Also the need to recognize that church buildings, many of heritage status, need to be financed from governments or from European funds. The burden on religious groups, particularly minorities who have buildings to maintain, will become unsustainable unless supported from outside.

4. The Committee later met with An Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern TD, at Government Buildings. An Taoiseach warmly welcomed the delegation and we spent the following 1½ hours in discussion with respect to:

- (a) The settlement by the Government (with little debate) of some 300 million Euro for child abuse suffered in Catholic institutions
- (b) The Nice Referendum
- (c) Possible public enquiries arising out of possible recommendations from Judge Cory following the Weston Park consultations of 2002
- (d) The rioting occurring in areas of Belfast

5. Relevant parts of the Church and Government Committee's Report to the 2002 General Assembly and the Resolutions of the General Assembly were given to An Taoiseach and his officials. The discussions, at all times, were wholehearted and open and opinions were freely expressed on all sides.

6. At the meeting on 23rd August the Clerk presented a paper on the "Future of Europe" and the need to have a Presbyterian representative in Brussels. (See Appendix H.)

7. The Committee continues to be active in discussions with the Equality Commission on the Single Equality Bill. The concept of equality of treatment is an inspirational ideal but the danger is that it will become embedded in complex legalities which might fail to protect the distinctive contributions which churches can make to the well being of society by failing to permit churches to protect the ethos of their communities.

8. Written and oral submissions have been made on the Draft Marriage Bill.

9. The Committee continues to be engaged in consultations on the issue of support for organisations unwilling to seek support from Lottery Funds.

10. The Committee looks forward to a meeting with the Church of Scotland's "Church and Nation Committee" on 17th and 18th October.

11. The Committee discussed the continuing problem of rioting in Belfast and the pressures on the police.

12. On a wider front the crisis over what to do with Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; the Israeli/Palestinian conflict; the implementation of the Belfast Agreement and the turmoil on the world's stockmarkets continue to indicate that there is much in the world that is unstable and constitutes the unpredictable arena within which the Christian church is called upon to be faithful to its Lord.

APPENDIX C**Supplementary Report to the General Board: 10th October 2002****A. THE NICE TREATY**

1. The European Union has been exceptionally good for Ireland in terms of:

Population growth; Jobs growth; Infrastructure improvements; Income growth;

Forced emigration eliminated; Bigger markets; Wider vision.

2. Apathy or silent consent gave rise to a low turnout for the 2001 referendum on the Nice Treaty. We are concerned that all citizens of the Republic turn out and vote on the 19th October 2002 in the second referendum on the Nice Treaty.

3. Following enlargement, the applicant countries can expect to have similar improvements to those of Ireland as a result of sharing within the EU.

4. It would be sad if the past, which has been so good, and the proposed enlargement of the EU are ignored as a result of cynicism throughout the country.

B. THE DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS

1. The Northern Ireland Policing Board has published the “Code of Practice on Functions and Responsibilities” for District Policing Partnerships to be established in the 26 District Councils. The role of a District Policing Partnership “is to consult with the community, establish policing priorities in conjunction with the PSNI District Commander and monitor police performance against a local policing plan”.

2. The Northern Ireland Policing Board, in partnership with 26 District Councils, now wish to appoint members of the public to serve as Independent Members of the District Policing Partnerships and applications are being sought.

3. Local Councillors will have a slight majority on each Partnership and will occupy the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair.

4. Applicants must be able to:

Demonstrate an interest in the local community, community safety or policing issues.

Be resident in or have close connection to the Council area.

Be able to commit around 2 days per month (3.5 days per month in Belfast).

Remuneration Allowances will be £2,400 per annum (for 2 days per month)

£4,200 per annum (for 3.5 days per month)

5. In its “Analysis” of the Patten proposals the Church and Government Committee noted the recommendation “that those with serious criminal or terrorist backgrounds should not be considered for police service” but asked that it be clarified if this is the case for those serving on the Policing Board and the District Partnership Policing Boards.

6. Under the Rehabilitation Act 1978, a sentence of up to 30 months imprisonment imposed upon a person who has been convicted of a crime, that

sentence having been served and five years having elapsed, such a sentence is deemed to be have been spent.

7. Such a person can apply to serve on a District Policing Partnership. This does not apply to people sentenced to more than 30 months. Under the Belfast Agreement prisoners who have been granted early release are on parole and their full sentences have not been served.

8. In its response to the Patten Commission the Church and Government Committee said:

The vision we have of Northern Ireland is of a community at peace with itself, with Roman Catholics and Protestants of both the Unionist and Nationalist traditions working together in a political structure and culture which embraces and honours the obvious diversity of its citizens. The composition, culture and style of policing should reflect and be supportive of that vision and should receive and earn the support of both sides of our community.

These District Policing Partnerships may well prove to be important and suitably qualified members of the Presbyterian Church should be encouraged to apply.

C. CURRENT POLICING STRENGTH

In the Committee's "Response" to the Patten proposals it was stated that "the Full Time Reserve ought not to be phased out until the security situation justifies it". In view of the considerable numbers of police officers who have been permitted to leave the service, the inevitably slow process of training new officers and the continuing terrorist threat, lawlessness and community disorder it seems prudent for the Chief Constable to request that the Police Reserve be kept in existence for three more years.

D. RECOGNITION OF PRISON OFFICERS

Having previously made representations that the service given by Prison Officers be recognised, the committee welcomes the decision to award medals and to include posthumous awards to those who were murdered because of their positions as Prison Officers.

E. IRAQ AND THE POSSIBILITY OF WAR

1. The British Government has published a dossier which sets out in detail the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's production of chemical and biological weapons and the possible development of nuclear weapons. There is no denying the brutal nature of the Iraqi regime which constitutes a threat to his own people, to neighbouring countries and to the world. Ten years of sanctions have not prevented the continued development of weapons of mass destruction and have meant that the people of Iraq have borne the brunt of suffering in terms of infant mortality, chronic malnutrition, crumbling health and education provision.

2. How is the continuing threat to be addressed? It is clearly preferable if these weapons of mass destruction can be dealt with satisfactorily without recourse to war. The avoidance of war, if at all possible, is important and war should be undertaken only as a last resort. Negotiations are in progress to see if

it is possible for United Nations' inspectors to be admitted to Iraq under satisfactory conditions.

3. What is to be done if Saddam Hussein does not comply with the arrangements, as has happened in the past?

4. "Just War" theories are not designed to glorify war but are restraints to prevent people going to war for unjustifiable reasons. It is obvious that political leaders need courage and wisdom for which we should pray. A word of caution is necessary and some principles need to be borne in mind.

- (a) Under international law the only circumstance under which individual states may invoke the authority to go to war is in self-defence following an attack. Unilateral pre-emptive strikes are not permitted. The possibility of action sanctioned by the United Nations would be more acceptable than pre-emptive military action by the USA and the United Kingdom. There are dangers in nation states taking it upon themselves to enforce United Nations' resolutions. What would happen if some Arab States unilaterally decided to enforce United Nations' resolutions about Israel and Palestine?
- (b) Political wisdom. Does Iraq pose an immediate threat to the USA and the United Kingdom? Without the agreement of the United Nations' Security Council would the USA and the UK be acting alone and with the active disagreement of other close military and political allies? The area is already in turmoil and the danger exists of further destabilisation which would make it more difficult to isolate terrorist networks.
- (c) Moral issues. A war against Iraq would cause thousands of casualties including the military forces involved as well as innocent civilians. The conflict may not be containable geographically and might further destabilize an interconnected world.

F. NORTHERN IRELAND MARRIAGE BILL

It is likely that a Bill will be passed in 2003 which will radically alter the legal arrangements for marriages in Northern Ireland. It is too soon to predict the eventual outcome of the discussions.

G. MALAWI

The Overseas Board, having received representations from the Rev H M Nkhoma, General Secretary of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Livingstonia, passed the following resolution:

"That the Board, through the Church and Government Committee, inform the wider Church that a modified bill proposing a third term of office for the incumbent President of Malawi may be presented in the Malawian Parliament in mid-October 2002; and that the Board urge the Church and Government Committee to lobby the UK and Irish Governments to act on this issue."

APPENDIX D**SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT TO THE GENERAL BOARD****10 October 2002****NORTHERN IRELAND: POLITICAL SITUATION****JESUS AND ADAM: THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE FALL**

1. The inability of the diverse parts of the Northern Ireland community to sustain a political process and implement the political accommodation represented by the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement represents a significant and sad failure for our society, especially since so many people have invested so much of their time, energy and resources in attempting to assist us.

2. The immediate cause of the current crisis is the allegations about republican paramilitaries being involved in gathering intelligence at the heart of the government. This has deeply affected the lives of several thousands of prison officers and others whose personal safety and that of their families, is threatened. The resulting insecurity adds to the already significant challenge of mistrust and division in our society. Many people feel bewildered, hurt and disappointed.

3. However, the underlying issues of mistrust and division in the society remain a very significant challenge. The present crisis may, with some justification, cause us to be a byword on the face of the earth as being incredibly privileged and impossibly unreasonable people. Since there are so many Christians in this country it will undermine the credibility of the gospel in the eyes of many.

4. Jesus calls us to the practice of forgiveness, of love for our enemies, of avoiding anger and revenge, of making peace with people who have something against us, it having an even higher priority than worship. (Matthew 5.23)

5. We are not just asked to be moral, or religious, we are asked to be Christian. Christian living involves seeking peace in the personal and social relationships of our culture and our shared life. We cannot build peace unless we deal with our hates and hatreds. We cannot build a peace process without building relationships with our neighbours.

6. If we are failing in these things we are neither salt nor light.

7. We can be thankful that God has not written off his creation but has come in Christ addressing sin and its consequences at all levels by becoming one of us and bearing sin in his own body on the cross. (2 Cor 5.21) The result was triumph. Since God has not become disengaged from his world, neither can we.

8. The problems we face are significant but the redemptive work of Christ is of greater significance than the sinful work of Adam. Redemption is cosmic in its scope, its effects encompassing the whole creation.

9. "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things

in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (Colossians 1.20 NIV)

10. Sin is serious as it permeates and destroys relationships at all levels and manifested itself as an organised communal attack by political and religious leaders on God himself, who is both Creator and Redeemer. (Acts 1.23)

11. Redemption is about more than a relationship with God and relationships among individuals. It also includes relationships with the rest of creation, among nations and among groups of people in specific situations.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

12. We applaud the Preamble to the Belfast Agreement which looked forward to **“the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance, and mutual trust, and to the protection and vindication of human rights for all”**. The Committee is aware that the Agreement is a political accommodation which was arrived at after many years of complex negotiations fraught with difficulties, involving, at the highest levels, the governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland and the United States of America, the leadership of most political parties in Northern Ireland and was subsequently endorsed by referenda in both parts of Ireland. We are grateful that so many people, with heavy responsibilities, gave so much time to trying to find some way out of our problems. Painfully and slowly a way forward was found.

13. While the present economic and political situation is less than perfect, it is a vast improvement on what obtained but a few years ago.

14. The Committee warns of the serious consequences of actions, or the absence of actions, which would contribute to the ending of devolution and the collapse of the current political arrangements. We need to beware of creating a situation where the result of such a collapse would be less desirable than what obtains at present.

15. The Committee recognises that many people from Nationalist, Republican, Unionist and Loyalist backgrounds have demonstrated constructive leadership and is also aware that all political leaders operate under various constraints which may make what is desirable difficult to achieve. Nevertheless the responsibilities of leadership require an ability to understand the difficulties faced by other leaders, a willingness to go forward ahead of the people and to use powers of persuasion to gain support for the policies being pursued.

16. Senator George Mitchell said “The Agreement was formulated to take account of the absence of trust”. For it to succeed, that important commodity of trust had to be multiplied, which meant each putting self in the shoes of others, and pursuing strategies that would be mutually helpful, rather than strategies which would weaken one’s opponent who was also one’s partner. If some people find themselves treated with suspicion, it is for them to demonstrate why the suspicion ought to be lifted.

17. While the majority of people in both parts of Ireland supported the Belfast Agreement, a minority, mainly within the Unionist part of the community, were opposed to it and wished to modify or replace it.

18. It is regrettable that loyalist and republican paramilitary activity which people hoped would end, and the decommissioning of illegal weapons which was expected to take place soon after the formation of the Executive, took

place in such a reluctant and minimalist way that trust was eroded rather than sustained and increased.

19. The people in both parts of Ireland as a whole have reason to feel betrayed, especially those who took a leap of faith in supporting the Agreement.

WHERE TO NOW?

20. Whatever may be the set backs and the problems, it is important to sustain the vision of creating a stable and equitable society in Northern Ireland within which diverse peoples can feel at peace and at home. The accomplishment of that will require persistence and optimism. For Christian people that will be rooted in faith in Christ. Political leaders need to be attentive to the dreams of people for a better future rather than pursuing policies rooted in fear.

APPENDIX E

Report to the General Board: Thursday 27th February 2003

1. “Review of the Parades Commission and Public Processions (N Ireland) Act 1998”.

The Committee submitted a response to the “Review of the Parades Commission and Public Processions (N Ireland) Act 1998”. (The Quigley Report). The Committee welcomed the suggestion that there should be Facilitations Agency and, in the event of local agreement not being achieved, agreed that there is need for a Rights Panel to make the determinations in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights Article 11(1).

2. Ulster Bands Association

The Committee made a submission to the Ulster Bands Association and was represented at a subsequent conference. The Ulster Bands Association is to be encouraged in making a sincere effort to raise the standard and decorum of band parades, and as its code of conduct illustrates, is seeking to regulate the behaviour of bands within its membership.

3. Charity Law Reform and Employment of Ministers issues

The Financial Secretary, Mr Clive Knox, is a member of the Churches Main Committee.

a. Charitable Status. Re: Consultation paper “Private Action, Public Benefit - A review of Charities and the wider Not-For-Profit Sector”. The “advancement of religion” is currently included as one of ten charitable purposes. The Churches Main Committee have generally welcomed the report’s approach to the status of religious bodies but have expressed some concern that if demonstrating public benefit should not cause any problem why not continue to presume it, as is the case at present.

b. Employment Issues Consultation. The Department of Trade and Industry has issued a “Discussion Document on Employment Status in relation to Statutory Employment Rights”. Clergy are identified as one category of Office Holder who are not considered self-employed but who do not fit into the legal definition of employee. The report recognises that the courts have established that the relationship between church authorities and ministers of

religion in not a contractual one. The Churches Main Committee response favours the Option of "Self Regulation" whereby the churches demonstrate that systems within Churches are equivalent to statutory rights. The results of the consultation are expected to be available early 2003 with detailed regulation being issued early 2004.

4. A response was forwarded to the "Draft Firearms NI Order".

5. Members of the Committee met the Police Oversight Commissioner, Mr Tom Constantine, prior to him issuing his third report and with the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

6. Efforts continue to create the conditions within which the Executive and Assembly could function once again. There are dangers that the Government may enter into bi-lateral understandings with some parties while others are unaware of the details. This does not engender trust.

7. At a meeting with the Secretary of State, Mr Paul Murphy, the Committee tabled some parts of recent reports of the Committee and some resolutions of the General Assembly and the General Board. Clarification was sought from the Secretary of State about the provisions relating to the eligibility of ex-prisoners for appointment to the Policing Board or District Policing Partnerships and the way that these could be affected by the proposals outlined in the 'text for consideration' that the Government published last November.

8. Dr Hutchinson and George McCullagh represented the Church and Government Committee at the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation in Dublin and made both verbal and written submissions.

9. Representatives of the Committee and of the Committee on Finance and Staffing met officials of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister to discuss issues connected with the Single Equality Bill. The Clerk conveyed the Presbyterian Church's concerns to the Prime Minister.

10. A violent feud within the UDA has resulted in a number of deaths, people leaving Northern Ireland and a more unified body. This may be of little comfort to the people who suffer from protection rackets, drug dealing and prostitution. Attempts are being made to persuade loyalist paramilitary groups to move towards peaceful political activity and leave their violent pasts behind. The Committee hopes to be briefed by a senior officer in the PSNI before the Board meets.

11. The job description for the Presbyterian Representative in Brussels has been agreed and the post has been advertised.

12. Ten new countries have been invited to join the European Union and each has now to ratify its decision in ways appropriate to each country.

13. A letter was sent to the Chief Constable expressing the hope that the PSNI band might be continued on a voluntary/part time capacity in keeping with what we understand to be the situation with other police bands in the United Kingdom. A reply indicated that it is hoped that, like the PSNI Pipe Band, members of the current band may consider forming a voluntary Association which the Chief Constable would support with the gift of instruments and financial aid where possible.

14. The possibility of war with Iraq continues to concern people in many parts of the world and has opened up divisions within and between countries. The world faces a new threat from international "asymmetrical warfare" which

is war waged by terrorist cells embedded within societies, which cells have the capacity to shake legitimate governments to their foundations and is an assault on current international order. Legitimate public authorities have the political and moral responsibility to protect their citizens against that threat. The 11th September attacks on the USA, the attacks on the theatre in Moscow and on a crowded disco in Indonesia are evidences of this international threat.

15. Citizens have the right to express their concerns about how this responsibility ought to be discharged. Churches have strongly urged caution and the need for United Nations involvement in the decisions about the declaration of war against Iraq and have drawn attention to the unresolved Israeli/Palestinian dispute. While some countries may be overwhelmingly Moslem, there are Christian communities within them, including Presbyterian churches in Iraq.

16. Further to our report to the last Board on this issue it may be useful to set out the "Just War" principles bearing in mind that "Just War" theories are not designed to glorify war but are restraints to prevent people going to war for unjustifiable reasons. Recognising that war is always awful in its effects we ask, "When is it permissible to wage war and what are the limitations on the ways war is waged?"

17. JUST WAR PRINCIPLES

- (i) **THERE MUST BE LAWFUL AUTHORITY.** This, in fact, means authority at the highest possible level. Where there is no higher authority, as in a world composed only of nation states, the state has to be judge and jury in its own cause. In our world, however, there is the United Nations. However imperfect the UN may be, it is a crucial sign that we are groping our way towards an international authority. Under international law the only circumstance under which individual states may invoke the authority to go to war is in self-defence following an attack. Unilateral pre-emptive strikes are not permitted.
- (ii) **THERE MUST BE PROPER CAUSE.** Augustine specifically ruled out as justifications for war such causes as "the desire for harming, the cruelty of revenge, the restless and implacable mind, the savageness of revolting, and the lust for dominating." In the case of Iraq, the motives may be mixed, but amongst them is the undeniable fact that Iraq is ruled tyrannically by Saddam Hussein who has failed to abide by the demands of the United Nations to get rid of weapons of mass destruction, which are known to include more than 5,000 litres of anthrax and thousands of litres of biological weapons including sarin gas and nerve gas, some of which he has already used on his own citizens.
- (iii) **EVERY EFFORT MUST HAVE BEEN MADE TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE FIRST BY PEACEFUL MEANS.** Is the presence of weapons by themselves, however destructive, even in the hands of someone who certainly cannot be trusted, sufficient cause? A policy of containment and deterrence might be more effective. What happens if Saddam Hussein continues to disregard the demands of the United Nations?
- (iv) **WAR MUST NOT UNLEASH MORE EVILS THAN ARE ALREADY BEING ENDURED.** There are dangers of an

Islamic/Christian confrontation, especially as the USA has no apparent intention of seeing UN resolutions implemented in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. What might be the consequences of Western powers attempting to police a Muslim State following any military victory in Iraq?

- (v) **THERE MUST BE A REASONABLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS.** Even if there is good reason to attack, soldiers cannot be simply sent out to die. Human life is too precious, too sacred to waste. A war with Iraq might not be easily won. Will Baghdad have to be captured street by street with significant loss of life on all sides? Who will run the country afterwards?
- (vi) **PROPORTIONALITY.** In waging a war, authorities must make sure that the harm caused by their response to aggression does not exceed the harm caused by the aggression itself. Annihilating the enemy in response to an attack is an example of disproportion. Similarly, proportionality has also come to mean that non-combatants must be shielded from harm. They can never, for any reason whatsoever, be the targets of an attack.

18. The history of modern warfare is characterised by “**total warfare**,” the expansion of targets beyond strictly military ones. That is why, of all the requirements of just war theory, proportionality is the most likely to be violated, even by governments with the most just of causes.

APPENDIX F

Supplementary Report to the General Board: Thursday 27th February 2003

1. All political power, including that of western powers, is transient. “The One who sits on his throne above the earth and beyond the sky ... brings down powerful rulers and reduces them to nothing. They are like young plants, just set out and barely rooted. When the Lord sends a wind, they dry up and blow away like straw” (Isaiah 40 22-24).

2. War, as a policy of last resort, is always the lesser of two evils, involving, as it inevitably does, death, injury and destruction and the use of the finite resources of the earth. Every avenue, short of war, must be pursued. War can only be embarked upon with regret and a penitent heart devoid of self-righteousness.

3. The Committee has been asked to forward resolutions on the possibility of war with Iraq from the Peace and Peacemaking Committee and from the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster.

4. **Ex-prisoners and the Policing Board and District Policing Partnerships.** Concerning the eligibility of ex-prisoners for appointment to the Policing Board and to the District Policing Partnerships. The following are extracts from the letter from the Secretary of State.

“Policing Board

There is, at present, no statutory bar on ex-prisoners being appointed to the Policing Board either as political members (drawn from the Assembly) or as independent members.

District Policing Partnerships

At present, there *is* a statutory bar on ex-prisoners being appointed as independent members of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). No equivalent provision exists for political members.

The proposals outlined in the ‘text for consideration’ would, in effect, bring the arrangements for independent members of DPPs into line with those that apply to their political counterparts.

As with local councillors, all applicants for independent membership would need to make a declaration against terrorism (a breach of which would constitute grounds for removal) and there would be a bar on eligibility for five years after the person was released from prison.

There are, however, some additional safeguards built into the appointments process. It will still be the responsibility of the Policing Board, in appointing independent members of DPPs, to assess each candidate’s suitability for appointment.”

Notes

- (a) *the Secretary of State has the responsibility to assess each person’s suitability to be an independent member of the Policing Board.*
- (b) *the five year period begins with the date of release;*
- (c) *release on licence, or as a grant of remission, is to be treated as discharge for the purposes of calculating the five year period; and*
- (d) *if someone released on license is subsequently re-imprisoned, the five year period is restarted from the point of the subsequent release.*

5. The Committee has been asked to look into the allegations that, compared to banks in other parts of the United Kingdom, the four largest banks in Northern Ireland have been overcharging customers for overdrafts.

6. The Presbytery of Route, the Environmental Panel and the Inter Church Relations Board have expressed deep concern about the proposal by Auiron Energy Ltd, an Australian mining company and their local subsidiary Ballymoney Power, to exploit a 2,000 hectare (5500 acre) site for open-cast lignite mining and an associated power station in the Ballymoney area.

7. Lignite is one of the world’s most polluting fuels. Mining could last for 30 years. The mine could reach to a depth of 500feet and thus extend below sea level. This would result in a drastic change in the levels of water tables, affecting ground water and feeder streams, and springs into the river Bush and the Ballymoney river. Approximately 80 farms will disappear, with churches and schools affected. Present road systems will disappear, disrupting social fabric and affecting community and family life built up over generations. The chimney stack of the power station will be 500 feet high, visible from the Giants Causeway, looking south. The Giants Causeway is our only World Heritage site. The fallout pollution from the stack will easily reach the north coast.

8. Paramilitary groups continue to be a threat to the peace and good order of Northern Ireland. It is important to distinguish between people who may

be Republicans or Loyalists and people within those communities who are engaged in illegal or paramilitary activity.

9. Dissident Republicans belonging to the Continuity IRA and the Real IRA are active and pose the greatest threat. The Provisional IRA retain their violent capability but are less active, apart from the serious issues of exercising local control and engaging in “punishment” attacks. Most republican illegal activity is in the area of smuggling, counterfeit goods, tax evasion and fraud.

10. The UDA has suffered major internal violent disruption. The organisation has long been involved in bombing, drug dealing, prostitution and extortion. Last week it declared “military inactivity” for twelve months. Any move in the right direction is welcome and time will tell how significant this declaration proves to be. The UVF is also involved in illegal activity but is more active politically than the UDA.

11. The police need community support if there is to be success in overcoming paramilitary and criminal activity. It is recognised that it is often dangerous for local people to give the police evidence and become witnesses to what they know is going on in their communities. The pressure exerted by the Criminal Assets Bureau will put pressure on those engaged in illegal activity.

APPENDIX G

Report to the General Board: 3rd April 2003

IRAQ

1. The USA and the United Kingdom are leading a military campaign in Iraq to enforce UN resolutions, without UN support for their actions. The intention behind military action is to enforce the United Nations’ resolutions, which Saddam Hussein has flouted for twelve years. There is no unanimity in the United Nations’ Security Council that such force is either necessary or authorised at this time.

2. The legal advice given to the British Government by the Attorney General was that Resolution 1441, warning Iraq that it will “face serious consequences as a result of its continued violations of its obligations”, was sufficient to justify military action. Had it been the case that Resolution 1441 was intended to be interpreted in that way it is unlikely that it would have been passed. Authorisation for military action by British forces was given by the British House of Commons after a day long debate of remarkable clarity and passion.

3. The unfolding crisis and the deep disagreements have caused very serious fracturing of relationships within the United Nations, within NATO, within the European Community and within the United Kingdom.

4. At its last meeting the General Board passed a resolution “encouraging the United Nations to ensure that Saddam Hussein is disarmed, using force only as a last resort”.

5. The Church and Government is of the opinion that:

- (a) the threat of force was causing Saddam Hussein to give some co-operation to the UN inspectors;

- (b) the United Nations' inspection programme, while not without difficulties, had not run its course;
- (c) after long, patient and partially successful containment there was then unseemly haste in marshalling large armies in the region and a consequent, almost inevitable, rush to war;
- (d) all alternatives to war had not been exhausted;
- (e) a widespread international coalition of support for military action was highly desirable but does not exist;
- (f) this war is fraught, in its execution, with extreme danger to the armed forces involved and to the civilian population of Iraq and, in its possible consequences, in making a dangerous situation even more dangerous as it may strengthen militant Islamic forces and weaken moderate ones.
- (g) whatever our convictions about the rightness or otherwise of this war we should express our prayerful concern for service personnel and their families and to military chaplains.
- (h) the current humanitarian concerns and the later reconstruction of the country must be carried through with a long term and generous commitment, along with the rebuilding of fractured internal and international relationships as well as seriously addressing the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

6. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches has issued a strongly worded statement condemning this war "taken without even the cover of UN authorisation" as "immoral and illegal. To use a traditional term, it is sin". The statement condemns unreservedly "this war of aggression ... and the unilateral and imperial mentality that lies behind it. No nation, however powerful, may act on the world stage as it pleases".

7. The Government of the Republic of Ireland has, controversially, granted refuelling rights to USA military aircraft involved in the Iraq war, even though the constitution declares Irish neutrality and the government disagrees with the war. As Ireland owes so much to the USA and has such close connections and long term interests, it was deemed to be a pragmatic decision taken in Ireland's long term interests.

LIGNITE MINING

8. An area of 5500 acres in the Ballymoney area is rich in lignite. There is a proposal to establish a lignite mine and associated power station. For long-term environmental, social and community reasons the churches in the area have joined with others in opposing the scheme. Communities and family connections built up over generations would be detrimentally affected, including the parishes of Roseyards, Bushvale and First Kilraughts.

9. The Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine at its meeting in March 2003 discussed the proposal to establish the lignite mine and associated power station and passed the following resolution: "Bearing in mind the increasing concern

and massive opposition to Ballymoney Power’s proposal for lignite mining and electricity generation in the North Antrim area, the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, strongly calls upon the Junior Minister of the Northern Ireland Office, Angela Smith; the Department of Enterprise and the Planning Authority to reject this scheme outright.”

10. At the adjourned meeting of the last General Board permission was given for a motion to be tabled at its next meeting, calling, not for a public enquiry before a decision on the Lignite proposal be taken, but for the proposal to be rejected immediately. The supporting argumentation for this has come through the Synod and the Environmental Panel of the Inter Church Relations Board. Any resolution passed by the Board should be forwarded to the minister, along with the resolution of the Synod.

OTHER MATTERS

11. The Committee is addressing the following matters:
 - (a) Dept of Agriculture and Rural Development consultation
 - (b) The use of Shannon Airport by USA military aircraft
 - (c) Bank Interest charges.
12. Responding to invitations to consultations is an increasing part of the work-load of the Committee
 - (a) Partners in Transformation: 1st April “A Shared Future”
 - (b) Human Rights Commission event “The Principles of Equality”
 - (c) Human Rights Commission event “Community and Identity Rights”
 - (d) Equality Commission event “Implementing EU Equality Obligations
 - (e) OFMDFM: Victims Division: “Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve”
 - (f) NIO Criminal Law Branch: Road Traffic Penalties: consultation
 - (g) EU Charter for Human Rights: Dublin: George McCullagh
 - (h) Fishing Industry: decommissioning of vessels and transitional aid
 - (i) Public Order Offences consultation paper. Sentences and jury trials.
13. Marriage Reform: Republic of Ireland: the Clerk is monitoring the proposed changes.
14. The Presbytery of Iveagh has expressed concern regarding the new District Policing Partnerships’ use of the term “non-Catholic” and further that the recruitment policy of the PSNI was discriminatory against protestants and was leading to a lack of personnel for effective policing.
15. Brussels-Genocide Watch has reported concern about the future of Boer farmers in South Africa.
16. Concern was expressed about any proposal to move the Balmoral Show to a weekend. It is not clear that this is a firm proposal.

APPENDIX H

EUROPE

Convention on the Future of Europe

1. In December 2000 the European Council initiated a debate on the future of the European Union; a year later the Declaration of Laeken raised some

of the specific issues facing the EU, and in order to consider them set up a **Convention** involving representatives of national governments and parliaments, the European Parliament, the European Commission and representatives of the candidate countries now negotiating for membership; the Convention runs until March 2003, after which its proposals will go to an Intergovernmental Conference. The government of each member state was also encouraged to set up a **National Forum** where representatives of civil society could be heard, thus affording a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for civil society, including the Churches, to express their views on the future of Europe.

Church Agencies

2. The main bodies representing Churches in Brussels are COMECE (the Commission of the [R C] Bishops' Conferences of the European Community), the Church and Society Commission (an agency of the Conference of European Churches, of which PCI is a member), and the office of the EKD (the German Lutheran Churches). All three bodies are well informed, have good contacts and cooperate closely. Initial submissions from COMECE and CSC have already been made to the Convention and other submissions may follow.

A Constitution for Europe?

3. One major issue under consideration by the Convention is the possibility of a "Constitution for Europe." The UK Government seems to favour such a Constitution. The Foreign Secretary, Mr Jack Straw, speaking to representatives of civil society (including PCI) in Belfast on 27 August 2002, said reassuringly that "A Constitution is nothing to be afraid of; even a golf club has one." There certainly is a case for a new Treaty that would consolidate all the previous Treaties into one well-drafted document, nevertheless the significance and importance of introducing a Constitution should not be underestimated. Such a document should only be adopted with great care and widespread consent, as it would create a rigid framework within which all future legislation would have to be enacted, otherwise Bills passed by the legislature could be struck down by the courts. Once in place a Constitution could not easily be changed; it is therefore vital that its text is subjected to detailed and unhurried scrutiny before it is approved. The citizens of Europe need to see clearly where they are going.

4. Church concerns fall into two main sections: firstly, matters directly affecting their own status and interests, and secondly, other matters of humanitarian concern (eg asylum seekers and aid to the Third World) or of ethical importance (eg bioethics).

5. The Church bodies in Brussels mentioned above have urged that any future Treaty of the European Union enacting a **Constitution** should:

- (i) acknowledge the specific contribution of Churches and religious communities to society;
- (ii) recognise fundamental rights, including religious freedom in its individual, collective and institutional dimensions. EU legislation and policy affect not only individuals but also structures and organisations. It is important to complement the predominantly individualist

- approach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, especially on matters religious;
- (iii) incorporate Declaration No 11 of the Final Act of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which expresses respect for the status and internal organisation of Churches and religious communities as recognised by each Member State;
 - (iv) provide for a structured dialogue between the European Institutions and Churches and religious communities like the recent seminars on Church/State Relations conducted by the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe (a body which seems to be more sensitive to the needs of the Churches than the EU).

6. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland should support points (i) to (iv) above, especially as the present UK Government, unlike others elsewhere, shows little interest in the views of civil society. "We cannot be governed by NGOs." Of course, if the Non-Governmental Organisations helped to "sell" the new Constitution or the Euro in any future referendum, that would be welcomed by Government.

The Wider Agenda

7. The wider agenda (matters other than those directly affecting church interests) could include such items as the following.

(a) **Migration and Refugees**

The issues of Migration, Asylum-seekers and Refugees should be viewed within the EU context as primarily a European problem, to be addressed collectively, rather than as one which variously affects individual member states; accordingly the EU should work towards a greater degree of equality between member states in welcoming refugees and asylum-seekers.

The EU should recognise the moral responsibility of the Continent of Europe, both historically and in terms of contemporary economic structures, for those conditions in other parts of the world which produce large numbers of uprooted people, not least within the continent of Africa.

The EU should note the long-standing concern of many churches in Europe for refugees and asylum-seekers, recognising that care for "the stranger" is deeply rooted in the biblical vision of society and a proper relationship between nations.

(b) **Sustainable Development**

We encourage the EU to address the major environmental issues confronting the people of Europe and to move towards a fuller implementation of its strategy for sustainable development, keeping global, ethical and theological perspectives to the fore, and integrating the environment in EU Economic and Employment policies. A market economy should be environmentally responsible.

(c) **The Enlargement of the EU**

There are 13 countries negotiating for membership of the EU, though at present some are nearer than others to achieving that status. The inclusion of central and eastern European states will add about 27% to

the area of the EU, about 23% to its population but only about 4% to its income, so the financial benefits to existing member states will be reduced. However, the inclusion of new states with a strong Orthodox presence could increase Christian influence in the Community. Enlargement will also help to increase solidarity between peoples and nations of an even wider area and promote peace and stability.

(d) **Correcting the Democratic Deficit**

There is an ever-widening gap between the EU leadership and the hearts and minds of the citizens. It is increasingly recognised that the EU is losing legitimacy with voters, so action needs to be taken now to close the gap by increasing civil participation. More democracy, transparency and efficiency are essential, so questions need to be asked about eg the role of the European Parliament and possible moves towards joint decision-making between the Parliament and the Council, otherwise there will be increasing suspicion of, and alienation from, the Institutions.

(e) **A Community of Values**

The EU is long past the stage of being simply a “Common Market.” There is, of course, a value in countries co-operating where possible on economic and monetary issues, but more is required. At the heart of the Christian gospel are values such as peace, justice, reconciliation, tolerance, the rule of law and respect for minorities, all of which should be included among the objectives of the EU.

Dublin and Stormont

8. In June the Church and Government Committee visited the Irish Government’s EU Forum in Dublin, of which Mr George McCullagh is a member. That valuable link should be maintained and used.

9. At Stormont the “Committee of the Centre” convened a conference on 28 June to consider EU matters and the possible creation of a EU Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Invitations to attend were sent out to about 500 local bodies deemed to be interested, but apparently including no churches, though steps are now being taken to correct that omission.

10. It was decided to set up a **Northern Ireland Forum on EU matters**, but it seems that this will be an informal network of agencies to be consulted rather than an organised body like the Civic Forum. The Presbyterian Church has been added to the list.

Staff post in Brussels

11. For the last eleven years the Church of Scotland appointed and funded a minister to work with the Church and Society Commission (formerly EECCS) as a member of the CSC staff team in Brussels. The most recent post-holder, Rev Stewart Lamont, like his predecessor Rev Alastair Hulbert, returned to Scotland twice a year to report to the Church and ecumenical bodies on developing issues, and to undertake deputation work on European matters.

12. Mr Lamont has now retired and the Church of Scotland would like the post to continue, but given its present financial circumstances, it can no longer fully fund the post (£40,000 per annum), but it could provide half the costs, if the balance could be found from other sources. Given the very secular ethos of the EU and the shift of power from national governments to Brussels, it is imperative that there is a clear Church presence to monitor developments and to provide a strong Christian voice. The PCI is invited to join with the Church of Scotland, contributing eg £10,000 per annum, though it remains to be seen where the remainder of the funds could be found. At this stage it is difficult to assess accurately what the direct value of this venture to the PCI would be, especially in the longer term, but an experiment would be worth trying, so our initial commitment (if any) should be limited to a period of three years, after which there could be a full review. Even such a brief appointment could help the home Church to a better understanding of how the institutions of the EU work, and how best to relate to them.

13. While various agencies of our Church could benefit from this post, eg the Church and Government Committee, the Overseas Board, the Inter-Church Relations Board and the Board of Finance and Administration, the simplest method of funding the post would be a charge on the Incidental Fund, though it is unlikely that any significant expenditure would arise until late in 2003. The Panel on the Overview of Funding is asking the General Board to lift the Assembly's moratorium on new posts in this instance.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly believe that any political accommodation in Ireland must take account of the stubborn cultural, political and religious diversity of the people who live here and call upon political leaders to have regard to the importance of pursuing policies and using language which engender a sense of mutual belonging in contrast to reinforcing sectarian divisions.
3. That the General Assembly believe that the Constitution of Europe should contain (i) an explicit reference to the Christian heritage of Europe; (ii) a mechanism for consultation between the European institutions and the religious communities of the European Union and (iii) Appendix 11 of the Treaty of Amsterdam on the status of churches.
4. That the General Assembly call upon all ministers to be aware of the proposed changes in the marriage laws in both jurisdictions in Ireland.
5. That the General Assembly, alarmed at the social and environmental consequences of the proposed lignite mine and associated power station in North Antrim, call upon those with relevant political responsibilities to reject the proposal.
6. That a grant of £6,200.00 be made available from the Incidental Fund to the Church and Government Committee.
7. That a grant of up to £6,000.00 be made available from the Incidental Fund to meet part of the cost of the Church and Society Commission post in Brussels.

8. That the resignation of Very Rev Dr John Dunlop as Co-Convenor of the Church and Government Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that Very Rev Dr H A Dunlop be appointed in his place.

9. That Mr George McCullagh be continued as Co-Convenor of the Church and Government Committee for one further year.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Convener: THE CLERK

1. During the year two “points of difficulty” were referred to the Judicial Commission for determination under the provisions of Par 21(1) of the Code.

2. The Presbytery of Tyrone submitted the following question:
‘According to the Code Par 80(1) “the conduct of public worship” is part of the “special calling of the minister.”

Does “the conduct of public worship” include the right to determine whether or not flags can be brought into the church building before, during, or after a service of worship?’

3. The determination of the Judicial Commission on this point was as follows:

“In view of (i) Paragraphs 18(2), 19(1), 37(a) and 80(1) of The Code; (ii) the absence of anything in Chapter II Section II of The Code to confer powers on the Kirk Session in respect of matters affecting public worship; (iii) the practice of the Church of Scotland and (iv) the absence of any known authorities to the contrary, the Judicial Commission is agreed that a decision on matters affecting public worship, such as the introduction and presence of flags in a service, is not ultimately a responsibility of the Kirk Session, though it is clearly desirable that the elders be consulted by the minister. Such a decision is a matter for the minister, but the minister in turn is responsible to the Presbytery. The Service of worship ends with the Benediction, and the conduct of events after the Benediction is the responsibility of the Kirk Session.

The authority of Presbytery is fundamental to the Presbyterian system. If there is a difference of opinion between minister and elders on the use of flags, the Presbytery could make a ruling on the matter, at least for future services.”

4. The Presbytery of Ards sent a letter referring to Par 291(2) and Par 74(a) of The Code, and requesting that the Judicial Commission investigate the jurisdiction of Presbytery over missionaries serving under the direction, discipline and control of the local church concerned.

5. The determination of the Judicial Commission on this point was as follows.

“That the Presbytery of Ards has jurisdiction by virtue of Par 74(a) and Par 291(2) of The Code over the character and usefulness of Rev _____ in the ministry of the Gospel. When exercising such jurisdiction Presbytery should recognise and acknowledge the joint jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.”

6. The Judicial Commission approved a decision of the Union Commission to extend a special arrangement under Par 226(b) of The Code for a minister who had resigned his charge.

7. The Judicial Commission now reaches the end of its five year term of office, so a resolution to appoint the Commission for the next five years is appended.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Judicial Commission be appointed in accordance with Par 127 of the Code as follows:

UNION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev T J STOTHERS
Secretary: Rev S A MATTHEWS

INTRODUCTION

1. The period covered by this Report is from March 2002 to February 2003.

2. During the year Rev Dr R F S Poots retired as Deputy Clerk and ceased to be Secretary to the Allocation Committee. This is a very important role; the Union Commission records its appreciation of his work and contribution over many years and wishes him well in his retirement. Rev Dr D J Watts has established himself well in the position.

3. The Union Commission has had a heavy workload in the period under review. Most monthly meetings have had a full complement of deputations (six) from Vacant Congregations seeking Leave to Call; there have been several long-term vacancies which need continual monitoring and review, many meetings have taken place away from Church House with Vacancy Commissions, representatives of congregations and others, an increasing number of previous settlements have been reviewed, and various matters have been considered under the heading of 'Manses', not all of them straightforward. To this is added the work of the Personnel and Planning Committee, which is reported elsewhere.

Stipend offers have been realistic and no deputations failed to receive Leave to Call on grounds of inadequate stipend offer when they appeared before the Commission. Offers of Ministerial Expenses have been running at a consistently high level.

4. Several Congregations have had Leave to Call delayed because no clear decision had been taken over work needing to be done on the Manse. Attention is drawn to the 2001 Guidelines (Reports 2001 page 68), particularly no 4, which includes this sentence: 'It is important to understand that the state of the manse will be taken into account before Permission to Call is granted'. In practice this means that a Professional Survey must have been completed and a definite decision taken on whatever work is identified as needing to be done.

Concern continues to be expressed by some members of the Commission at the number of Congregations seeking Leave to Call an Associate Minister, especially in view of the decreased supply of Licentiates eligible for ordination, and the number of vacant congregations. Short of imposing a quota system, however, no way of regulating this is apparent other than 'supply and demand'.

5. The Union Commission is finding new and imaginative ways of providing ministry as appropriate for 21st century Ireland in association with Presbyteries and the Board of Mission in Ireland. These have included granting the Board Leave to Call an Associate Minister in Lucan with a view to establishing a cause in Maynooth; new arrangements in the Ards Peninsula; the establishment of a Home Mission Development Scheme in Drogheda and exploratory work in Navan; and establishing a scheme in a Belfast congregation

to allow the Minister called to devote particular time to establishing links with the local community.

6. Consultation has been taking place with the Presbytery of Monaghan concerning how best to provide ministry in the circumstances there.

7. Central funding will normally be withdrawn from future Ordained Assistantships 15 months following eligibility for call. (This brings provisions for Ordained Assistantships into line with those for Licensed Assistantships.)

8. A panel under the Convenership of Rev Wilfred Orr has been established to take an overview of the provision of ministry in Inner-City Belfast.

LEAVE TO CALL MINISTERS

Congregation	Stipend	Expenses
Note: Expenses are initial expenses to be kept under review; they do not include telephone expenses.		
First Ahoghill	£26,000 (2002)	£6,000
Arnoy	£11,250 (2002)	£3,000
Ramoan	£9,450 (2002)	£3,000
Second Saintfield	£22,000 (2002)	£6,000
Ballycastle	£17,000 (2002)	£4,900
Croaghmore	£4,000 (2002)	£1,600
Toberdoney	£7,500 (2002)	£2,000
Mosside	£13,500 (2002)	£4,500
First Monaghan	€17,500(2002)	€4,800
Seaview	£20,000 (2002)	£6,000
Crumlin Road	£18,000 (2002)	£6,000
Mersey Street	£13,000 (2002)	£5,000
(Review of Stipend after three full years of ministry.)		
First Castlederg	£13,000 (2002)	£5,000
Killeter	£6,000 (2002)	£1,414
First Donegore	£18,100 (2002)	£6,000
(Review at the end of three full years of ministry.)		
Killymurriss	£22,500 (2002)	£6,000
Cloughy	£9,400 (2002)	£2,915
Portaferry	£7,700 (2002)	£2,385
Albany	£3,200 (2002)	£750
Brigh	£8,400 (2002)	£2,000
First Stewartstown	£8,000 (2002)	£2,500
Lowe Memorial	£28,000 (2002)	£7,000
Warrenpoint	£7,750 (2002)	£3,340
Rostrevor	£4,700 (2002)	£1,670
2nd Dunboe	£11,544 (2002)	£2,800
Ringsend	£10,500 (2002)	£2,600
Duneane	£8,500 (2002)	£3000
First Randalstown	£12,750 (2002)	£3,000
First Larne	£32,000 (2002)	£6,000
Donemana	£19,000(2002)	£5,200

Loughaghery	£17,000 (2002)	£4,000
Cargycreevy	£6,700 (2002)	£2,000
Aghadowey	£18,217 (2003)	£5,000
Crossgar	£8,200 (2003)	£2,000
Cladymore	£8,500 (2003)	£2,500
Tassagh	£8,500 (2003)	£2,500
Cumber	£13,500 (2003)	£3,100
Upper Cumber	£10,800 (2003)	£2,900
Roseyards	£20,000 (2003)	£5,460
Faughanvale	£22,500 (2003)	£6,250
Kirkpatrick Memorial	£13,000 (2003)	£5,000

(Annual review beginning after the first full year of ministry.)

LEAVE TO CALL UNDER HOME MISSION DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Congregation	Stipend	Expenses
Kilkenny	€13,332 (2002)	€7,618
Irvinestown	€11,000 (2002)	€3,700
Pettigo	€5,200 (2002)	€1,750
Tempo	€2,600 (2002)	€700
Limerick	€7,618 (2002)	€10,000
Shannon Airport	€1,000 (2002)	€300

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

Leave to call an Associate Minister was given to the following congregations in accordance with the General Assembly's Form of Call and the following terms:

Congregation	Salary	Expenses
Hamilton Road, Bangor	Appropriate Ministerial Minimum	£3,750
Carnmoney	Appropriate Ministerial Minimum	£4,000
Ballywillan	£18,000	£4,000

Leave to Call an Associate Minister to the Lucan/Liffey Valley scheme was given to the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Appropriate Ministerial Minimum €5,000

LEAVE TO CALL UNDER REVIEWABLE TENURE

Portavogie:

- (a) Stipend £13,500 (2003), Expenses £5,500
- (b) the appointment to be reviewed and/or terminated:
 - (i) five years from the date of installation OR
 - (ii) in such circumstances as the Union Commission and Presbytery plan an alternative pattern of distribution of ministry for the congregation or local congregations.

Newington:

Stipend £11,200 (2003); Expenses £4,370

The appointment will be reviewed after 5 years.

Following the review, the position will either be continued under Reviewable Tenure, Terminated, or the Reviewable Tenure provisions will be deemed to have lapsed (ie the position will be that of a normal ministry).

LEAVE TO CALL SUSPENDED

Clones, Ballyhobridge, Stonebridge and Newbliss: Following a period when a Call was not issued and in view of further vacancies in the Presbytery of Monaghan, Leave to Call was suspended to facilitate discussions with the Presbytery about the whole future of ministry in the area.

CONGREGATIONS UNITED

The following congregations were united under the terms set out below.

Mosside and Toberdoney

1. That the congregations of Mosside and Toberdoney be united as from 1st June 2002.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a minister, the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The stated services shall be Toberdoney 10.45 am and Mosside 12.00 noon, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting as one Kirk Session shall determine.
6. The Call Figures and Initial Ministerial Expenses shall be as follows:
Toberdoney: Stipend £7,500 and Expenses £2,000
Mosside: Stipend £13,500 and Expenses £4,500
7. Holiday Supplies, Telephone Rental and Business Calls, Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance and Repair of the Manse will be borne in the proportions Toberdoney 2/5 and Mosside 3/5.
8. The Minister shall reside in the Toberdoney Manse.
9. The General Assembly's guidelines shall apply to the Mosside Manse.

Ballycastle and Croaghmore

1. That the congregations of Ballycastle and Croaghmore be united as from 1st June 2002.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a minister, the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The stated services shall be Croaghmore 10.00 am and Ballycastle 11.30 am and 7.00 pm, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting as one Kirk Session shall determine.
6. The Call Figures and Initial Ministerial Expenses shall be as follows:
Croaghmore: Stipend £4,000 and Expenses £1,600

Ballycastle: Stipend £17,000 and Expenses £4,900

7. Holiday Supplies, Telephone Rental and Business Calls, Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance and Repair of the Manse will be borne in the proportions Croaghmore 1/3 and Ballycastle 2/3.
8. The minister shall reside in the Ballycastle Manse.

Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo

1. That the congregations of Irvinestown, Pettigo and Tempo be united as from 1st July, 2002.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a minister, the three congregations shall act as one congregation and the three Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The stated services shall be (a) Irvinestown, 11.00 am (b) Pettigo, 12.30 pm (c) Tempo, 9.45 am or at such other times as the three Kirk Sessions acting as one Kirk Session shall determine.
6. That the Stipends be (a) Irvinestown, £11,000 (2002); (b) Pettigo, £5,200 (2002); (c) Tempo, £2,600 (2002) and Initial Ministerial expenses per annum Irvinestown, £3,700; (b) Pettigo, £1,750; (c) Tempo, £700. Holiday Supplies, Manse, Telephone Rental and Business Calls to be born in the following proportions (a) Irvinestown, 50%, (b) Pettigo, 35%, (c) Tempo, 15%.
7. That Rent, Rates and Taxes and Maintenance of Irvinestown and Pettigo Manse to be borne in the proportions Irvinestown, 45% (b) Pettigo, 45% (c) Tempo, 10%.
8. The Minister shall reside in the Irvinestown and Pettigo Manse

Cloughey and Portaferry

1. That the congregations of Cloughey and Portaferry be united as from 16 October 2002.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finance.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The Stated Services shall be (a) Cloughey at 12.00pm (b) Portaferry at 10.30am, or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends for 2002 be (a) Cloughey £9,400 (b) Portaferry £7,700 and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) Cloughey £2,915 (b) Portaferry £2,385. Holiday Supplies, Telephone Rental and Business Calls, Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Cloughey Manse to be borne in the proportions Cloughey 55%, Portaferry 45%.
7. That the Minister shall reside in Cloughey Manse.
8. That the directions of the Union Commission be observed in connection with Portaferry Manse Fund.

Cladymore and Tassagh

1. That the congregations of Cladymore and Tassagh be united as from 18 February, 2003.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The Stated Services shall be (a) Cladymore 12.00 noon (and occasionally at 7.30pm) (b) Tassagh 10.30am or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends be (a) Cladymore £8,500 (2003) (b) Tassagh £8,500 (2003) and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) Cladymore £2,500 (b) Tassagh £2,500. Holiday Supplies, Manse Telephone Rental and Business Calls, to be borne in the proportions (a) Cladymore 50% (b) Tassagh 50%.
7. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Cladymore Manse be borne in the proportions (a) Cladymore 50% (b) Tassagh 50%.
8. That the Minister shall reside in Cladymore Manse.
9. That the directions of the Union Commission be observed concerning Tassagh Manse Fund.

Kells and Ervey

1. That the congregations of Kells and Ervey be united as from 18 February 2003.
2. Each congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and Finances.
3. Each congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the Superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister the two congregations shall act as one congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The Stated Services shall be (a) Kells 9.45am (b) Ervey 12 noon or at such other times as the two Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends be (a) Kells €1,950 (2003) (b) Ervey €2,800 (2003) and Initial Ministerial Expenses per annum (a) Kells €700 (b) Ervey €1,000. Holiday Supplies, Manse, Telephone Rental and Business Calls, to be borne in the proportions (a) Kells 40% (b) Ervey 60%.
7. That Rent, Rates, Taxes and Maintenance of Kells Manse be borne in the proportions (a) Kells 40% (b) Ervey 60%.
8. That the Minister shall reside in Kells Manse.

UNIONS DISSOLVED

Faughanvale and Gortnessy:

The Union was dissolved with effect from 18th February, 2003.

Drogheda and Ervey:

The Union was dissolved with effect from 18th February, 2003.

TERMS OF UNION VARIED

Cargycreevy and Loughaghery:

Shared expenses (including Manse maintenance) changed from 50%/50% to Loughaghery 70%, Cargycreevy 30%.

REVIEWS

The financial arrangements in many congregations continue to be kept under review by the Commission. This may be part of the terms of Leave to Call or because of the requirement to review after seven years of ministry, or because of special circumstances that have arisen where it is not appropriate simply to apply the Tyrone Memorial mechanism, or because of the need to review a Leave to Call where a congregation has been slow to call a Minister. This volume of work is co-ordinated by the Review Sub-Committee, under its Conveners Mr J B Hutcheson and Rev T J McCormick. The Commission is grateful for the work done by Mr W Alexander in helping to set up the Committee and in seeing it through its first period of operation. There follows a summary of the main reviews agreed by the Commission:

Garnerville:	Review in 2003
Gilnahirk:	Stipend for 2002 £25,600 and review in 2003
Ballyclare:	Request to congregation to move to Tyrone Memorial with stipend of £29,000 for 2002
Greenisland:	Stipend for 2002 £23,500 and further review in 2003
Burnside:	Stipend for 2002 £17,500, Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2003
New Row, Coleraine:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2002 Church Committee reminded that expenses were originally set at £6,000.
Alt:	Arrears due to Minister for 2001 to be paid immediately. Stipend for 2002, £2,250 and expenses £675 and further review in 2003.
2nd Castlederg:	Stipend for 2002 £15,000, expenses £5,700 and further review in 2003.
Magheramason:	Stipend for 2002 £20,100 and further review in 2003.
1st Comber:	Stipend for 2002 £26,500 and further review in 2003.
2nd Dromara:	Stipend for 2002 £13,300 and further review in 2003.
Magheragall:	Stipend for 2002 £15,000 and further review in 2003.
Abbey Dublin:	Stipend 2002 €11,500

Gilford:	Stipend for 2002 £6,500 and further review in 2003
Kilkeel:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002
1st Antrim:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002
High Street, Antrim:	Stipend for 2002 £24,600 and Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2003
Kilbride:	Stipend for 2002 £26,600 and further review in 2003
Dungannon:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002
Pomeroy:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002
Sandholes:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002
Ballyhenry:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2002, with base of £23,000. Review when 2004 figures become available.
Glengormley:	Stipend for 2002 £26,800 with further review in 2003
Lowe Memorial:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2002. No further review
Bloomfield:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2002. No further review
Conlig:	No review until 2002 figures available
Ballygrainey:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002 with base of £18,200. No further review
Trinity Bangor:	Tyrone Memorial applies from 1st January 2002 with base of £25,000
Wellington Street, Ballymena:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2003. Review 2005
Kells, Ballymena:	Tyrone Memorial to apply from 1st January 2002. No further review

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Where financial support of ministers was necessary because of sickness, redundancy, resignation or other special circumstances, special arrangements were made.

RESTRICTED LIST

The Commission continues to apply the following rules and it is the responsibility of the individual minister to apply for an extension.

- A. The name of a minister shall be removed from the list of eligible ministers (Code Par 193(1)(e) after two years, unless the minister concerned applies for and is granted an extension by the Union Commission.
- B. When the Union Commission is not meeting on a monthly basis:
- (a) The Convener may grant an extension of up to two months, in consultation with the Clerk of Assembly.
 - (b) The Allocation Committee may place a new applicant on the restricted list.

MANSES

First Ahoghill and Ballyronev were given permission to demolish their existing Manses and to erect new manses on the same sites.

Seaview, Faughanvale and Drogheda were given permission to sell their existing manses and buy new manses.

Ballygomartin, Kilkenny, Irvinestown and First Castleberg were given permission to let their Manses during their vacancies.

Mosside was given permission to sell the Manse on the understanding that the capital will be used in accordance with the Manse Guidelines and no restrictions are found in the Deeds.

Killead was given permission to use up to a maximum of one half of an acre of Glebe for part of site for new Church Hall, on the understanding that the minister will be financially compensated annually for the reduction in glebe.

Second Donegore was given permission to sell the property which has been a temporary Manse for ten years, the intention being that proceeds are to be immediately used to purchase a new Manse.

Kilmacrennan was given permission to sell the present Manse field, which is Glebe land, and replace it with a field beside the Church, providing certain conditions are met.

2nd Saintfield was given permission to sell the Manse Lands Investment and devote the proceeds in full to upgrading their manse.

Representatives of the Manses Committee sought to be of assistance to the Foyle Presbytery in resolving issues in connection with Dungiven Manse, which is occupied by the Minister of Dungiven and Largy.

ENNISKILLEN BEQUEST

The Commission approved a new set of arrangements concerning the Gamble Bequest. This trust requires the Trustees to pay the income from the Bequest to the Minister.

**ASSESSMENTS ON FULLY CONSTITUTED CHURCH EXTENSION
CHARGES — 2003**

Under Par. 234 (3)(a) of the Code

	<i>Fully Constituted</i>	<i>Families (†)</i>	<i>Assess 2003 £</i>	<i>Spec. Sources £</i>	<i>Income £</i>
Tullycarnet	1990	221 (151)	227	36,214	59,292
Downshire	1993	255 (187)	281	52,639	74,959
Lisnabreen	1993	255 (160)	240	40,177	58,702
Scrabo	1994	249 (159)	239	47,700	72,714
Burnside	1995	176 (147)	221	56,046	116,368
Movilla	2001	217 (177)	266	41,055	60,649

† Families contributing at least £5.00 per annum

ASSESSMENTS ON CHURCH EXTENSION CHARGES — 2003

<i>Church</i>	<i>Spec.</i>						
	<i>Building £</i>	<i>Srs. £</i>	<i>Stip. £</i>	<i>C.M.F. £</i>	<i>Ch. Ext £</i>	<i>H.M. £</i>	<i>Total £</i>
New Mossley*	2,249	14,796	3,699	1,775	1,184	740	7,398
Ballysally*	6,336	26,986	6,746	3,238	2,159	1,349	13,492
Strathfoyle*	4	2,100	252	126	84	50	512
Taughmonagh	—	17,142	5,143	2,571	1,714	1,029	10,457

* Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 2003

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £13,275 from 1st January, 2003 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

FIRST YEAR — From 1st January, 2003

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Hamilton Road, Bangor	N. S. R. Lockhart†	09.06.02	35,541 (30%)	11,013	2,964
1st Lurgan	D. S. Henry*	16.06.02	24,018 (25%)	s/a 3,306	10,971
Harmony Hill	B. McCroskery†	02.06.02	30,384 (30%)	9,466	4,511
Glengormley	P. Linkens*	07.06.02	26,799 (30%)	8,541	5,736

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance s/a Special Arrangement

LICENTIATES — 2003

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £13,275 from 1st January, 2003 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

SECOND YEAR — From 1st January, 2003

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Wellington Street	C. Grant*	03.06.01	30,201 (30%)	9,561	4,716
Newcastle	D. Murphy‡	12.06.98	28,566 (30%)	s/a 5,000	8,275
* Married House Allowance	‡ No House Allowance		s/a Special Arrangement		

LICENTIATES — 2003

Licentiates are paid 75% of the ministerial minimum = £13,275 from 1st January, 2003 plus House Allowance p.a. (single — £702; married — £1,002) if applicable. House Allowance is shared equally between the Congregation and C.M.F.

THIRD YEAR — From 1st January, 2003

<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Date of Licensing</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>Congregations Contribution</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Dundonald	L. H. Eagleson †	15.06.00	36,102 (30%)	11,182	2,795
Malone	Dr. M. Jones †	18.06.00	30,180 (30%)	9,405	4,572
Mourne	C. W. A. Martin *	16.06.00	43,392 (30%)	13,519	758
Joymount	C. K. McDowell *	18.06.00	27,873 (30%)	8,863	5,414

* Married House Allowance † Single House Allowance

ORDAINED ASSISTANTS — 2003

From 1st January, 2003

<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Congregation</i>	<i>Date of Ord.</i>	<i>Ministers Stipend</i> £	<i>% Min.</i>	<i>Salary</i> £	<i>House Allow.</i> £	<i>Total</i> £	<i>Cong. Cont.</i> £	<i>C.M.F.</i> £
Marlene Taylor	Cooke Centenary	11.01.85	21,504	100	17,700	1,002	18,702	9,640	9,062
Christina Bradley	Rosemary	23.02.86	27,411	100	17,700	1,002	18,702	12,151	6,551
D. Kiarie	2nd Ballyeaston		26,628	100	17,700	—	17,700	11,317	6,383
C. Ebbinghaus	High Kirk, Ballymena	22.06.02	44,088	100	17,700	1,002	18,702 s/a	2,000	16,702

s/a Special Arrangement

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS 2003

Name	Congregation	Salary		House Allowance Paid £	Annual Assessment Recovery £
		Paid £	Recovery £		
S. Calder from 11.09.02	Hamilton Road, Bangor	18,144.00	14,660.40	2,000.00	611.53
G. Kennedy	First Bangor	17,700.00	12,627.60	1,500.00	351.79
Ian Carton	West Church, Bangor	20,000.00	14,770.40	2,000.00	1,697.29
M. Henderson	Shore Street	17,700.00	11,505.00	2,000.00	351.79
C. Burcombe	Greenwell Street	17,700.00	11,505.00	2,000.00	351.79
D. Montgomery	Knock	20,600.00	20,600.00	0.00	2,048.29
D. N. Gray	Belmont	19,470.00	13,509.60	2,000.00	1,387.24
H. E. Lewis	Bloomfield	17,700.00	11,505.00	1,500.00	351.79
J. Peacock	Newtownbreda	17,700.00	11,761.20	2,499.00	351.79
C. Glover	Stormont	20,000.00	16,700.00	0.00	1,697.29
D. J. McCarthy	Orangefield	20,604.00	14,409.00	2,000.00	2,050.63
M. Gibson	Westbourne	17,700.00	s/a 7,839.00	2,000.00	351.79
C. A. Reid	Glinahirk	17,700.00	11,505.00	2,000.00	351.79
A. V. Stewart from 30.06.02	McQuiston Memorial	17,700.00	11,505.00	2,000.00	351.79
B. D. Colvin	Ballyclare	17,949	11,849.40	2,000.00	497.45
R. J. Montgomery	1st Carrickfergus	19,308	18,454.80	1,500.00	1,292.47
M. N. Davidson	First Antrim	17,700	11,842.80	1,500.00	351.79
K. McCrory from 01.02.03	Lucan-Liffey Valley	€ 29,178	19,451.85	€ 0.00	€ 0.00

s/a Special Arrangement

PERSONNEL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

EXTRA-PAROCHIAL WORK

1. Eight ministers, having obtained prior Presbytery approval, were given permission for extra-parochial work of no more than six hours per week. To assist ministers and Presbyteries with compliance of Par 73(d) the Extra-Parochial Work pro-forma issued through Presbytery Clerks should be returned annually to the Committee Convener at the earliest opportunity and normally prior to the commencement of such work.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

2. The 2003 recommendations for travel expenses were set according to an established formula for a car of 1400cc. From our most recent survey the average "business" mileage in Northern Ireland is 12,874 miles and in the Republic of Ireland 14,423 miles. The standing costs attributable to private motoring have also been factored in.

N Ireland £4,740 (2002: £4,680) RI €7,200 (2000: €6,856)

These figures are only average figures issued for the guidance of Congregational Committees. They cover only motoring costs, and should not be automatically and universally applied as the appropriate amount for each minister.

INADEQUATE EXPENSES GRANT SCHEME

3. Applications for grants towards inadequate expenses in the year 2001 were approved for 20 ministers. The total grants paid amounted to £36,775.02, compared to £37,023.09 in the previous year.

The Committee appreciates the diligence of Ministers, Congregational Treasurers and Presbytery Clerks/Finance Conveners in supplying the relevant information and authorisations with the application forms (which are due after the March Presbytery meetings).

4. The recommended limits for 2003 claims under this scheme are as follows:

N Ireland £5,000 (2002: £4,900) RI €7,500 (2002: €7,200)

SUPPLY FEES

5. In pursuance of Par 238(3), as amended in 2000, the supply fee for the year 2003 will be NI £72 or RI €114, with NI £48 or RI €76 for a single service supply. This is a minimum figure and does not include travelling expenses, which should be paid in "accordance with the rates for travel by car fixed for attendance at Assembly Boards, or be based on second class rail or bus fares." Par 238 (4). Currently this rate is 12p or 20 cents per mile.

Presbyteries should ensure that atypical circumstances do not give rise to unfair anomalies in these matters.

ADDITIONAL PASTORAL PERSONNEL

6. Proposals for additional pastoral personnel appointments by congregations are showing no signs of declining. Applications were considered and approved for 22 appointments, which is on a par with last year.

7. The Committee strongly urges congregations considering the appointment of additional pastoral personnel to take the fullest cognizance of relevant and informed legal and personnel guidance.

8. In attempting to support congregations and affirm the work of additional pastoral personnel the Committee set up a Working Group to consult widely. This Working Group has benefited from perspectives offered by other “partners”, such as the Board of Studies and Christian Training, Union Theological College including the Magee Institute, the Youth Board, as well as representatives of the Board of Finance and Administration and the Personnel Office. Consideration has been given to advising and preparing congregations for such appointments, as well as the assessment, support and training needs of additional pastoral personnel.

9. Whilst more detailed analysis is required the Working Group is confident that a coherent strategy can be developed which would more fully support congregations and additional pastoral personnel in their strategic roles.

10. It must be stressed that Presbyteries have an integral role to play throughout the process, including the endorsement of such personnel before appointment. The 1997 Guidelines (*p 57 1997 Annual Reports*) still provide a useful reference.

COLIN McCLURE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the CMF be authorised to pay grants towards expenses incurred by ministers in congregations, up to a limit of NI £5,000 or RI €7,500 for ministers residing in the Republic of Ireland, within the terms of resolution 3, p 70 General Assembly Minutes 1988.
3. That the Personnel and Planning Committee, in consultation with other relevant Boards and agencies, continue to facilitate discussions concerning the optimum means of employing, and supporting work of, additional pastoral personnel within our congregations; and that a co-ordinated strategy be formulated for wider discussion and implementation.
4. That the Union Commission with its associated working Committee be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 128 of the Code as follows:

MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on the 2nd day of June, 2003.

The Memorial of the Kirk Session of Macrory Memorial Presbyterian Church Respectfully Showeth:

That there has been population movement out of its district; that many of the remaining active members live beyond its parish bounds; that the congregation is now vacant, and that there are other Presbyterian churches in the neighbourhood;

That it is the considered opinion of the Kirk Session that the work and witness of the Presbyterian Church in that area could be carried out in a more effective and efficient way if the congregation were amalgamated with another congregation;

Memorialists therefore pray your Venerable Assembly to ask the Union Commission to consider this matter and to bring proposals to the General Assembly in 2004 for a suitable amalgamation to take place in 2005;

And Memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Adopted by the Kirk Session at its meeting on 23rd February, 2003 and transmitted to the Presbytery of North Belfast.

L E CARROLL, Interim Moderator
W J A CRAWFORD, Clerk of Session

Licensed by the Presbytery of North Belfast at its meeting in New Mossley on 4th March, 2003 and transmitted to the Synod of Belfast with the recommendation that its prayer be granted.

I McDONALD, Moderator
C MORRISON, Clerk

Transmitted by the Synod of Belfast at its meeting in Townsend Street on 11th March, 2003 with the recommendation that its prayer be granted.

R J T McMULLAN, Moderator
W D F MARSHALL Clerk

* * * * *

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet at Belfast on the 2nd day of June, 2003.

The Memorial of the Presbytery of East Belfast Respectfully Showeth:

That in an age when tied houses are considered a liability by most professions and employers, Manses, being no longer regarded as a benefit in kind, may not always best serve the Church's purposes or best interest.

It therefore prays your Venerable Court to establish an ad hoc committee of the Assembly to investigate the matter of Ministers being allowed to purchase their own house in place of a manse, and report to the General Assembly 2004.

And Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Adopted at its meeting of 4th March, 2003 and transmitted to the Synod of Belfast.

J H McINTYRE, Moderator
JOHN McVEIGH, Clerk

Licensed by the Synod of Belfast at its meeting in Townsend Street on 11th March, 2003 and transmitted with the recommendation that its prayer be granted.

R J T McMULLAN, Moderator
W D F MARSHALL, Clerk

REPORTS OF SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES

SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN

The **SYNOD OF ARMAGH AND DOWN** report that the Rev M A Barry, BA, BD, DMin, is their Moderator, and that their next meeting is appointed to be held in Church House, Belfast, during the General Assembly.

The **ARDS PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W J Parkes, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev John Trevor Williamson, BA, BD, PGCE, demitted his charge as Minister of Glastry on 5th September, 2002, having received and accepted a call from the congregations of Urney and Sion and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; that the Rev William James Todd, BSc, having presented credentials from the Ballymena Presbytery was installed as minister of Second Newtownards on 26th June 2002; that the Rev Peter Clarke Lyle, BEd, BD, having presented credentials from the Coleraine Presbytery was installed as minister of Ballyholme on 2nd September 2002; that the Rev David John Steele, BD, MTh, was ordained and installed to missionary service on 28th June, 2002; that the Rev Stephen Charles Calder, BSc, BD, DipMin, was inducted as associate minister in Hamilton Road on 11th September, 2002; that Mr Barry John McCroskery was licensed on 2nd June, 2002 and furnished with credentials to the Dromore Presbytery; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Rev D McKee, BD, the Rev C D Mawhinney, BD, Rev D M Spratt, ALCM, BEd, DipTh; as a licentiate Mr N Lockhart; as students, P Jamieson, C W P Kennedy, A Best, J W D Rogers, Nigel Craig, Colin Dickson; that they have visited the congregations of Millisle and Ballycopeland, Trinity, Greyabbey and Conlig; and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

The **ARMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J A Curry, MEng, BD, is their Moderator; that the Very Rev John Girvan, BA, DD, died on 21st August, 2002; that the Rev R B Thompson, BA, minister of Cladymore, resigned his charge on 14th September, 2002, having accepted a call to the congregations of Armoyn and Ramoan and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that they ordained and installed Mr S D Finlay, LLB, MDiv, on 26th September, 2002 as minister of the congregations of Redrock and Druminnis upon his presentation of credentials from the Presbytery of Down; that they

furnished Mr W J M Parker, BSc, MDiv, a licentiate of the Presbytery, with credentials to the Presbytery of Iveagh, upon his acceptance of a call to the congregations of Castlewellan and Leitrim; that they furnished the Rev W A Shaw, BD, a minister without charge, with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that Mr D S Henry, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry and was received as a Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery; that they have under their care as a student for the ministry Mr Mervyn Lindsay; that during the year they consulted the congregations of First Keady, Armaghbreague and Moy; that the Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Credentials

Under care
Consulted

The **DOWN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev T W Gordon, BA, BD, PGCE, is their Moderator; that the Rev B C G Black, BSSc, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Monaghan, was installed in Ballygowan on Friday, 8th March, 2002; that the Rev T I Harte, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast, was installed in Trinity Church, Boardmills, on Friday, 22nd March, 2002; that the Rev M Casement, MA, MDiv, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of East Belfast, was installed in Second Saintfield on 6th December, 2002; that the Mr S D Finlay, LLB, MDiv, a licentiate, having received a call from Redrock and Druminnis, was furnished with credentials to the Armagh Presbytery on 10th September, 2002; that they have under their care as a minister without charge the Rev R N Stewart, BA, BD; that the Rev D Stanfield, BA, BD, a minister without charge, was transferred from the Presbytery of North Belfast, received by the Presbytery of Down on 1st October, 2002 and placed under its care; that they have under their care as students for the ministry, Samuel Newell, and Leslie Patterson; that during the year no congregational consultations were carried out; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Installed

Credentials
Under care

Consulted

The **DROMORE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev W J Henry, BSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev D McConaghy, BA, minister of Loughaghery and Cargycreevy retired on 30th April, 2002; that the Rev H W Mullan, BA, BD, minister of Drumbo, having received a call from the congregations of Drumreagh and Dromore, demitted his charge on 6th February, 2003 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Route; that the Rev S P Swinn, BA, BTh, PhD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Melbourne East, Australia, was installed as Chaplain to HM Forces on 3rd September, 2002; that the Rev J Brackenridge, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Templepatrick, was installed to the pastoral oversight of First Lisburn congregation on 28th November, 2002; that Mr C Ebbinghaus, BSc, Licentiate Assistant in Harmony Hill, having received a call to become Ordained Assistant in High Kirk, Ballymena, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena on 5th March, 2002; that Miss C Reid, LLB, BD, PGDM, Licentiate Assistant in Railway Street, having received a call to become the Associate

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Credentials

Minister of Gilnahirk congregation, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast on 5th March, 2003; that Mr S J Richmond, BD, MSc, Licentiate Assistant in Hillsborough, having received a call from the Home Board to become minister of the congregations of Donegal and Ballyshannon, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Donegal on 5th September, 2002; that Mr N S R Lockhart, LLB, DipMin, was licensed as a probationer for the Christian ministry on 9th June, 2002 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that they have under their care as students for the ministry, Mr Michael Anderson, Mr Michael McClenahan, Mr Colin McKibbin; that during the year they held Consultations with the congregations of Hillsborough and Magheragall; and that Financial Statements are being published separately by each congregation.

Licensed

Under care

Consulted

The **IVEAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R M Murray, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev W J M Parker, BSc (Econ), MDiv, PGDM, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh, was Ordained and Installed as Minister in Castlewellan and Leitrim on 6th September, 2002; that they have under their care as a minister without charge (retired) the Rev E G McAuley, BA, BD, MSc; that during the year they consulted with the congregations of Drumgooland, Kilkinamurry and Newcastle; and that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Installed

Under care

Consulted

The **NEWRY PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J K A McIntyre, MSc, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev B McMillen, BA, resigned as Minister of Warrenpoint and Rostrevor on 12th September, 2002, having received a Call from the congregation of Raloo and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Carrickfergus; that Mr D S Henry was licensed on 16th June, 2002 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Armagh; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Mr C W A Martin, BSc, MDiv, and as a Student for the Ministry Mr R C Kerr, that during the year they held Consultations with the congregations of Mourne, Bessbrook and Tyrone's Ditches; and that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Licensed

Under care

Consulted

SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

The **SYNOD OF BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE** report that the Rev D Clarke, LLB, BD, is their Moderator and that their next meeting will be held in Church House, Belfast, on Thursday, 5th June, 2003.

The **BALLYMENA PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev S W Dickinson, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev M G Evans, BA, senior minister of West Church, died on 25th April, 2002; that the Rev Dr T C Ballentine, MPhil, BD, PhD, DipSCOT, retired from the duties

Died

Retired

of the active ministry in Grange, on 31st December, 2002; that the Rev W J Todd, BSc, resigned his charge as minister of Killymurriss on 25th June, 2002, having received and accepted a call from Second Newtownards, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that Mr C Ebbinghaus, BSc, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore, was ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry and appointed to an Assistant Ministry in High Kirk on 2nd June, 2002; that Mr C K McDowell, BA, MDiv, DipTh, PGDM, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Carrickfergus, was ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry and installed as Minister of Killymurriss on 28th February, 2003; that the Rev W S Marrs, BSc, BD, Executive Secretary of the General Assembly's Overseas Board, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast on 10th September, 2002; that they have under their care as a Licentiate Dr C A Grant, MA, LLM, MDiv, PhD; that they have under their care as a Student for the Ministry, Mr J E Sloan, BA; that the congregations of Harryville and Ballykeel were visited; and that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Resigned

Ordained

Installed

Credentials
Under care

Visited

The **CARRICKFERGUS PRESBYTERY** report that their Moderator is Rev J P Moxen, BA, BTh; that on 11th September, 2002 Rev G L McAadoo, BA, BD, MTh, retired as Minister of First Larne; that on 30th August, 2002 Rev N M Williamson, BA, BD, MTh, LTCL, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast, was installed as Minister of Magheramore; that on 13th September, 2002 Rev B McMillen, BA, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Newry, was installed as Minister of Raloo; that on 4th February, 2003 Mr C K McDowell, BA, MDiv, a Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ballymena, having received a call to be Minister of Killymurriss; that they have under their care as Minister without Charge Rev D R Byers, BA, DipTh and as a Student for the Ministry Miss H M Rendell; that during the year they conducted a consultation in the Congregation of Ballyclare and that the Financial Statements of the congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Installed

Credentials

Under care

Consulted

The **COLERAINE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev John Coulter, BD, is their Moderator; that on 29th May, 2002 the Rev John Cecil Parke, MA, Senior Minister of New Row Congregation, Coleraine died; that on 30th September, 2002 the Rev Alexander McMullan Kerr, BA, Minister of Aghadowey and Crossgar Congregations, retired from the duties of the active ministry; that on 1st September, 2002 the Rev Peter Clarke Lyle, BEd, BD, Minister of Ringsend and Second Dunboe Congregations demitted his charge having accepted a Call to become Minister of Ballyholme congregation, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Ards; that on 20th April, 2002, the Rev John Duncan Woodside, BAg, MSc, BD, was installed as Minister of Ballywillan Congregation, having presented credentials from the

Died

Retired

Resigned

Installed

Under care Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that they have under their care as ministers without charge the Revs William James Morrison, BA and John Douglas Mark, MA, BD, that they have under their care as students for the ministry Darran Basil McCorriston, John Emerson McDowell and Philip Bolton; and that they Financial Statements of congregations are being printed separately.

The **ROUTE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R B Thompson, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev R F S Poots, OBE, BA, BD, MA, DD, retired as Deputy Clerk of Assembly on 31st August, 2002; that the Rev E J Hyndman, MA, demitted his charge of Roseyards on 12th December, 2002, having received a call from Seaview, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that on 15 September, 2002, the Rev R B Thompson, BA, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh, was installed at Armoy and Ramoan; that on 14th December, 2002, the Rev N E Dorrans, BSc, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Donegal, was installed at Ballycastle and Croaghmore; that on 7th February, 2003 the Rev H W Mullan, BA, BD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore, was installed at Dromore and Drumreagh; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge the Rev V Dobbins, CB, MBE, MA, MTh, PhD, DD; and as a student for the Ministry Mr G Chestnutt; that during the year they visited the congregations of Bushvale, and Toberkeigh; that the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

The **TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R L Brown is their Moderator; that Rev F J Kelly (2nd Randalstown) died on 20 August, 2002; that on 30th September, 2002, the Rev T Pollock, DipTh, BTh, Minister of First Randalstown and Duneane retired from the active duties of the ministry; that on 27th November, 2002, Rev J Brackenridge, BA, BD, Minister of Dundrod demitted his charge, having received and accepted a call from First Lisburn and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dromore; that on 6th September, 2002, the Rev W D Patton, BSSc, BD, PhD, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of South Belfast, was installed as Minister of O C Randalstown; that during the year they held consultations with First Antrim and Second Randalstown; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being printed separately.

SYNOD OF BELFAST

The **SYNOD OF BELFAST** report that the Rev M R Patterson OBE, BA, BD, DD, MSW, is their Moderator; that the next stated meeting of Synod will be held by commission in Townsend Street, at 10.00 am on 9th March, 2004.

The **NORTH BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Ian Kenneth McDonald, BSc, DipTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev Cosmo Alexander Morwood Meldrum, MBE, CD, TD, HCF, BA, LL.M, PhD, JP, died on 16th October, 2002; that the Rev Desmond Edwin Kingston Mock died on 22 December, 2002; that the Rev Thomas Irvine Harte, BA, BD, minister in Crumlin Road, resigned his charge on 21 March, 2002, having received a call from the congregation of Trinity, Boardmills and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that the Rev William Graeme Stewart, BA, BD, minister of Ballygomartin resigned his charge on 31 May, 2002, and was received as a minister without charge; that the Rev Robert Love, BA, DipTEFL, minister of Duncairn and St Enoch's, resigned his charge on 22 October, 2002, having received a call from the congregation of Taughmonagh, and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast South; that the Rev Edward Joseph Hyndman, MA, was installed in Seaview on 13 December, 2002, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of Route; that the Rev Lee Henry Eagleson was ordained and inducted as Associate Minister in Carnmoney on 15 January, 2003, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of East Belfast; that Mr Paul Ernest Linkens, BA, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane and was received as a Licentiate; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs C R J Brown (Retired), J S Carson, C I McKnight, W A Shaw, W M Smyth, MP, W G Stewart and F W Vincent; that they have under their care as Licentiates Mr N Patrick and Mr P E Linkens; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Messrs W G Hamilton, W J Hayes and D Laney; that consultations were held with the congregations of Abbots Cross and Glengormley; and that the Financial Reports are being printed separately.

Died
Resigned

Installed
Ordained

Under care

Consulted

The **BELFAST SOUTH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev K N E Newell, BA, BD, MTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev William Kenneth Weir, BA, Senior Minister of May Street, died on 20th October, 2002; that the Rev Dr D C Irwin, BA, BD, Minister of McCracken Memorial retired on 31st January, 2003; that the Rev W D Moore, BA, BD, Minister of Taughmonagh, resigned his charge on 18th March, 2002 on receipt of a call from the Presbytery of Glasgow to work in the Prison Service as a Chaplain and was issued with credentials; that the Rev N M Williamson, BA, BD, MTh, LTCL, resigned as Chaplain to Campbell College on 29th August, 2002, on receipt of a call to Magheramorne and was issued with credentials to the Carrickfergus Presbytery; that the Rev Dr W D Patton, BSSc, BD, Minister of Lowe Memorial Finaghy, resigned his charge on 5th September, 2002 upon receipt of a call from Old Congregation Randalstown and was issued with credentials to the Presbytery of Templepatrick; that the Rev Robert Love, BA, DipTEFL, was installed in Taughmonagh on 23rd October, 2002 having presented credentials from the Presbytery of North Belfast; that the Rev Noel Agnew was

Died

Retired
Resigned

Installed

installed in West Kirk on 31st January, 2003, credentials having been received from the Presbytery of Tyrone; that Dr Mark Jones is a Licentiate under the care of the Presbytery; that the consultation process was completed in Great Victoria Street Congregation; that all congregations are furnishing their own reports.

The **EAST BELFAST PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev J Hastings McIntyre, BSc, BD, DipEd, BA, is their Moderator; that the Rev R Hornby, BA, retired from the active ministry in Mersey Street on 30th June, 2002; that the Rev D R Whitley, BA, BD, DipEd, retired from the active ministry in Kirkpatrick Memorial on 30th September, 2002; that the Rev J Moore Casement, MA, MDiv, resigned as Assistant Minister in Knock on 5th December, 2002, having received a call from the congregation of Second Saintfield, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Down; that on 31st May, 2002 the Rev Richard Ker Graham, BA, BTh, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane and was installed as Minister of Castlereagh Church; that on 20th October, 2002, the Rev William Samuel Marrs, BSc, BD, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ballymena, and was installed as Executive Secretary of the Overseas Board; that on 17th March, 2002 Miss Cheryl A Reid, LLB, BD, PGDM, presented credentials from the Presbytery of Dromore, and was ordained to the Christian Ministry and inducted as Associate Minister in Gilnahirk Church; that on 30th June, 2002 Mr Angus Stewart, MA, DipMin, a Licentiate of the Presbytery, was ordained to the Christian Ministry and inducted as Associate Minister in the congregation of McQuiston Memorial; that on 13th January, 2003, Mr L H Eagleson, BSc, a Licentiate under care of Presbytery, having received a call to be Associate Minister in the congregation of Carnmoney, was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that they have under their care as Ministers without Charge the Revs R A Crooks, MA, W J Harshaw, BEd, BD, Dr E Jamison, BA, MEd, MTh; that Dr Mark Welsh is a Student for the Ministry under the care of the Presbytery; that a consultation was held in the congregation of Cooke Centenary during the year; and that Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH

The **SYNOD OF DERRY AND OMAGH** report that the Rev J L Casement, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that their next Stated Meeting is appointed to be held in Sixmilecross Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, 10th March, 2004, at 2.30 pm.

The **DERRY AND STRABANE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Robert Lyle Craig, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Alexander James Beattie, ACIS, Senior Minister of Moville and

Greenbank, died on 1st March, 2002; that the Rev Andrew Gardiner, BSc, BD, Senior Minister of Moville and Greenbank, died on 18th June, 2002; that the Rev Richard Ker Graham, BA, BTh, demitted his charge as Minister of First Castledearg and Killeter on the 30th day of May, 2002, having received and accepted a call from the congregation of Castlereagh, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of East Belfast; that the Rev Dr Thomas Robert Buick, BSc, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Tyrone, was installed to the pastoral oversight of Carlisle Road and Crossroads Congregations on 4th July, 2002; that the Rev John Trevor Williamson, BA, BD, PGCE, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Ards was installed to the pastoral oversight of Urney and Sion Congregations on 6th September, 2002; that the Rev Dr William John Henning McKee, BA, having presented credentials from the Presbytery of Foyle, was installed to the pastoral oversight of Newtownstewart and Gortin Congregations on 15th November, 2002; that Mr Paul Ernest Linkens, BA, was licensed as a Probationer for the Ministerial Office on 7th June, 2002 and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of North Belfast; that they have under their care as a Minister without Charge Rev John Craig Teeney, BSc, BTh; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr Robert Alexander Campbell, BA, and Mr Nigel John Edward Reid; that the Congregation of Ebrington was visited by way of the Presbytery Consultation Process during the year and that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately.

Died

Resigned

Installed

Licensed

Under care

Consulted

The **FOYLE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev G D Simpson, BTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev James McGregor, BSc, retired from the duties of the active Ministry in the congregation of Donemana on 1st September, 2002; that the Rev Samuel James Gray, BA, BD, retired from the duties of the active Ministry in the congregations of Faughanvale and Gortnessy on 31st December, 2002; that the Rev Dr William John Henning McKee, BA, resigned as minister of Cumber and Upper Cumber Congregations on 14 November, 2002, having received a call from Newtownstewart and Gortin Congregations, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; and the Financial Reports of the congregations are being printed separately.

Retired

Resigned

The **OMAGH PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev R I Abraham, BA, BD, minister of Cavanaleck and Aughtentine is their Moderator; that the Rev B A Hunt, BA, MTh, minister of Irvinestown and Pettigo with Tempo, having received a call from the congregation of Harrogate, demitted his charge on 12 April, 2002 and was furnished with credentials to the United Reformed Church; that they have under their care as a Student for the Ministry Mr David Irvine; that the Consultation process has been initiated in the congregations of Cavanaleck and Aughtentine and Maguiresbridge and Newtownbutler; and that Financial Statements are being printed in booklet form.

Resigned

Under care

Consulted

The **TYRONE PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Adrian McLernon, BA, BD, is their Moderator; that the Rev Hugh Cochrane Conn, BA, died on 18th August, 2002; that the Rev Thomas Robert Buick, BSc, DPhil, resigned his charge as minister of Albany, Brigh and First Stewartstown, on 3rd July, 2002, having received and accepted a call from Carlisle Road and Crossroads, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane; that the Rev Robert Noel Agnew resigned his charge as minister of Bellaghy and Knockloughrim on 30th January, 2003, having received and accepted a call from West Kirk, and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Belfast South; that they have under their care as Students for the Ministry Mr Adrian T S McAlister, BSc, MSc; Mr David Brown and Mr Knox Jones; that during the year they did not visit/consult with any congregation; that the Financial Reports of the Congregations are being published separately.

Died
Resigned

Under care

Consulted

SYNOD OF DUBLIN

The **SYNOD OF DUBLIN** report that the Rev Nancy Cubitt, BA, BD, is their Moderator and that the Synod will meet by Commission at First Castleblayney on 9 March, 2004.

The **DONEGAL PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev James Lamont, BD, MTh, is their Moderator; that the Rev N E Dorrans, BSc, having received a call from the congregations of Ballycastle and Croaghmore, resigned his charge on 13th December, 2002 and was furnished with credentials to the Route Presbytery; that Mr Stephen John Richmond, BD, MSc, having presented credentials as a licentiate from the Presbytery of Dromore, was ordained and installed as minister of the congregations of Donegal and Ballyshannon under the Board of Mission in Ireland on 5th September, 2002; that the congregations of St Johnston and Ballindrait were consulted during the year; that the Financial Statements of the congregations are being published in a Year Book.

Resigned

Installed

Consulted

The **DUBLIN AND MUNSTER PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev Samuel Mawhinney, MB, BCh, BAO, BD, is their Moderator; that there died on 24th November, 2002 Rev Hugh Alexander Hezlett, MB, BCh, BAO, DRCOG, on 27th November, 2002 Rev Samuel Edward Williamson, BA, BAI, and on 7th January, 2003 Rev Samuel Rutherford Watt, BA; that on 19th April, 2002 Rev John Duncan Woodside, BAgr, MSc, BD, resigned his charge at Kilkenny, having received a call to the Congregation of Ballywillan and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Coleraine, that on 26th January, 2003 Rev Daniel Keith McCrory, BSc, BD, was inducted as Associate Minister for church planting in Lucan under the Home Mission; that the Presbytery has under its care as a Minister without Charge, Rev Ruth

Died

Resigned

Inducted

Under care

Gregg, BD, and as a Student for the Ministry, Mrs Karen Campbell; that the Financial Statements of all Congregations are being published separately.

The **MONAGHAN PRESBYTERY** report that the Rev M R Burnside, BSc, is their Moderator; that the Rev J A Fulton, BA, Senior Minister of Corvally, died on 13th November, 2002; that the Rev Florence Taylor, BA, BD, Minister of First Bailieborough, Trinity Bailieborough and Corraneary, retired on 2nd September, 2002; that the Rev D T Moore, MA, BD, Minister of Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount, resigned his charge on 7th March, 2003, having received and accepted a call from Kilkenny and was furnished with credentials to the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster; that they have no students for the ministry under their care; that during the year the congregations of Second Ballybay and Rockcorry were consulted; that the Financial Reports for each congregation are being printed separately.

Died
Retired
Resigned
Consulted

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BUSINESS BOARD

Convener: THE CLERK

1. Two matters arising from last Assembly concerned the Business Board during the year, the first being the perennial problem of lapsed business. It is easy for one or two interesting debates to be unduly protracted, with the result that other items later on the agenda (which may be of equal or even greater importance) are compressed into a few minutes, or lapse to another day.

2. Several suggestions are therefore submitted. As an experiment for this year additional timings have been added to the Order of Business (most of them in brackets indicating that the time mentioned may be anticipated, but not passed). That should provide for a fairer allocation of time for each report; it is better that a few resolutions from one Board should lapse than that another Board should lose its slot altogether. However, the Moderator should have reasonable discretion in the matter, ensuring in particular that the vote on a major issue is not separated from the debate on it.

3. The second suggestion was to issue a reminder that the thanks of the Assembly to retiring conveners, etc should be conveyed only by the Moderator, though the mover or seconder of a report may wish to include a few appropriate remarks in their speech.

4. Resolutions should only be submitted where a decision of the Assembly is required, or where it is felt that some important matter (eg a centenary) should be a matter of record.

5. The Board also considered the "Alternative Presentation" which has now been accepted practice for a number of years. With the advent of modern technology many Boards that are not officially employing the Alternative Presentation are nevertheless using the overhead projector for pictures, etc. However, a business session of the Assembly is primarily for making decisions, and should therefore be different from a rally where promotional material is more appropriate.

6. It was accordingly decided that, as an experiment for this year, all Boards should use the same format, ie that the proposer and seconder of a report should have 17 minutes for this purpose as at present, but that they be free to use this time as they wish, either for conventional speeches, or for interviews, videos, etc.

7. When the Business Board presented its report last year there was a request that some consideration should be given to the question of invitations to distinguished guests to attend the Opening Night. A committee to consider the matter was set up in conjunction with the General Board, whose report on the matter will be found elsewhere in this Blue Book.

8. Attention is drawn to the "Guide to Assembly Procedure" printed in the yellow pages at the front of this volume of Reports. Questions should be written out and lodged in the box provided in good time, and amendments must be written out and lodged at the Clerk's desk before they are spoken to.

9. Those who wish to speak in a debate should come forward in good time and take their place in the row of seats at the front reserved for that purpose.

10. Copies of the Annual Accounts are available to members of Assembly in the Financial Secretary's Office upon request.

Board Membership

11. The Business Board is appointed in accordance with the provisions of Par 275 of the Code to take office on the 15 March preceding the Assembly. The Board for the year 2003-2004 together with the associated Arrangements Committee, is as follows:-

THE CLERK, Convener

- (a) The Moderator, and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, the former Clerks, preceding three Moderators, all Assembly Convener and Secretaries of Commissions and Boards, Financial Secretary, Youth and Information Officers.
- (b) Rev WA Kennedy; W Graham — Rev C Harris; WH Scott — Rev Dr J Harper; W Pentland — Rev SWW Neilly; R Gibson — Rev GE Best; L Ryan — Rev Dr MA Barry; W Grills.
- (c) Rev JJ Andrews; WG McDowell — Rev JW McAuley; N Carmichael — Rev TJ McCormick; P McGonigle — Rev RB Thompson; R Irwin — Rev D Bannerman; TC Younger.
- (d) Rev JR Dickinson; G Crooks — Rev Dr Ruth Patterson; V Elliott — Rev JR Lambe; Miss VJ Wilson.
- (e) Rev Dr R Kane; J Lamberton — Rev TV Mawhinney; T Allen — Rev R Herron; J Cochrane — Rev WT Bingham; S McKinney.
- (f) Rev J Lamont; Mrs E Montgomery — Rev A Mitchell; W McIlreavy — Rev Nancy Cubitt; J Jenkins.

A. ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE (5) Rev TC Morrison, Convener

- (a) The Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator-Designate, Deputy Clerk, Information Officer, Hospitality Secretary, J Kelly; Rev TC Morrison.
- (x) Revs Alan S Thompson, PT Dalzell; D Crowe, M Fisher
- (y) Revs JR Lambe, GE Best, TJ McCormick, R Herron, D Bannerman; Miss VJ Wilson, GY Crooks, WG McDowell.

Other Churches

12. Delegates to the governing bodies of other Churches were appointed as follows:

Presbyterian Church of Wales: Very Rev Dr A W G Brown

Church of Ireland General Synod 2003: Very Rev Dr H A Dunlop, Mr David Colvin

Methodist Conference 2003: Very Rev Dr R I Birney, Mr W Henry

Eglise Réformée de France: Mrs Maureen Patterson

Uniting Church in Australia: Right Rev Ivan McKay

The URC Assembly 2002

Rev Colin McClure reports:

1. The 2002 General Assembly of the United Reformed Church met on 4-8 July, in the historic and striking surroundings of St Andrew's and was hosted for the first time by the church's Synod of Scotland. (The Congregational Union of Scotland and the United Reformed Church confirmed their union in 2000). PCI was represented by the Very Rev Dr Alastair Dunlop, Mrs Anne Dunlop, and myself.

2. At this my third URC Assembly I have again been impressed by the logistical organisation and breadth of business compressed into a few days of this intense, hard-working, residential experience. Delegates have time to chat and eat and in work-shop settings share good practice, raise key issues and hear various aspects of the church's life at home and overseas. The time-table is full, exhilarating and exhausting.

3. Not only is the URC now a church of three nations (Scotland, England and Wales) – it is also their active intent to draw in and learn from the experience of partner churches in the British Isles and beyond. The richness of the personal experience of the URC Assembly for a PCI representative is enhanced by being part of a multicultural group of delegates. It is chastening to fellowship with Christians who have struggled to be Church in the most demanding of contexts eg China, Angola, Cuba, Malawi. The URC commits to real efforts at listening to its partners. The overseas delegates are not only involved in worship but are actively encouraged to participate in debate. For instance, the delegate representing the United Church of Christ USA made a powerful input reflecting upon the national and global implications of "September 11th".

4. Indeed the pervasive characteristic of this denomination and its Assembly is that of inclusiveness. There is a real sense in which "grass roots" issues and contributions are fostered, and the youth delegates (who meet prior to Assembly) were certainly impressively confident. This does mean that debates can be long and sometimes bewildering to outsiders! However the motions "That The Matter Be Not Put" or "The Matter Be Now Put" were constructively used.

5. The business sessions ran through Friday and Saturday (morning and evening) and all day Sunday (beginning with worship at 9 am and concluding some time after 10 pm). The hall was always full with delegates.

6. Most Committees (equivalent to our Boards) only report every other year. Five Synods (there are 13) were given a short slot to present aspects of the work and challenges within their areas. Considerable (and helpful) use was made of PowerPoint during reports and presentations. The emphasis was often as much to do with inspiration as information. Nevertheless the Assembly did not shy away from difficult debates and choices. Throughout the sessions there was a coming to terms with a 50% membership decline over the last 30 years in tandem with a corresponding doubling in the number of ministers. This posed critical resource dilemmas. I was intrigued by the Assembly's emotional struggle over the future of the "National" Youth Centre at Yardley Hastings and the mutual respect shown across the generations and between the viewpoints.

7. The Methodist Church and Church of England have been engaged in a covenant process and the URC have also been involved in a trilateral process with these larger denominations. The URC report on this latter process “*Conversations on the way to Unity*”, was greeted warmly by the Assembly. The URC greatly value this process. An invitation from the Methodist Conference and the Church of England Synod to respond to “*An Anglican-Methodist Covenant*” was unanimously accepted (except for one lone vote among about 500).

8. Ecumenical Bishop for East Cardiff: This “man” would oversee 8 congregations (including three Local Ecumenical Partnerships) in the East Cardiff area. One of the Churches involved in discussions the Presbyterian Church of Wales has decided not to proceed at this stage. The URC Assembly eventually accepted the proposal and encouraged their partners to take steps to make it a reality.

9. However an interesting dilemma emerged for the URC, which is by definition a “uniting” and “inclusive” Church. Because of the sensitivities of some partners, eg the Anglican Church of Wales, the first appointee, according to the proposals, must be male. Several female ministers, for what they described as the “greater good”, supported the scheme. The bishop will most definitely be consecrated, not ordained. The URC obviously regards this rather localised “experiment” as having at least national implications.

10. From a personal perspective a PCI delegate, as a full voting member of the Assembly, can be assured of an intriguing and exhausting adventure. The special relationship and affection we enjoy is often underlined by the several Irish accents encountered during the Assembly asking after this friend or that relative. More important, however, is the value placed upon our partnership with the URC. They are a Church which has steadfastly remained open to us during trying times. The ongoing relationship will continue to be mutually beneficial, instructive and challenging.

The Methodist Conference 2002

Rev David Cupples reports:

1. The 233rd Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland took place in Darling Street Methodist Church, Enniskillen, from Friday, 7th June until Tuesday 11th June, 2002.

2. The opening service was held in Darling Street Church when the Rev W Winston Graham was installed as President of the Methodist Church in Ireland. The theme of the conference was ‘God’s Pilgrim people’.

3. The Presbyterian representatives were Right Rev Dr H Alistair Dunlop, Rev David Cupples and Mr John Henderson.

4. Matters across the whole spectrum of church life were discussed and concerns common to all churches were easy to note – the vital importance of youth work, how to equip the church and church members for mission, how to address the needs of the clergy and full-time lay workers for pastoral care and personal development, how to relate to other churches. Questions of administration and finance were also on the agenda. In all these things there was

robust debate without rancour and evidence of a high degree of trust, respect and commonness of purpose.

5. One issue of great significance was the proposed Covenant between the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland which was debated on the Saturday afternoon. The Rev Dudley Cooney addressed the conference in his role as Co-Chair of the Joint Theological Working Party. He stressed that the Covenant was not the end of the journey but the beginning of one. Both churches will remain as separate entities but closer links will be established at congregational level throughout Ireland. As pilgrims together they would look forward to the time when their ministries could be fully interchangeable and their churches visibly united. The majority of speakers in the debate were in favour of the Covenant though there were some concerns in areas such as episcopacy and the sacraments. The Rev Dudley Cooney responding to the debate stated that they were not being stamped into any agreement. They were not talking about union but about a common-ness of purpose in mission which the world can see. The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority. It will now be for the two churches to work out the implications of this covenant in how local churches work together.

6. Another issue which engaged the Conference deeply was a proposed root-and-branch reorganisation of the whole administrative structure of the Methodist Church. The report came from the General Committee and was called "Connexions". In 1998 the Conference had directed the General Committee to appoint a think-tank to 'dream dreams' regarding the mission of the Methodist Church in Ireland. The report was received in 1999. The document before Conference in 2002 was a set of proposals on how the earlier report could be implemented in the life of the church. Space does not permit a detailed report here but in essence the idea is to streamline and simplify the administrative structures of Irish Methodism both within the local congregation and the denomination so as to facilitate mission. It is very radical and within it the local church is seen as the key to mission. Predictable questions were asked – will the ordinary people catch the vision? Is this growing up from below or is it a grand scheme being foisted on the church? Will these proposals truly be a driving force for mission or in actual fact generate a whole new level of bureaucracy? Two particular concerns which produced much debate were: what degree of commitment is the church being asked to give to these proposals this year? Debate took place over whether the conference was "receiving" or "adopting" the report. An amendment was carried which said the report was received "for the purpose of helping the Conference move from dreams to action". This sustains the forward movement of the proposals without the Conference feeling committed to every jot and tittle of them. A second area of concern was over the proper relationship between leaders and people within local congregations in facilitating change. Some felt the role of the minister was being threatened. The impression was that Connexions was a powerful wave breaking on the shore of Irish Methodism but that it could yet find its force broken on the rocks of a very mixed response from local congregations.

7. The various Conference meetings and rallies were well attended. Given the overall size of the Methodist Church there is a very strong sense of 'family' to an outsider and the impression that everyone knows everyone else

very well, or at least knows of them. This seems to engender strong and warm relationships.

8. The Methodist Church is grappling with exactly the same issues in the same society as the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. It is not afraid to ask really hard questions and to question time-honoured traditions and structures. In this they set us a good example of how everything is negotiable except the gospel itself. We should continue to listen and learn from their experience and pray God's richest blessing upon them.

The Welsh Assembly 2002

Rev W J Orr reports:

1. I am most grateful for the opportunity given to represent the Church with Jenny, my wife, at the meetings of the Welsh General Assembly in Lampeter from 15th – 18th July 2002. We were received with great warmth, hospitality and kindness. A smaller gathering in terms of numbers enables the Welsh Assembly to take over a university college and provide living accommodation, meals and a suitable hall on the one site. This contributed greatly to the sense of fellowship and 'togetherness' of the occasion.

2. The Welsh Church is set in a beautiful country divided to some extent by its rugged topography into north and south, and divided culturally by the very many (particularly in the north) for whom Welsh is the first language and those who speak only English. To understand the Church itself, and the business of the Assembly, it was necessary first to grasp a little of its history, as well as some sense of its current challenges. In origin, this Church was really Calvinist Methodist, acquiring later a degree of Presbyterian polity largely as a result of looking to Scotland as a model for ministerial training. Thirty Presbyteries govern the Church which meets annually in General Assembly, but there is an intermediate layer of three 'Associations': North, South and East. These Associations retain considerable power in the decision making process. The Church refers to itself sometimes as 'the Connexion', and occasionally as 'the old body'. These terms reflect its unique history. Language is also an issue. Most of the debate was in Welsh, with very good simultaneous translation. However, with the North and South Associations being Welsh speaking, but the East Association being English speaking, use and place of language requires constant sensitivity.

3. Significantly declining numbers (to about 40,000 adherents), and a sharp fall in candidates for the ministry, have prompted a bold response. One of the main reports, entitled 'Moving Forward' recommended reducing the Presbyteries from thirty to twelve, and forming one Association out of the current three. This was agreed by General Assembly, but must subsequently be sanctioned by each Association. Debate took place on the need to reduce the number of congregations, many of them very small, and unite groups of them under one ministry. The Assembly has been served by seven boards, an expensive and cumbersome mechanism: it was suggested that the boards be reduced to a total of three.

4. Small numbers of students force the closing of the Church College in Aberystwyth in the Summer of 2003. The Assembly will appoint a 'Training

Officer' to supervise the preparation of students for the ministry as they follow an agreed syllabus, but in different locations and university colleges.

5. As well as the installation of the new moderator, the Rev Meirion Davies, a new General Secretary, the Rev Ifan Roberts was appointed in succession to the Rev Gareth Edwards who goes back into parish life. Personnel at the Assembly also included some young people who had been invited to sit and deliberate. A 'Youth Assembly' had met a few days before the main Assembly, and having studied the reports, had appointed representatives to come with questions or comments. These contributions were made at the rostrum with great self-confidence.

6. This was not a discouraging Assembly, but one facing its challenges with courage. Not only were far reaching structural changes accepted, but steps were taken to establish a unified mission throughout the Church, to plan for the establishment of team ministries, including trained lay people, and to agree a core syllabus shared by other reformed Churches in the training of ministers. But above all, there resides a deep and living spirituality in this Church. It was sensed in the quality of their worship, particularly in the harmony and enthusiasm of that marvellous singing in the Welsh tongue. This spirituality will be the source of the strength needed to meet the challenge of their circumstances in the company and leading of Christ.

7. It was a joy and privilege to be able to bring the greetings of our General Assembly, and to express the hope that, as they have remembered us, we would remember them in an interested and informed way as they continue 'Moving Forward'.

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Transport

1. A complimentary limousine has been provided by Kirkwoods Ltd for the use of the Moderator during the week. A similar facility for the outgoing Moderator on the Monday evening is provided by Houston and Williamson. The thanks of the Assembly is expressed to all concerned.

Communion Service

2. Following a decision of the General Board in October 2002, the Communion Service this year will be held in Church House commencing at **12 noon**.

Catering Arrangements

3. Bread and Cheese lunches will be available at lunch time on Tuesday, with proceeds going to the World Development Appeal as usual. On other days there will not be any lunch time meals or tea/coffee available for sale in the Minor Hall. It is a matter of regret that catering is not available but a number of difficulties such as inadequate kitchen facilities, pressure on space, and health and safety and insurance requirements have combined to make the situation what it is today

Tea/coffee etc will be available for purchase in the Minor Hall – as well as on the Concourse – at the stated coffee breaks.

Voting Cards

4. These should be obtained as soon as possible from the desk at the Carrickfergus Window where they are available on Monday evening/Tuesday morning, after which Members should contact the Financial Secretary's Office.

Admission

5. Admission to the Private Session is only for those who have and show their own voting card. In any vote the Moderator may call for voting cards to be shown and only those displaying their own voting card are eligible to vote.

Expenses

6. All Members may claim a daily allowance but travel expenses cover the cost of only one return journey in the week. Claims should be made on the appropriate form obtainable from the Reception at the Wellington Street entrance. Full details of rates are printed on the form.

COLIN MORRISON, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommended Order of Business be adopted.
3. That the professional amplification controller and the visual display operator be admitted to the private session.
4. That a grant of £15,000 be made from the Incidental Fund to the Arrangements Committee.
5. That the Business Board, with its associated working committee, for the ensuing year beginning 15 March, 2004 be appointed in accordance with Par 275 of the Code.

BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Convener: Rev W A KENNEDY
Secretary: Mr STEPHEN LYNAS

1. During the year the Board of Communications continued its role of encouraging and supporting the work of its various committees. We express thanks to Mr Stephen Lynas for once again maintaining a highly successful media operation on behalf of the Church and to his staff in the Communications Department, Anne McCully and Edward Connolly. They have carried a heavy load this year, and by June we hope that they will have been joined by two additional members of staff.

2. The biggest current project of the Board, the new Hymnal, has reached the exciting early stages of going to print. We thank Rev Jack Richardson and his team for the long hours of work that have gone into this project, which is at the heart of retaining a commonality in the worship of our congregations.

3. The reports of the ad hoc Committee on Priorities have given us cause to reflect on the rationale that lies at the root of the Board. We concluded that “communication” does create an appropriate nexus between the Board’s component parts – communicating through publications, the modern media, worship, appropriate buildings, our Presbyterian history and bookselling.

4. The Reformation was born in the communications revolution that accompanied the invention of printing. We live today in another explosion of information – indeed information overload for many. A Christian Church has something of incalculable value to say to an information hungry and spiritually hungry world. The existence of a strong and well resourced Board of Communications must remain at the core of the Church as we think strategically about how to be, as the Assembly resolved some years ago, “A Church with its mind set on mission.”

5. As such we warmly welcome the proposal of the ad hoc Committee to prioritise the development of “structures to ensure that at all levels the Church communicates effectively, both externally and internally.” We further commend the call “to encourage all relevant Boards and/or committees, within their areas of expertise, to communicate prophetically and explain clearly the Church’s message to our society and the world beyond.”

6. However, in the absence of concrete ideas as to how the above will be realised, we cannot envisage how the proposals as at present formulated could create a satisfactory and workable role for the Board of Communications. A Board reinvigorated to support the mission of the Church through its congregations and agencies requires an enhanced remit.

7. The Board proposes to establish a “Panel on Communications Strategy” chaired by the Clerk of Assembly as a first step in this direction. This Panel would bring together key players within the various Boards and Church House Departments to discuss matters of mutual interest in respect of internal and external communication.

8. The Board has profound misgivings about the proposal to remove the Committee on Public Worship from its supervision. We consider that the Public Worship Committee has responsibilities and a workload which are too significant for it to be subsumed within a "Committee on Resourcing Congregational Life."

9. Whilst agreeing that worship is crucial to the mission of congregations (and some aspects of it are a legitimate concern of the Board of Mission in Ireland), the area of responsibility given to the Public Worship Committee within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland involves, among other things, theological reflection and promoting good practice in all areas of worship, primarily at congregational but also at Presbytery level. As such, its place within the Board of Communications is entirely appropriate. Such patient, reflective and scholarly work would be a diversion for a Board such as the Board of Mission in Ireland, whose calling is to focus on mission.

10. The Board of Communications is entirely aware of the central role played by forms of worship in making congregational life seeker-friendly and plans, after the completion of the new hymnal, to engage with the challenge of resourcing the Church for worship which is both culturally appropriate and theologically grounded in scripture and the Reformed tradition.

11. As worship continues to develop and congregations make use of more and more material from a wide variety of sources, including audio-visual materials, the whole area of copyright continues to be a minefield. Many churches have licenses which allow for the copying of words of songs and music. However there are also copyright issues concerning the use of music from CDs, tapes and videos etc, as well as the showing of videos and DVDs on church property. Congregations should ensure they have the appropriate licenses and agreements in place. Advice is available from the Board's office.

Minister in Recognised Service

Rev Dr Bert Tosh reports:

1. I continue as Senior Producer in the Religious Broadcasting Unit in BBC Northern Ireland. In 2002, we were responsible for the transmission of some 438 hours of programmes on BBC Radio Ulster along with some 14 hours on network radio, plus 3 hours on BBC1 TV.

2. That such a high volume of output is maintained is due, not least, to the willingness of a large number of people - many of them Presbyterians - to take part in discussions, prepare and deliver scripts and agree to conduct worship. With my colleagues in the Unit, I am extremely grateful for their commitment and enthusiasm.

3. The environment in which Religious Broadcasting operates is continually changing. The number of people, particularly under the age of 35 who find institutional religion dissatisfying, the desire to find answers that suit the individual, the willingness to question any sort of authority - these all impinge on what we are trying to do. And while there will always be programmes with reflection and worship at their core, we do have to look at and experiment with fresh ideas and new formats.

4. Sunday Sequence, presented by Rev Dr William Crawley continues to explore that often confusing area where religion, ethics, culture and social issues meet. In June 2002 the programme received two Andrew Cross Awards from the Churches Advisory Council for Local Broadcasting: one for the best response to a news event for the programme on the Sunday following the events of September 11th 2001, the other for a report and short discussion on the "Harry Potter phenomenon."

5. I ceased to be convener of the vacancy of First Lisburn at the end of November 2002, after a vacancy lasting some 20 months. For me it was a useful and very enjoyable experience.

MEDIA COMMITTEE

1. The Committee has sought to fulfil the remit of the Assembly in a number of ways:

2. Religious advisers for TV and radio continue to inform us of developments in broadcast media.

3. Rev Liz Hughes has been appointed as a religious advisor to UTV, succeeding Very Rev Dr John Dunlop. While this is not a church appointment, the committee is pleased to have her acting in this capacity and congratulate her on the appointment.

4. The Irish Churches Council for Television and Radio Affairs hosted a seminar on 3rd April on religious broadcasting and the future, entitled "What do the churches want? What do the public need?" Representatives of the Board and Committee were present.

5. The Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister published a paper concerning the awareness and response to the issue of the digital divide within a Northern Ireland context, highlighting the problem of access to modern information technologies. A written response was made to this document and has been acknowledged by the Director of the Government's Central Information Technology Unit.

6. The need for guidance on Internet Protocols for congregations regarding the use of the Internet, both in terms of access and publishing, was recognised. Guidelines have been produced and are now available from the Information Office.

7. The BBC Charter is due for renewal in 2006. This will present the Church with an opportunity to provide constructive comment on the nature of public broadcasting.

8. The Information Office continues to advise on and deal with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's relationship to the media, circulating over 150 stories per year on Church related issues. A high level of positive coverage in the media should be noted.

9. Media Watch articles continue in the Presbyterian Herald to inform the wider church of current media issues.

C GLOVER, Convener

COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Department

1. Communication is at the very heart of why Christians have been called together to form the community of Jesus Christ. Proclaiming his love and challenge to the surrounding world requires the creative and efficient use of all the resources at our disposal, so that the melody of the Gospel is played distinctly and the trumpet call to action sounds clearly amidst the spiritual chaos of our secular society. Amidst the constant flow of social change, unexpected outcomes of technology and the whims of fashion, as well as the continual development of the words and images new generations use to express their thoughts and ideas, effective communication must keep pace with change in the world around us and even within the church. Thus the five year plan of the Board still continues to focus our thoughts as we consider our whole remit, from the staffing of our department, the effectiveness of our publications and the exploitation of new technologies to make Irish Presbyterians aware of the work of their own church as well as helping them in sharing the message of Christ to the surrounding world.

2. Stephen Lynas still continues to lead his hard working staff in maintaining an excellent service for our Church. Part of our project is to encourage our church to make even more use of their expertise and creativity. We need to consolidate our corporate identity through our publications, advertising, web sites, responses to the media and even the letterheads on our correspondence. We believe our proposal to form a panel across the Boards and agencies of our Church should result in a much more coherent and united presentation of the direction and convictions of our church both within our own fellowship and to the society we are called to serve.

3. It has been encouraging that the work of the department continues to be effective in publicising the United Appeal of our Church. We were also glad that the 'Aids Matters' publicity for the World Development Appeal successfully conveyed the continuing responsibility of our Church's members to be generous to people whose needs can so easily be obscured by prejudice and misunderstanding.

4. Even the best of our publications are useless unless they are distributed. Once again we express our appreciation to the PROP ladies as they make sure the Points for Prayer booklets are circulated amongst our congregations. And we are grateful for all those other folk who take responsibility for the circulation of Irish Presbyterian literature in their own local churches. It is good to note the continued operation of Prayerline, both through the telephone service and on the Web and the addition of the Home Mission Prayer Link.

Presbyterian Herald

5. In spite of the good work of Rev Arthur Clarke and his staff, and the loyalty of its readership, subscription to the Herald continues to decline. The magazine still has a considerable but ageing readership which is not being

augmented from the younger generations of our Church. We consider that the time has come to take a fresh look at our Church's magazine, hoping to retain its present strengths while seeking ways to address the interests of younger age groups. This will be part of our remit for the new session of our work.

R ALAN RUSSELL, Convener

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1. As part of its remit, the Society publishes books and pamphlets on a wide range of historical subjects, particularly relating to Irish Presbyterianism.

2. The Society's programme of events is designed to appeal to a variety of historical interests.

3. We invite all who are interested to visit our room in Church House (Room 2.20), which is on the second floor and is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.00 am – 12.30 pm and Wednesday 10.00 am – 12.30 pm and 1.00 pm – 3.30 pm. Our Assistant Secretary will be pleased to assist members and visitors in whatever way he can. You can visit our website at www.presbyterianireland.org/phsi - our website includes very interesting material concerning the work of the Society.

4. We are presently exploring a variety of initiatives which we hope will help to increase our membership, particularly among younger people.

5. We thank all who support the Society. The Incidental Fund remains a vital source of income. Therefore we express our gratitude to the General Assembly for its generosity.

W J H McKEE, Convener

PUBLIC WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Of necessity, the major task of the Public Worship Committee for the past year has focused on the new hymnal, to be called the Irish Presbyterian Hymnbook. It will contain approximately 660 items of praise and, in the opinion of the committee, gives a good balance of materials to suit all ages and tastes within our denomination. The layout is biblically based, commencing as Genesis does with Creation, and going through the biblical narrative right up to the doctrine of the last things in Revelation. A generous supply of praises under the various subject headings is given and, where appropriate, there is a fair degree of cross-referencing to other subject headings. Indexing has been very much in the minds of the Committee so as to ensure that the hymnal can be conveniently handled. The language is as contemporary as possible and, where gender is a consideration, is inclusive. The better known and most used of the Psalms are presented in the vernacular ie in contemporary language. There is an excellent selection of children's and young people's materials, which doubtless will prove both useful and popular. Plans are underway to have the entire script delivered to the publishers, SCM Canterbury, on Friday 28th March, and it is hoped that

all will be in readiness to have the official launch sometime in the autumn next year.

2. With regard to the proposed Resource Centre to be sited at Union College, progress has been slow. However a site meeting with representatives of the Public Worship and College Management Committees is to take place in the near future when our allocation of the proposed area will be decided.

3. On the issue of the Experimental Revision Materials, separate sub-committees have been set up to deal with a revision of the materials regarding Baptism and the Lord's Supper, taking into consideration the points made by Presbyteries in the recent questionnaire.

4. Consideration is presently being given by the Committee to a revision of Professor John M Barkley's book *Public Worship*, published in June 1965. Developments on this important issue will be reported in the future.

5. On the issue of the proposals of the ad hoc Committee on Priorities on the new central structures, the Public Worship Committee is unanimously of the opinion that it should remain under the Board of Communications rather than under the Board of Mission in Ireland as proposed by the ad hoc Committee.

W T J RICHARDSON, Convener

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

1. The Church Architecture Committee met on eight occasions since the last report, and in addition has paid a number of site visits to congregations to give advice and encouragement.

2. During the past year there has been a number of requests for help in the redesign of sanctuary areas within large church buildings. In order to give adequate advice on this matter the Committee visited a number of renovated church buildings in Edinburgh and the surrounding area. This proved to be both useful and enlightening.

3. As was the case last year, the number of submissions to the Church Architecture Committee has increased. However there is still some uncertainty as to procedure in regard to such submissions. The Committee wish to underline that churches undertaking any architectural work (internal or external) should follow the procedure as per the Code which is: (a) Agreement for project at a congregational meeting (b) Submission to Presbytery (c) Submission to Church Architecture Committee. The Committee ask that this procedure be followed so that decisions can be made as smoothly as possible.

4. During the year the Committee has had to deal with congregations who have experienced building problems *after* renovations had taken place. In several cases the Committee had not been consulted in the first instance. The Committee wish to remind congregations and the Assembly that their remit restricts them to advise *before* building programmes begin. The Committee cannot give advice which would be better dealt with legally.

5. During the year the Committee has had to make some difficult decisions in difficult circumstances, particularly when time was pressing for good congregations. The Committee ask that information is forwarded allowing good

time for discussion and deliberation so that a satisfactory decision can be made as quickly as possible.

6. The Committee wish to remind the Assembly of the impending Access for the Disabled Act, which will come into force in 2004. It is vital that every congregation be seen to be obeying the rule of law in this matter by, as far as is possible, providing disabled access to church buildings and halls and offering disabled toilet facilities in both. An article regarding this appeared in the April edition of the Presbyterian Herald and the Committee will also be issuing literature to Presbytery Clerks in the near future. The Committee would ask congregations to bear in mind that this Act also asks that adequate provision for the visually and hearing impaired be made.

7. Rev R Cobain represented the Presbyterian Church on the Ulster Historic Churches Trust during the course of the past year.

8. The Committee acknowledges the help give by Miss Rosemary Jack over many years as advisor in stained glass. Miss Jack has suffered serious illness during the past year and is now unable to participate in the work of the Committee. In thanking her for her contribution we also wish her God's richest blessing in these difficult days.

9. The Committee acknowledges the voluntary help of Mr Brownlow McClean over the past year and also wishes to thank all of its experts for giving up so much valuable time to take an active interest in this area of church life.

LAWRENCE HILDITCH, Convener

MEMORIAL RECORD

Rev Andrew Gardiner, BSc, BD, senior minister of Merville and Greenbank, died on 17 June 2002 in the 94th year of his age and the 68th of his ministry.

Born in Ballyclare on 21 November 1908, he attended Ballyclare Grammar School, graduated from Queen's University in Science, and studied for the ministry at Assembly's College, Belfast. He subsequently earned a degree in Divinity from London University.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Carrickfergus on 21 May 1933, he served as assistant first in Richview, then in Second Garvagh, as assistant and successor to Rev S B Thompson, being ordained on 4 April 1935. He quickly established a rapport with the young people of the congregation and the community. During his ministry instrumental music was introduced to a congregation which prospered under his leadership both spiritually and financially.

In 1948 he was called to South Africa, to St Columba's Church, Queenstown, returning to Ireland six years later to give further rein to his interest in youth ministry on appointment as Warden of the Boys' Residential Club in Belfast. A move to Omagh came in 1961 when he obtained a post as teacher of Religious Education in the County Secondary School, and he became a respected member of First Omagh congregation. Upon reaching what is usually regarded as retirement age he offered himself again to the Church and in 1973 became minister of Merville and Greenbank in the county of Donegal, where he

remained until 30 November 1980.

Some years of retirement were spent in Belfast, but after the death of his wife, Ilene, he moved to be nearer his family in England, and it was there that he died.

As a preacher he was respected for his carefully prepared sermons, spoken with deep conviction; as a pastor his interest in people was evident. A shy man, his influence for good was left behind whenever he moved on, and he is remembered with deep affection by those whose lives he touched.

He is survived by a daughter Catherine, a son Patrick, and by their children.

Rev Hugh Cochrane Conn, BA, senior minister of First and Second Moneymore, died on 18 August 2002 in the 89th year of his age and the 63rd of his ministry.

Of farming stock, he was born at Articlave, Castlerock and was educated at Coleraine Academical Institution. He enrolled at Magee University College in 1932, graduated in Arts from Trinity College, Dublin in 1936, and pursued his studies for the ministry first at New College, Edinburgh and then at Assembly's College, Belfast.

Licensed by the Coleraine Presbytery on 26 June 1938, he served assistantships in Abbey, Dublin and Portstewart, and following his installation in First and Second Moneymore on 7 March 1940, was to spend his entire ministry in that charge until retirement on 31 December 1980.

A fine preacher with a wonderful grasp of the English language, his sermons were well structured, well-delivered and to the point. A kindly pastor, he was one who knew all his sheep and was known of them for his faithfulness in more than forty years and for his sympathy and support in time of need.

He founded a company of the Boys' Brigade, attended its meetings regularly, and fulfilled conscientiously his role as chaplain. He was an active member of the Bowling Club and served as President. His early farming background found expression in the successful breeding of pedigree Suffolk sheep on the manse farm and in a valued association with the Young Farmers' Clubs of the area.

A stalwart of the Presbytery of Tyrone and regarded as a man of standing and integrity, he was for many years convener of its Visitation Commission. His wise counsel was made freely available and was greatly appreciated. Given to enjoy the company of others and with a lively sense of humour, his manse was well known for the genial and generous hospitality dispensed by host and hostess together. In the course of his ministry Hugh Conn served as Moderator of three Synods. A keen member of the Orange, Black and Masonic Institutions and appointed to high office within them, he was also a governor of Rainey Endowed School, Magherafelt, and in retirement he enjoyed the fellowship of the local Probus Club, acting as President for eleven years.

One who fulfilled the prophet's injunction to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with his God, he as left a rich legacy of witness and service in congregational and community life.

He leaves a widow, Doreen, a son and a daughter.

Rev Francis John (Jack) Kelly, BA, BD, MTh, DipEd, senior minister of Second Randalstown, died suddenly on 20 August 2002 in the 69th year of his age and the 42nd of his ministry.

A native of Belfast, whose home congregation was Mountpottinger and who was educated at Grosvenor High School, he worked initially upon leaving school in a family business, but an experience of Christ in teenage years directed him towards Christian ministry.

He obtained a degree in Arts through Magee University College and Trinity College, Dublin, and a further degree in Divinity from Assembly's College, Belfast. In subsequent years he added a Master's degree in Theology from the American Bible College and a diploma in Education from Queen's University, Belfast.

An assistantship was spent in Sinclair Seamen's congregation. Licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 16 May 1959, he was ordained and installed in his first charge in Second Broughshane on 31 May 1961. The first day of January 1971 saw him embark on a new stage in his ministry when he was installed in Richview, Belfast. There he remained for fourteen years, and a similar period was subsequently spent in Second Randalstown, from 11 January 1985 to 30 April 1999, when he retired.

Throughout his ministry he placed emphasis on the importance of preaching, preparing meticulously for the pulpit, but he was also a faithful pastor, and his kindly counsel was placed generously at the disposal of his people, his colleagues, and manse families in times of trouble. A man of strong conviction, his was not a harsh or critical spirit, and he respected those who might differ from him in opinion.

He gave his support to the Middle East Christian Outreach and his energy to the Campaign for the Concerted Witness of Reformed Truth. He was the author of several commentaries and published other material.

With a lifelong interest in sport and a keen athlete in earlier days, he continued to follow the exploits of others on the rugby field and the cricket pitch.

Upon retirement he became associated with the congregation of Ballee, where he continued to make friendships, and he was always ready to supply vacant pulpits and offer holiday relief.

He is survived by his wife Lily and their children, David, Karyn and Brian.

Very Rev John Girvan, BA, DD, senior minister of Hill Street, Lurgan, died on 21 August 2002, in the 86th year of his age and the 46th of his ministry.

Born near Killinchy, Co Down, he spent the first twelve years of his working life in a coach building firm. A personal sense of God's saving grace in Christ led to five years' service with Belfast City Mission and then to study for the ministry at Magee University College, Londonderry, Trinity College, Dublin, and Assembly's College, Belfast.

Licensing by the Presbytery of Comber on 3 June 1956, and an assistantship in Richview, Belfast, led to ordination in Carlisle Road, Londonderry on 28 November 1956. He moved to Bethany, Belfast on 30 July 1964 and became minister of the union between that congregation and Agnes Street which became Immanuel in October 1971. On 14 November 1972 he was

installed as minister of Hill Street, Lurgan, where he remained until retirement on 31 December 1984.

Fulfilling dutifully his obligations to Church courts, he served as convener of the Irish Mission from 1978-1983 and was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1981.

A caring pastor, whose practical compassion was deeply appreciated throughout his congregational ministry, he had a particular passion for evangelism, within his own Church and beyond. Having proved himself a powerful and persuasive evangelist even in his earliest years, retirement freed him more fully to embrace an aspect of service for which he had special gifts, and he continued to sound the gospel call in years of further fruitful ministry, as he conducted meetings and led missions.

Dr Girvan was married twice. His first wife Agnes died after a long illness in 1968. Five years later he married Miss Mary Heyburn, a former missionary, who survives him.

Rev Cosmo Alexander Morwood Meldrum, MBE, CD, TD, HCF, BA, LL.M, PhD, JP, former Director of the Northern Ireland Council for Social Services, died on 16 October 2002, in the 81st year of his age and the 55th of his ministry.

A Belfast man, he began his education in the school attached to his home congregation of St Enoch's, and then progressed via Methodist College to Queen's University, where he graduated in Arts, and subsequently to Assembly's College. Later he was to take an external degree in Law from the University of London; and a lifelong interest in study produced some four years ago a PhD from the University of California.

Licensed on 1 December 1946 by the Presbytery of Belfast, he served as assistant in Great Victoria Street, Belfast, Trinity Cloughton, Birkenhead and Mountpottinger, Belfast, before accepting the call of Drumhillery congregation where he was ordained and installed on 1 September 1948. A ministry there of three years' duration was followed by nine years, from 26 July 1951 to 6 September 1960 in First Monaghan, before he returned to Belfast, to the congregation of Macrory Memorial, where he ministered from 7 September 1960 to 30 November 1974. It was on 3 December 1974 that he became Director of NI Council of Social Services, and he remained in this post until retirement in 1985. Having served as Moderator of the Synod of Armagh and Monaghan in 1955, he was appointed Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1978.

A lifelong interest in the Services brought association as a young man with the Merchant Navy; then for eighteen years as chaplain with the Territorial Army, in recognition of which he was awarded a Territorial Decoration and bar; and, later still, with the Army Volunteer Reserve. From 1971-1978 he served as convener of the Church's Forces Committee. Among his personal interests he retained membership of the Military History Society in Ireland.

Ideally suited by staunch commitment to the aims of Social Service, he became convener of the Social Services Committee from 1968-1971 and of the Board of Social Witness in the period 1971-1975. He represented his Church on the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society and in the Social Responsibility

Department of the Irish Council of Churches; and the work of PHAB and Gingerbread also claimed his attention.

Awarded the MBE, he served as a JP, and in 1966 was made a Freeman of Winnipeg and an honorary citizen of Canada.

An eloquent preacher and a warm human being who won the respect of many within the Church and beyond, he was about to celebrate fifty years of marriage to his wife Dorothy when he met an untimely death as the result of a traffic accident in the centre of Ballyclare, where they lived in retirement. She survives him, together with their two daughters and a son.

Rev William Kenneth Weir, BA, senior minister of May Street, Belfast, died on 20 October 2002, in the 79th year of his age and the 51st of his ministry.

A native of Ballynahinch, following the early death of his mother he was brought up by an aunt and educated at Down High School and Methodist College. After working for two years in the family business he enrolled at Queen's University, Belfast, graduating in Arts in 1947.

Contacts within his home congregation of Edengrove and through Ballynahinch Christian Workers Union fuelled an early enthusiasm for evangelism, and he was accepted as a student for the ministry, pursuing his theological course at Assembly's College, Belfast and New College, Edinburgh.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Down on 30 May 1950, following a period as assistant in Sinclair Seamen's, he was ordained on 11 December 1951 in his first charge of First and Second Anaghlon. During his ministry there he also taught English, French and Religious Instruction in Banbridge Academy.

A call to Conlig saw him installed there on 11 October 1962, and while ministering to the people of that congregation he took on responsibility for the new cause at Kilcooley, Bangor and found satisfaction in its early progress. He also served for a time as chaplain to the Ards Battalion of the Boys' Brigade. On 5 March, 1975 another phase of ministry was begun in Belvoir Park, where he remained until called to May Street, where he served from 4 March 1982 until his retirement on 31 December 1989.

Kenneth Weir found greatest fulfilment throughout his ministry in writing and preaching sermons. He produced some work for publication which included a memoir of Margaret Smith and a book entitled *Greater Things than These*; though the theology of Billy Bunter and the Greyfriars Magnets provided more unusual fascination. He had an interest in drama and was himself an amateur producer. A keen rugby supporter, he also found pleasure in travel.

His retirement years, during which he became associated with the congregation of Castlereagh, were clouded first by the death of his wife, Edith, and then by his own increasingly debilitating illness; but such was his faith and his demeanour that even in the last two years of his life, which were spent in a nursing home, the grace of God was yet seen in him.

He found great delight in the three sons by whom he is survived, David, John and Alan, and in his eight grandchildren.

Rev John Alexander Fulton, BA, senior minister of Corlea and Corvalley, died on 13 November 2002 in the 81st year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

Born on a farm at Kilnock, Toomebridge, his home congregation was Duneeane, where first he learned the faith. Early on he felt the call to Christian ministry, and his education at Ballymena Academy, Magee University College, Londonderry, Trinity College, Dublin and Assembly's College, Belfast prepared him for his life's work. He undertook an assistantship in Rosemary congregation, was licensed by the Presbytery of Ahoghill on 16 February 1950, and later that year was installed in his first charge, the united congregations of Boyle and Ballymote, where he remained until 1953.

Then came six years as minister of Trinity, Bailieborough, Seafin and Bellasis, until he accepted the call of Corlea and Corvalley and was installed there on 22 April 1959. There he was to remain for a remarkable period of 38 years, retiring only on 31 December 1997, at the age of 75 years.

A "character" and something of a legend in his own time – these descriptions fit one who was well-known and well-loved in the community he served, identifying as readily with its schools and with its farming interests as with its churches.

A man of integrity and compassion, he was a staunch Presbyterian with a delight in the psalms and paraphrases which were part of a tradition of which he was proud. Respectful of others and respected by them, within the Church and without, he stood fearlessly for what he believed to be right, but never at the sacrifice of graciousness or good humour. Full of hearty laughter, with a gift for storytelling and a delight in the fellowship of the tea table, he was renowned for a generosity of friendship and hospitality.

He had become father of the Presbytery he served as Clerk from 1962-1967, and he acted as Stated Supply in the congregations of Glasleck and Kilmount.

Partner of his life and in his ministry for so many years, his wife Mollie survives him, together with their daughters, Jennifer and Alison.

Rev Dr Hugh Alexander Hezlett, MB, BCh, BAO, DRCOG, senior minister of Greystones and Arklow, died on 24 November 2002 in the 96th year of his age and the 38th of his ministry.

Generally known as Hugo, he was born in Coleraine, where his father was a bank manager, and received his early education at the Model School and then at Coleraine Academical Institution. He felt early a call to the ministry, but a greater facility in Science and Mathematics rather than in languages, whether ancient or modern, and an appeal by the then convener of the Foreign Mission not for clerics but for doctors, brought about his enrolment at Queen's University, Belfast to study medicine rather than theology. He became interested in the work of the Jungle Tribes Mission, but decided to gain experience in Sheffield, as a ship's doctor, and in Belfast, before committing himself to India and to what would be 27 years of healing in the service of Christ, a work in which he was partnered by his wife Mave, a nurse whom he had first encountered in Belfast, who herself came of missionary stock and had been brought up in India, and whom he met again as they studied there at the same language school. Together they built the hospital in Dohad, prepared to undertake personally every aspect of its life and work, and training the team of which they were such inspiring leaders.

In 1953 Hugo Hezlett had served as Moderator of the Presbytery of Gujarat and Kathiawar. On return to Ireland in 1962 his early interest resurfaced and led him to apply at the age of 56 as a candidate for the ministry. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast South on 15 December 1963, became assistant in Finaghy, and was installed in Edenderry, Omagh on 29 June 1965, a charge which brought with it responsibility as chaplain to the local Tyrone and Fermanagh Mental Hospital. Four years later he responded to an appeal for ministers to fill vacancies in the Republic of Ireland and was called to Greystones and Arklow. During this period he was appointed convener of the Committee on National and International Problems.

Deteriorating health prompted retirement in 1973, initially to Drumbo and later in Belfast, where it became possible for him to give valued help in Newtownbreda congregation. In 1987 the Hezletts moved to England to be nearer their family.

Dr Hezlett will be remembered as kind, gentle and loving, a man rich in humour and a faithful servant of the Master to whom he committed his life at the age of ten. Beyond the disciplines of medicine and theology which had the predominant influence on his life he found time to cultivate a variety of interests which included classical music, the writing of family history, and the stock market. His was a long life, rich and full.

He is survived by three daughters and a son.

Rev Samuel Edward Williamson, BA, BAI, senior minister of Enniscorthy and Wexford, died on 27 November 2002, in the 80th year of his age and the 53rd of his ministry.

It was in Enniscorthy that he was born, on 23 October 1923, and there was his home congregation. St Andrew's College, Dublin, prepared him for further education at Trinity College, from which he graduated in 1946. He trained as a civil engineer before embarking on theological studies at New College, Edinburgh and Assembly's College, Belfast.

After licensing by the Presbytery of Dublin on 12 June 1949 he was ordained in Aghada on 24 March 1950, and served as minister of Cobh and Aghada for three years. Called to Greystones in 1953, his ministry there lasted some four and a half years and was followed by a move north to Muckamore, where he was installed on 18 July 1957, and where he remained until 31 August 1968. During this period he fulfilled the role of Hospital Chaplain in Muckamore Abbey.

From 1968 until 1972 he taught Religious Education in two different schools, until returning to his native town to become minister of Enniscorthy, Wexford and Gorey under the Presbyterian/Methodist Alternating Ministry scheme. Installed on 3 September, 1982, he remained there until retirement on 31 October 1988.

A thoughtful preacher and a loving pastor, reserved and quietly-spoken, he is remembered for his gentleness and graciousness. He found recreation in gardening, fishing and bee-keeping, and his grandchildren were not the only ones who enjoyed the fruits of his skills in woodwork. In retirement he found opportunity to develop an interest also in travel.

Bereaved by the death of his first wife, the former Miss Edith Margaret Foster, he is survived by their three sons, Jonathan, Mervyn and Stephen, minister of Strabane Presbyterian Church, by a daughter Rosemarie, and by his second wife, Rosemary.

Rev Desmond Edwin Kingston Mock, senior minister of Macrory Memorial, Belfast, died on 22 December 2002 in the 80th year of his age and the 36th year of his ministry.

An Englishman, born and educated in London, he found himself living near an RAF station at Hornchurch, Essex, through the Battle of Britain. Aviation was in his blood; he trained as a pilot, achieved the rank of Squadron Leader, and became a pilot instructor. His varied Air Force career saw him posted Assistant Air Attache with the British Embassy in Vienna, and he came to have responsibility for liaison and recruitment in schools of northwest England and Wales.

His early associations were with the Methodist Church, but he acknowledged the influence of two Irish Presbyterian Chaplains in offering himself as a candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the homeland of his wife Frances.

Licensed by the Presbytery of Down on 28 May 1967, he was ordained in Malone in November of the same year and served there as assistant until May 1970. Responding to the call of the congregations of Fourtowns and Poyntzpass, he remained in his first charge for three years, before moving south to Greystones and Arklow. After some five and a half years he came to Macrory Memorial, Belfast, where he ministered from 30 April 1980 until retirement on 31 October 1991.

Conscientious and hardworking as a pastor, interested in youth work and the promotion of good community relations, his pulpit work was always well-prepared and he preached to meet the needs of his own congregation and the neighbourhood in which it was set.

A man of integrity and grace, he was true to his own convictions while displaying a readiness to understand another point of view. A founder member of PACE, he was prolific with the pen on political and other issues. He never lost interest in flying, becoming an honorary member and adviser in the Ulster Flying Club, and his wide-ranging interests included sailing, hill-walking, skiing, golf and music.

He and his wife spent their years of retirement in Newcastle. She survives him, along with three daughters, Sylvia, Glenda and Rosemary.

Rev Samuel Rutherford Watt, BA, senior minister of Waterford and Kilkenny, died on 7 January 2003, in the 94th year of his age and the 57th of his ministry.

A native of Castlederg, Co Tyrone, he was born on 5 May 1909 and received his early education in the town, where his father was in business. It seemed at first that he would become a farmer, but a call to the Christian ministry proved stronger, and he prepared for his life's work at Renshaw's College in Belfast, Magee University College, and Assembly's College.

Having graduated in Arts, he gave assistance to the congregation of Mountjoy while its minister, Rev J Boyd Moore, was serving for a time during the war as Naval Chaplain. Licensing on 22 July 1945 by the Presbytery of Donegal led to ordination on 23 July 1946, and installation as minister of Killeshandra, Drumkeeran and Carrigallen, where he remained for nearly 18 years. On 23 January 1964 he was installed as minister of Clontibret, moving from there to the congregations of Waterford and Kilkenny on 22 November 1967. After a ministry spent almost entirely in the Republic he retired on 31 August 1974 and made his home in Bangor, Co Down.

A gifted preacher, he was known as such not only by the people to whom he ministered in his own congregations, but by those also who shared his delight in spending summer vacations at Rossnowlagh in Co Donegal among the hills and by the rivers which encouraged his interests in painting and in fishing. The manse garden provided another arena for his creativity, as for his relaxation.

He is survived by his wife Daisy.

Rev Howard Edmond Lewis, BD, DipEd, associate minister of Bloomfield, died on 8 March 2003, in the 56th year of his age and the 24th of his ministry.

A son of the manse – his father was Rev Ivor Lewis of Berry Street, Shankill Road Mission and Whiteabbey – he was born in Birkenhead on 23 October 1947, and on coming to Ireland with his family was educated at Campbell College, Belfast. A student of the University of Wales he graduated in Divinity in 1976 and subsequently gained a Diploma in Education from Queen's University, Belfast.

Having offered himself as a candidate for the ministry, he was ordained on 13 January 1980 as assistant in Strand, Belfast, and on receiving a call to Rasharkin was installed as minister there on 20 March 1981. He moved to Belvoir Park in the Presbytery of East Belfast on 19 February 1987 and remained there until 8 September 1991. At the beginning of the following year he became General Secretary of Evangelical Alliance, in which capacity he served until 31 October 1994. He entered what was to be his final sphere of service on 25 May 1999 when he was inducted as associate minister in Bloomfield.

Small of stature but a giant in faith, he preached the whole counsel of God with grace and humility. Quiet and reserved by nature, a private person indeed, his consummate skill with words made of him a powerful public communicator. A man of vision, his sense of humour made of an earnest evangelist a warm human being and a likeable one, who endeared himself readily and regularly to those who heard him speak.

He found a major recreational outlet in photography and shared with his son Christopher a passion for cars.

His premature death leaves many to mourn his loss who will give thanks to God for every remembrance of him; but he will be most deeply missed by Elizabeth, his widow, and by their son.

FAMILYBOOKS LIMITED

1. The book trade has continued to feel the effects of increased pressures from various sources but especially web sites, catalogue sales and cut-price retailers.

2. Familybooks sales for last year were slightly down but trading in the current year has improved.

3. The company remains profitable – but only just – and the Company’s Board decided that the time had come for a decision on the longer-term future of the business. The Board was faced with a decision to recommend either a major investment in order to expand the business substantially or to recommend that it be sold.

4. It was after considerable research and a great deal of heart searching that the Company’s Board recommended that the Trustees should consider our recommendation that the business be sold to Wesley Owen. The two key elements which influenced the Company’s Board in its decision were the provision of not only a reliable source of good religious books for the community but also a good employer for our staff. Under the guidance of Mrs Betty Bell, they were responsible for the outstanding success of the company over the years and this success was truly acknowledged when they were awarded the UK Religious Bookshop of the Year Award.

B T FERGUSON, Chairman

APPENDIX

RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES

The Board of Communications congratulates the ad hoc Committee on Priorities on the breadth of their thinking and its emphasis on the mission of the Church. We warmly welcome the proposal to prioritise the development of “structures to ensure that at all levels the Church communicates effectively, both externally and internally”. We further commend the call “to encourage all relevant Boards and/or committees, within their areas of expertise, to communicate prophetically and explain clearly the Church’s message to our society and the world beyond.”

However, in the absence of concrete ideas as to how the above will be realised, we cannot envisage how the proposals as at present formulated could create a satisfactory and workable role for the Board of Communications.

The distinction made in “Towards New Central Structures” between mission and service Boards is much too neat and facile to correspond to reality. The distinction between “support” for mission and mission as such, is blurred – the Board of Communications irrevocably touches the mission of congregations as the Board which resources their worship life. There is a strong natural logic in the nexus of worship material, worship places, means of communication, forum for congregational news, etc.

The removal of the Committee on Public Worship from the Board would leave the Board of Communications with less than a full work-load within the

division of labour among the various Boards. We wish to oppose the removal of the Committee on Public Worship from the Board of Communications. We consider that the Public Worship Committee has responsibilities and a workload which are too significant for it to be subsumed within a "Committee on Resourcing Congregational Life."

Whilst agreeing that worship is crucial to the mission of congregations (and some aspects of it are a legitimate concern of the Board of Mission in Ireland), the area of responsibility given to the Public Worship Committee within the PCI involves, among other things, theological reflection and promoting good practice in all areas of worship, primarily congregational but also at Presbytery level. As such, its place within the Board of Communications is entirely appropriate. Such patient, reflective and scholarly work would be a diversion for a Board focussing on mission.

The Board of Communications is entirely aware of the central role played by forms of worship in making congregational life seeker-friendly and plans, after the completion of the new hymnal, to engage with the challenge of resourcing the Church for worship which is both culturally appropriate and theologically grounded in scripture and the Reformed tradition.

Agreed by the Board of Communication 25th February 2003.

REPORT BY THE CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

TO

The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the United Free Church of Scotland in respect of the year ending 31st December, 2002.

CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION

1. The sales of the Church Hymnary Third Edition show a decline on the previous year with 4,613 copies sold compared with 5,913 copies in 2001. The Royalty produced was £2,309.19 compared with £2,848.82 in the previous year.

SCOTTISH PSALTER 1929

2. 417 copies of the Scottish Psalter bound with the Third Edition of the Hymnary were sold in 2002. This compares with 22 copies of the previous year and 640 in 2000. Regrettably, due to the limited sales the publishers have indicated that it is not economic to keep the editions of the Hymnary with the Scottish Psalter in print any longer.

IRISH PSALTER

3. 525 copies of the Church Hymnary bound with the revised Irish Psalter were sold in 2002 compared with 948 copies in 2001 and 1,420 in 2000. Here again, we are advised by the publishers that it is not economic to keep this edition in print.

FUTURE OF THE TRUST

4. Negotiations were concluded with the Presbyterian Church of Wales and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for their withdrawal from the Church Hymnary Trust. A payment of £9,753.64 was sent to the Presbyterian Church of Wales which represented their average share of the royalties over the past year. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland opted to take a proportion of the investments and some were transferred and others sold and effectively there was distributed to them 22.21% of the capital of the Trust. Discharges from both Churches were received and they will now cease to have any interest in the Trust.

CONTRACT WITH THE PUBLISHER FOR FOURTH EDITION OF THE HYMNARY

5. The contract between the Trust and SCM-Canterbury for the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary has now been completed.

PROMOTION OF THE NEW HYMNARY

6. The cost of the production of the new book has been less than anticipated. The trustees are considering the possibility of initially discounting the published price of the Hymnary so that it may be widely used and seek the Assemblies' approval to apply some of the funds for that purpose.

STATE OF FUNDS

7. Notwithstanding the distribution to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Trustees are confident that they have sufficient funds to meet all costs in connection with the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Hymnary. It is therefore proposed to distribute the Royalties earned in 2002 to the two Churches continuing in the Trust in the same proportions as have been adopted in the past.

GEORGE W PENROSE, Chairman
JOHN M HODGE, Secretary and Treasurer

MARCH, 2003

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly express appreciation to the Directors and staff for the ministry provided to the Church and wider community by Familybooks up until its disposal in May 2003.
3. That the General Assembly express thanks to the Information Officer, the staff of the Communications Department and the Editor of the Presbyterian Herald for all their work on behalf of the Church and commend their ongoing efforts to make the Presbyterian Herald a vibrant forum for the Church.
4. That, to maintain continuity in progress towards publication of the new Presbyterian Hymnbook, the General Assembly agree that Rev W T J Richardson continue for a further year as Convener of the Public Worship Committee.

5. That a grant of £800 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Public Worship Committee.

6. That a grant of £1,300 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Church Architecture Committee.

7. That a grant of £13,700 be paid from the Incidental Fund to the Presbyterian Historical Society.

8. That the Board of Communications, together with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 277 of the Code as follows:

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS BOARD

Convener: Rev A D DAVIDSON

1. The Board met three times during the past year. At the February Board meeting the Board expressed its dissatisfaction with the proposals from the ad hoc Committee on Priorities. Concerns were expressed about potential conflict of interest with the World Development Committee going to the Overseas Board; the additional layer of administration involved in a committee for global concerns under the General Board; the General Board's ability to cope with additional responsibilities and the lack of proper consultation in the process

Other items of business are included in committee reports.

Ministers in Recognised Service

Rev Andrew Gibson reports:

2. My work at Belfast Bible College continues to be stimulating and satisfying, where I continue to teach mostly mission related subjects. I am in the process of developing a new course on what the church in the west can learn from the church in the developing world. The preparatory work for this course has led to much reflection on what I have learned from my time in Africa and from my continuing interaction with overseas students at the Bible College. I would commend to the wider Church the value of developing closer relationships with our brothers and sisters throughout the world as one means of hearing what the Lord is saying to us here in Ireland.

Rev Desi Maxwell reports:

3. Teaching continues to be the joy of my life. I am in the very fortunate position of being able to focus my work at the college but then take it throughout the wider church and indeed the wider world. Belfast Bible College continues to attract a wide spread of international full-time students as well as part-time students from near-by. It has been a joy to see much growth over the sixteen years that I have been here and just recently we have opened a new worship centre.

Rev Dr Ruth Patterson reports:

4. Our theme for the year in Restoration Ministries has been 'Let the Broken Places Sing.' This has been given flesh in various ways, eg through our monthly meetings and through the production of a magazine with articles from people such as Trevor Morrow, Jean Vanier and President Mary McAleese.

5. A new venture has been a series of hospitality evenings where we bring people together from different sections of the community to meet one another in a safe place, to share a meal together and to build relationships. Our

after-dinner speakers all come from the South, adding to what we trust is a meaningful experience in reconciliation.

6. For the second year Mgr Tom Toner and myself ran a joint Bible Study during the weeks of Lent.

7. In March 2003 we celebrated the launch of the book - *Journeying Towards Reconciliation: A Song for Ireland*.

8. As always, prayer is the heartbeat of the work, and we would be grateful, in turn, for the prayers of the church.

ENVIRONMENTAL PANEL

Rev Sam Millar reports:

1. Energy has been one of the main themes of the Environmental Panel's work in the past year. Following the publication of plans to construct a wind generating complex at sea between Portstewart and Inishowen, the Panel decided to examine the cases for and against such a development. Members attended meetings organised by bodies opposed to the scheme; we then paid a most useful visit to the offices of the developer. Here we were told the full import of the policies of both our governments relating to the move from the use of fossil fuels in the generation of power to the increasing use of renewable energy resources; we also were able to examine at close quarters a turbine in action. As a result, we still have an open mind on this proposal, though in principle we are in support of the governments' philosophies.

2. Later we became involved in the controversy over the proposal to mine lignite, by open-cast methods, in the area around Ballymoney, County Antrim. If approved, this would result in substantial upheaval to a rural, farming community, many of whom are PCI members. This operation seemed to us to be unacceptable for many reasons, and we formulated a resolution opposing it; we understand that other Boards are considering similar action.

3. In May 2003 two members of the Panel will attend the conference of the European Christian Environmental Network in Greece.

In relation to the new Presbytery consultation procedure we are glad to see that a few Presbyteries have already asked for copies of the Environmental Audit to assist congregations in dealing with this matter. Members of the Panel and Presbytery Environmental Agents are available to provide assistance at any stage of a consultation.

4. Panel Members continue to address Presbyteries and talk to both men's and women's organisations on matters relating to the Christian response to environmental issues.

5. One disappointment during the year was the lack of development of the Eco-Congregation project; this was due to a change in funding arrangements following the devolution process in Great Britain. We are investigating alternative sources of funding for this worthwhile activity.

WORLD CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The work of our committee is largely done through other church and inter-church bodies. Our contact continues to be mainly with World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), the Conference of European Churches (CEC), and to a lesser degree than previously the Leuenberg Church Fellowship (LCF). The closer contact between our partner churches in England, Scotland and Wales has also continued with plans for a further consultation in 2004. We are very pleased that the General Secretary of WARC, Dr Setri Nyomi, will be a guest at our General Assembly this year and value the place he gives to our church within the Alliance.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

2. Rev Ken Crowe and Rev Gabrielle Farquhar attended the European Area Council, which met in Oradea, Romania, 17th - 24th August. The theme for the gathering was *The Fullness of Life: Global Vision, Local Action, Coping with the Past and Minority issues in Europe*. The gathering was also the first occasion that WARC's European Area Council met in a former communist-ruled country in Eastern Europe. Held in an area where the Hungarian Reformed tradition is very strong it was not surprising that the issues around return of property to the Reformed churches were very dominant throughout the event. In fact it was difficult for other churches, which are also a minority in relation to the church/state, to have their voice heard. The Rev John Kirkpatrick, a member of Council also attended. We were grateful that he was given the opportunity to speak about the situation in Ireland and his contribution was much appreciated by the Council. Due to financial restraints throughout the member churches, the future of the Council and number of members for the incoming committee were debated. It was decided to reduce the committee from 20 to 12 and that the council would meet again within the next 4 – 7 years.

Rev Gabrielle Farquhar was elected to the new European Area Committee.

Conference of European Churches

3. Three delegates of our church will be travelling to Norway for the 12th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) at the end of June. The theme for the Assembly is *'Jesus Christ Heals and Reconciles – Our Witness in Europe'*. Born in the 1950's in the era of the 'cold war', CEC's mission has always been to "build bridges" not only between churches, but also between East and West, North and South, women and men. Such a mission is as vital now as it was when CEC began. As it states in preparation notes for the 12th Assembly - *'Hopes for a Europe truly at peace with itself, embodying values of justice, human dignity and community, still remain to be realised. There are historic memories still in need of healing.'* The Assembly logo shows Jesus' open hand (with the sign of the nail in the middle) and at the same time a dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. The heart at the centre symbolises God's love, which we are called to be a witness to in Europe.

United Reformed Church

4. Rev C McClure faithfully represents our church at the URC ecumenical committee. He attended the Assembly in July 2002 and committee meetings in September 2002 and January 2003. The URC continue to support us by prayer and we in turn offer our prayers for them in their time of change and financial struggles. The URC's membership is one of vast multi-cultural diversity. This brings to the church its richness and its challenges. For so long we have understood mission as bringing the gospel to others, even when we are 'partners in mission'. When that is reversed, and the gospel is being brought to us afresh, we find it hard to accept. Such is one of the challenges facing the URC with its multi-cultural diversity. This challenge is also beginning to present itself to us in PCI – especially in the Republic.

Consultation of the UK Reformed Churches

5. Following the successful consultation in 2001 it was agreed to hold another such gathering 'in the next 2 to 3 years'. An invitation to hold the next consultation in Ireland, Spring 2004, has been accepted.

GABRIELLE FARQUHAR, Convener

IRISH CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**Irish Council of Churches**

1. The AGM 2002 of the ICC was held on 7 May in Dromantine Conference Centre. Mr Graham Wylie, Plumblin Family of Churches, presented a paper on New Churches in Ireland and Mr Fergus Ryan, Trinity Church Network Dublin, presented a paper on New Churches in Dublin.

2. The AGM 2003 of the ICC was held on 19 March in Dromantine Conference Centre. Mr Femi Olayisade and Rev Alan Martin introduced discussion of 'Aspects of Religious Life of Immigrants in the South of Ireland', and reports were received from Partners In Transformation, Women's Link, and the Board of Overseas Affairs.

3. The ICC Executive received the final report of the Research Project into Aspects of Religious Life of Refugees, Immigrants and Asylum Seekers in the Republic of Ireland and has begun to consider the impacts on local congregations. An application for membership of the ICC was received from the Russian Orthodox Church. Following last years General Assembly we append the guidelines for membership of the ICC. The Cherubim and Seraphim Churches have been admitted to membership of the ICC on the basis of their being, 'part of a larger church with significant membership in other places of the world'. It was noted that they are already in membership of CTBI. (See Appendix)

4. Rev Robert Herron was elected President of the Irish Council of Churches. In January he reported to the Executive Committee on his visit to Israel and Palestine.

Irish Inter-Church Meeting

5. The proposed Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland has provided much discussion material for the Meeting. The Executive Secretary has met with the Human Rights Commission and has been in touch with churches regarding the possibility of joint action.

6. In September an opportunity was taken to enable Council members and members of the Irish Inter-Church Committee to hear and meet Jim Wallis a leading American evangelical who helped to found the Sojourners community.

7. The Women's Link Annual Fellowship Day was held in April 2002 at Christchurch Sandymount Dublin. The theme of the day was "Vision for the Future" and the speaker was Dr Fran Porter, author of the book, "Changing women, changing worlds".

8. An Inter-Church meeting took place in the Dromantine Conference Centre 19/20 April, 2002 and was led by staff from the Irish School of Ecumenics; the theme was "Pathways to peace building". Planning has begun for the next meeting to take place in November 2003 with the theme of the implications of the "New Immigrant Presence in Ireland".

9. The committee met four times during the year, a comment was made on the draft Heritage Protection guidelines in the Republic of Ireland. Among the issues under consideration have been: the Charta Oecumenica, the Bill of Rights for N Ireland, equality issues and child abuse. The Rev David Gamble and Rev Jean Maryland presented CTBI report "Time for action: sexual abuse, the churches and a new dawn for survivors" to the January 2003 meeting.

10. The Department of Social Issues provides a meeting point for social responsibility people from the member churches and meets quarterly. Information sharing is an important part of the Department's role.

11. Environmental matters, alcohol use and abuse, refugees', asylum seekers and racism issues, youth and homelessness and youth issues have all been on the agenda. A seminar on "Prosperity – its purposes and its price" was held in Dublin on 27th January, 2003 with 30 people present.

Ongoing Work of the Committee

12. The Committee looked at two reports during the year – The Research on Refugees, Immigrants and Asylum Seekers from the ICC and, 'A Shared Future – A Consultation Paper on Improving Relations in Northern Ireland'. Our comments on the Community Relations document were transmitted to the Church and Government Committee.

13. The Committee met with Rev Doug Baker and Dr Cecelia Clegg from the Partners in Transformation Project to listen to their experiences in talking with church leaders and to hear what they considered to be significant matters for the Irish church relations at this time. The Partners In Transformation Project is under the auspices of the Irish School of Ecumenics and follows on from the Moving Beyond Sectarianism Project.

LESLEY CARROLL, Convener

APPENDIX I**IRISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES****Executive Committee****SOME GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERING CHURCHES FOR ICC MEMBERSHIP**

Agreed by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 7 November 2000:

That Membership of the ICC be open to

- (i) churches or recognised associations of churches within one Christian tradition having a reasonable geographical spread of congregations in Ireland; and
- (ii) churches which, while only having a few worship centres in Ireland, are part of much larger historic churches with significant membership in other places in the world, and which
 - (a) accept the Constitution of the ICC
 - (b) accept that membership of the ICC involves active participation in the Irish Inter-Church Meeting.
 - (c) are broadly acceptable to the ICC member churches.

In considering an application for membership the Council will take into account the beliefs, practices and history of the applicant church and its relationships with other churches.

APPENDIX II**INTER-CHURCH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee met in January 2003. The members of the Committee are:

Church of Ireland	Methodist	Presbyterian
Rev Wm Ritchie	Rev Dr E T I Mawhinney	Rev Dr D J Watts
Rev I J E Knox	Rev Des Bain	Rev A D Davidson
Rev Canon John Mayes	Rev T M Kingston	Rev A V Martin
Rev Canon G A McCamley	Mrs H O'Neill	Mrs E Cobain

Recent Changes

2. The Committee reviewed some of the arrangements for ministry in joint charges. A Methodist/Church of Ireland Working Party is looking at Strathfoyle, where some Presbyterians also worship. The Rev John Parkin and his family have settled well in St Patrick's, Waterford, and it was noted that the Revs David and C J Range had returned to the USA from Limerick and Shannon. Appreciation was expressed of their ministry.

Galway and Ballinasloe

3. The Rev Sahr Yamsu gave an encouraging report on the joint Presbyterian/Methodist charge in Galway and Ballinasloe, especially in reaching out to immigrants. A French speaking congregation meets on Sunday afternoons. Ballinasloe has a small but loyal membership.

Monkstown

4. The Rev Alan Lorimer brought an enthusiastic report from the Methodist and Church of Ireland congregations at Monkstown who are working very closely together. The scheme may be a prototype for the new covenant between the Church of Ireland and Methodist churches.

Future Arrangements

5. It was agreed that the Inter-Church Consultative Committee and the Alternating Ministries Committee (Presbyterian/Methodist) should attempt to work more closely together. Initially they will be called at the same time.

APPENDIX III**REPORT ON THE INTER-CHURCH STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIXED MARRIAGES 2001 - 2002**

Rev. John Brackenridge reports:

The Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages met in Mount Oliver, Dundalk on Friday 15th November 2002. Most Rev Gerard Clifford acted as Chairman for the meeting.

Apologies were received from Most Rev Anthony Farquhar, Rev John Brackenridge and Mgr Patrick Devine.

1. Changes to the Committee Membership

It was noted that the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland has appointed Archdeacon Patrick Lawrence to the Committee in succession to the Rt Rev Michael Mayes. The Presbyterian Board of Inter-Church Relations has appointed Rev Elizabeth Hughes to the Committee in succession to Mrs Olive Marshall.

2. Report on the Meeting of the Inter- Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages 2001 - 2002

There was a brief discussion of last year's Report and an amendment proposed by a Committee member concerning 'eucharistic sharing' was incorporated into the Report. It was noted that the Report had been distributed and approved by each of the Churches.

3. Joint Preparation for Inter-Church Marriage

It was noted that twelve marriage preparation courses facilitating 145 inter-Church couples had taken place in Dublin during the past twelve months.

Courses tend to be booked well in advance reflecting a continued need and also the worth of past courses as reflected in feedback from participating couples.

Ken Dunne reported that one pre-marriage course, organised by ACCORD and NIMMA, involving fourteen couples had taken place in Whiteabbey (Belfast). The course was over-subscribed, highlighting the continuing need for good marriage preparation for inter-Church couples. The course was advertised by ACCORD and NIMMA through parish bulletins and publications. It was noted that another course is planned in the near future.

It was felt that every effort should continue to be made by each Church to support and commend preparation courses for all engaged inter-Church couples.

4. Recent Trends in Inter-Church Marriage

Recent trends in the preparation for Inter-Church marriage and the celebration of Inter-Church marriage services continue to be, in the main, positive.

Some discussion took place by the Committee regarding issues which arise for some Inter-Church couples prior to the baptism of their children. The question of 'double belonging' continues to be raised by some Inter-Church couples. During the discussion, it was noted that we recognise the validity of each other's baptism. Moreover, as is the case with the celebration of mixed marriages, ministers from the respective churches can be present for the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism.

5. Pastoral Care of Inter-Church Families

The Committee discussed the pastoral care of Inter-Church families. An on-going difficulty continues to be that many couples move to a different parish after their marriage, which makes it difficult to organise ongoing pastoral care.

Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that next year's meeting of the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages take place in Mount Oliver, Dundalk, on Friday, 14th November, 2003 at 2 pm.

Members of the Committee

Rev John Brackenridge
Most Rev Gerard Clifford
Rt Rev Mons Patrick Devine
Mr Kenneth Dunn
Most Rev Anthony Farquhar (Co-Chairperson)
Rev Elizabeth Hughes
Archdeacon Patrick Lawrence [Co-Chairperson]
Very Rev Brendan Murray
Rev Ronnie Nesbitt
Rev Aidan O'Boyle
Rev David Turtle

WORLD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. **Annual Appeal:** The World Development Appeal for 2002, 'AIDS MATTERS ... when your family are dying one by one' was launched in Church House on Thursday, 3 October 2002. The Committee, Presbytery Agents, invited guests and the press were all addressed by Dr Daleep Mukarji, Director of Christian Aid, and Ian Wallace, International Operations Director of Tearfund. Dr Alemayu, Director of Health of the Kale Heywet Church in Ethiopia – a beneficiary from the Good Works 2001 Appeal – told of the work of his church in education and prevention of HIV/AIDS, nursing care and counselling for those already infected.

The response to the appeal has been most encouraging. To date, March 31, the sum of £500,000 has been raised. Grants totalling £450,000 have already been made over to Christian Aid and Tearfund for 10 specified HIV/AIDS projects in Brazil, Ghana, India (2), Kenya, Malawi, Serbia, Thailand, Uganda and Zambia.

2. **Emergency Appeal for Southern Africa:** The Moderator wrote to all congregations in August 2002 in respect of the food crisis across Southern Africa. The Financial Secretary's Office received £245,523 in response. This has been shared equally by Christian Aid and Tearfund and continues to be used in emergency feeding programmes as well as to provide seeds and tools across Angola, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. **Visits to development projects:** In October 2002 Rev Colin McClure travelled to Sierra Leone as the guest of Christian Aid. Bob Hanna of Christian Aid led the inter church party. Rev Timothy Kinahan from Belfast represented the Church of Ireland and Rev Rosemary Lindsay from Wicklow represented the Methodist Church. Rev Colin McClure had the opportunity to visit one of the primary schools part funded by the PCI World Development Appeal 2000 'Let my people go ... free to learn'.

4. **Advocacy:** The Committee continues to work for justice for the poor by our support for the 'Drop the Debt' campaign and the 'Trade and Justice Movement'. In June 2002 PCI members and clergy joined the 12,000 strong lobby outside Parliament at Westminster and handed over pledge cards signed by many thousands more, all calling for fairer trade rules for poor countries. Church members were also encouraged to join a similar event in Dublin on 14 May 2003.

5. **Christian Aid Board:** Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson has been appointed to the National Board of Christian Aid to replace Rev Dr Jim Campbell whose term of office has come to an end. Rev Dr Roger Purce will remain on the Board for a further four years.

6. **Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities:** The World Development Committee has grave concerns over the proposals to abolish the Inter Church Relations Board and to merge the Committee with the Overseas Board. The Convener has written an open letter to the Clerk of Assembly on the matter.

HAZEL McCALL, Convener

RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. During the past year the Race Relations Committee has continued to develop communication with relevant organisations both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, particularly those concerned with asylum seekers.

For the 'February' meeting of the Committee a procedural experiment took place, namely the convening of the Committee in two sections: Dublin-based members meeting in Dublin, and 'northern-based' members in Belfast, the Convener attending each meeting. This was welcomed especially by the Dublin group; and it proved effective, in that in each case fuller and specific attention could be given to the substantially differing situation within either jurisdiction. It is proposed to continue this format for one meeting per year, with the understanding that all members will be informed of and welcome at both meetings.

2. All of the groups to whom grants were made from the General Assembly 2002 have expressed gratitude for the support of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Diakonia Council of Churches, South Africa, grateful for the support of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland over many years, invited a representative to attend the official opening of their new Diakonia offices and Conference Centre, on 28 February. No financial provision having been made for this, the invitation was declined. However the Inter-Church Relations Board, at the behest of the Committee, mandated the Rev Dr David and Mrs Maureen Irwin, who were due to make a private visit to South Africa in early March, to convey in person our Church's greetings.

3. Since the Race Relations Committee was first established in 1980 as an ad hoc Committee of the General Assembly, the issue of race relations in South Africa has had a prominent place in their agenda. It is the Committee's view that our involvement now needs to be re-assessed, in light of developments within South Africa and the completion of the Diakonia Centre. The Committee hope that their Convener will be able to visit South Africa when a suitable opportunity arises, in order to assess present needs for continuing support.

4. The question also arises as to whether or not there are other areas of the world in which we should be taking a particular interest from a race relations point of view, not least with regard to the persecution of Christians, for instance in Pakistan. Obviously any such developments would only take place after consultation with other concerned organs of our church, such as the Overseas Board, the World Development Committee and the Church and Government Committee.

5. The Committee agreed to support a request from the Holocaust Memorial Day Committee in the Republic of Ireland for a grant towards expenses. After consultation, it was agreed that the Race Relations Committee include relations with the Jewish community in its remit.

The Committee are pleased to present the document *A Policy on Asylum Seekers and Refugees*, as initially requested by the Church and Government Committee. They intend preparing, with advice from the Publications Department, a brief popular leaflet for use at congregational level.

7. The Committee draw particular attention to the section relating to Local Congregations.

GORDON GRAY, Convener

APPENDIX

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Race Relations Committee

Policy on Asylum Seekers and Refugees

1. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (hereafter 'PCI') as part of the Church Universal sees the challenge posed by Asylum-seekers and Refugees in a global context. Whereas at national and local level the issues are those of immigration, reception, provision and hospitality, the Church is in the first instance concerned about those conditions which cause displacement: conflict, oppression, unfair trading relationships, the arms trade, poverty and hunger. Through its Overseas Mission, World Development, Race Relations and Inter-Church Relations instruments the PCI, in common with other churches, often has first-hand, personal contact with such situations of distress. Accordingly the contemporary tide of displaced men, women and children needs to be addressed at its multifarious roots and by the community of nations in our increasingly inter-connected world.

2. **Historically** the question of refugees has been on the agenda of the churches at least since the end of the Second World War. Millions of children, women and men were displaced and rendered homeless through the years of conflict. This led to the setting up of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid and Refugee World Service (CICARWS) of the World Council of Churches, established in 1948. Ireland played its part. The Haven, a home for mainly Russian refugees, was opened in Dublin and supported by the churches of the Irish Council of Churches for many years. Concern for refugees continued through Christian Aid, Tear Fund and Trocaire. The recent influx of asylum-seekers and refugees from a number of countries into this island faces the Irish churches, like the rest of society, with a new set of challenges.

3. **Theologically and Ethically** the churches' concern is rooted in the biblical understanding of the dignity and worth of the human being.

- (i) *Individuals* are created in the image of God the Father, potentially redeemed through the Son, cherished by the Holy Spirit and called to fullness of life. They are accordingly deserving of respect, fundamental human rights and opportunity.
- (ii) The individual is set within the *family*, a factor which is perhaps of even greater importance for cultures where the extended family is the norm more than it is in Western societies with their focus on the nuclear family. This can have important implications for policy and provision for asylum-seekers and refugees.
- (iii) The Church is concerned also for *community*. This suggests variety and inclusiveness. As the world increasingly becomes a global village so the stranger who is different becomes increasingly our neighbour, with whom we must coexist and interact harmoniously.

4. Ultimately the Church's positive vision of inclusive community is derived from the heavenly vision, as expressed for instance in Revelation 7:9:

“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb”.

5. However, despite policies of integration and programmes of community relations, experience has underlined the gap between vision and reality. Diversity easily disintegrates into fear, suspicion, hostility and violence. For instance the former Yugoslavia broke down into ethnic conflict once the restraint of a Communist dictatorship was removed. Add race, which is usually a factor in the case of asylum-seekers and refugees, and the difficulty of achieving an inclusive community is heightened. Sociologists, psychologists, demographers, economists and political scientists all have their contribution to make to our understanding of such failures of human relationships, but for the Christian the diagnosis is sin, in both persons and societies. Neither are churches immune:

“We are obliged to confess that racism is a sin, not only of individual Christians, but of churches and societies at large... People have become accustomed to patterns of neglect of and contempt for others, of injustice and prejudice, of degradation and exploitation, and now regard them as ‘normal’. This demonic pervasiveness of racism compels us to speak of ‘collective sin’.” *“None is righteous, no not one” (Rom. 3.10). “We are thrown together in a solidarity of sin.”* (Racism in Theology: Theology Against Racism – Report of a Faith and Order Consultation, Geneva, 1974, p.7)

6. It is on the basis of our acknowledged complicity in this sin, as individual Christians and as a church that the PCI calls on others also to face and confess their racism and aspire to a nobler vision. Christian faith asserts that in the Cross Jesus Christ identified himself with both the sinner and the sinned against, the oppressor and the victim. And through the suffering of the Cross He won the victory over the powers of sin and negativity:

“He is the victorious victim. Out of the depth of his suffering he is the Lord of history, a history undercutting the histories of demonic oppression and of the evil revolt against God.” (ibid p 6)

“Because of the costly grace of Christ we are enabled to confess that racism is a sin which separates us from God and from our fellow human beings. Without it racism could be regarded as a disastrous fate which leaves us with despair or apathy.” (ibid. p.7)

7. Therefore, despite the forces of negativity which often frustrate human schemes and dreams, the PCI seeks to bear faithful witness, in its words, in its actions and in its own life, to the possibility, under God, of inclusive and diverse human community.

Statement of Principles

8. The PCI is associated with the Churches’ Commission on Racial Justice, a Commission of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. A member of the PCI’s Race Relations Committee, Ms Fee Ching Leong, represents the Irish churches on the Commission. That Commission has set out a series of basic humanitarian values and principles which, with minor adaptations, the Race Relations Committee and the Inter-Church Relations

Board now commend to the General Assembly as consonant with the above faith statement, and as applicable in both jurisdictions, as follows:

We believe that all people are created equal in dignity and personhood, and are made in the image of God. We affirm respect for the dignity and worth of every person regardless of nationality, ethnicity, culture, colour or religion. Human life, personal safety and physical security should be upheld in the law and practice of institutions; this concern for humanity is also reflected in international law and human rights instruments.

While recognising the need for controls, we believe that hospitality and compassion should underlie any approach to people seeking asylum and refuge. Misleading or disparaging terminology should be rigorously avoided when referring to asylum-seekers, refugees and other immigrants.

We believe that people seeking refuge in the UK or Ireland can enrich and enhance the cultural, religious, economic and political life of British and Irish society, and should not be treated with hostility and suspicion.

We believe it is the responsibility of the respective Governments and of the media to resist negative stereotyping of targeted groups (such as 'Arabs' or 'Algerians') and to promote the positive aspects of immigration among the general public, stressing the value of diversity and the contribution made historically by immigrants to society, and facilitating the social inclusion of immigrants as central to combating racism and racial discrimination.

While absolute respect for the right to seek asylum must remain, there is a need for international policies that will address the root causes of forced migration, such as the destructive aspects of international trade, conflict and poverty. The situation could be addressed in partnership with other Governments by developing conflict prevention and resolution measures, securing a massive reduction in international inequality, reducing the trade in armaments, and putting human rights standards at the heart of development policy.

Some practical implications

9. The faith convictions and ethical principles outlined above will obviously lead the PCI to support or question specific immigration policies and practices and their implementation as these develop and as situations change. Moreover these principles will apply with varying relevance at any given time to the UK and the Republic. However we highlight the following current concerns:

(a) Terminology

Heightened concern about terrorism, the location of accommodation centres and alarmist press reporting have helped make asylum-seekers and refugees into an emotive subject. Terms are used loosely, such as 'illegal immigrants' or 'bogus asylum-seekers'. But the seeking of asylum is a human right guaranteed by the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, to which both the UK and Ireland, together with some 130 other countries, are signatories. The Convention is an international treaty to which both countries are thus legally bound. Accordingly the right to apply for asylum is precisely that, a right and not a concession. Within the European Community

this was underpinned by the 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam which includes in its objectives ‘absolute respect for the right to seek asylum’ based on ‘the full and inclusive application of the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol’.

A person who applies for asylum (an asylum-seeker) and whose application is subsequently approved, is then granted the legal status of a refugee. A refugee is defined by the Convention as:

Someone who is unable to return to their country of origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, and who is not afforded protection by the forces of law and order of his/her own state.

This definition falls short of contemporary needs in several ways. For example, it does not include those displaced within their own country or those forced to leave for environmental reasons.

An asylum-seeker, that is a person who has applied for refugee status in a country other than their own, is legally resident in the receiving country until the application is processed. A person whose application for asylum is successful and who becomes a refugee continues to be legally resident in the receiving country. Thus informed, church members should courteously but immediately challenge anyone who refers generally to asylum-seekers or refugees as “illegals”, “bogus”, “economic migrants” and similar.

(b) Migrant workers/guest workers

With regard to the right to work it should be remembered that many asylum-seekers and refugees are highly educated and skilled, and are both willing and ready to contribute to the economy and to the common good of the receiving country. Many who themselves are or whose families were immigrants are making an invaluable contribution to business life and to institutions such as hospitals. But even here questions need to be asked. As the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland comments:

“The West is quite happy to take in economic migrants if they are professionals, or technologically skilled. It welcomes the computer wizards of Bangalore but does not want the persecuted peoples of Sri Lanka or the Punjab”. (Report to the General Assembly, May 2002, p5).

We should also examine what effect our offer of lucrative posts to professionally qualified men and women from poorer nations is having on the quality of life for their own people – a brain and skills drain from them to us, to meet our exorbitant western needs!

(c) Freedom of movement and residence

The international Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which both countries have signed, states:

Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his/her residence. (CCPR, Art 12 (1))

As noted above, the biblical understanding of what it means to be a human person suggests that we are most truly ourselves only in relationship to others, in family and community. Therefore, as Christians we are particularly mindful of the importance, for asylum-seekers and refugees, of being included in the wider community and maintaining natural friendship and contact with family. Policies which separate asylum-seekers from their family members, their ethnic or their faith community make it more difficult for them to integrate, to learn English or Irish, to become part of a worshipping community of their choice, and to access public facilities such as libraries, and so on.

(d) Immigration regulations and procedures

We support the continuing development of overall immigration policies in both Ireland and the United Kingdom, and of accompanying legislation, which is fair and transparent, and which honours both countries' obligations under international law. Such a policy should have at least the following features:

- (i) While taking a clear stand against illegal immigration, it should recognise and respect without ambiguity the rights of individuals to seek asylum. A 'saving clause' or other provision should make allowance for the fact that asylum-seekers are not required to have the same documentation as other categories of persons entering the country.
- (ii) Decisions about the operation of such a 'saving clause' should be made only by properly trained officials. They should have up-to-date, reliable information on countries of origin. While it is important to clamp down on traffickers, carriers should not be held responsible for making such judgements.
- (iii) Where a process, such as application for refugee status, involves a number of stages, and includes at any stage the right of appeal, legislation should ensure that there is sufficient time given for each stage to be fairly enacted. In particular, where translation or legal services are essential to the fair hearing of a claim, sufficient time should be allowed for such services to be accessed.
- (iv) The right to seek asylum should be clearly upheld as a right which applies to *individuals*. The concept of a "safe country" is misleading. It violates the principle that the right to seek asylum is an individual right, and that all asylum claims should be evaluated on an individual basis.
- (v) Regarding removals to EU countries, not all member states recognise persecution by non-government agencies as persecution within the meaning of the 1951 Convention. Those who have been persecuted and whose governments will not protect them should have the right to asylum.
- (vi) Consideration should be given to having asylum policy and administration taken out of the political sphere and handed to independent but accountable multiagency commissions in either country. These should have maximum communication and seek to harmonise policy and practice. In particular, the situation of students

from abroad, guest workers (including church workers) and other immigrants, short-term or long-term, regarding crossing the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland needs to be clarified.

(e) Accommodation centres

Recent publicity about the siting of accommodation centres locally, for example in a hotel in Sittingbourne in Kent, underline the difficulty of implementing a compassionate system of accommodation for asylum-seekers, while respecting the rights of local residents. Small, community-based accommodation is preferable to large accommodation centres, in which asylum seekers are segregated from the local community. The standard of accommodation, cleanliness, safety and the nature of the regime should be subject to rigorous inspection and not left mainly to the discretion of the centre manager.

(f) Detention

'The churches remain absolutely opposed in principle to the detention of people who are not even suspected of committing any crime. (By the Geneva Convention) we maintain that those seeking asylum should not be detained, or held in prisons, unless they have been charged with a serious criminal offence – in which case their detention should be governed by criminal law procedures – or if there is evidence to support a suspicion that they are a threat to public safety.' (CCRJ)

As a church we strongly endorse this view, recognising that it applies in Northern Ireland to the practice of detaining asylum-seekers in Maghaberry Prison – a situation generally recognised as unsatisfactory. We support bodies such as the Law Centre (NI) in urging that provision similar to Bail Hostels be made, enabling contact to be maintained with newly-arrived asylum-seekers, and services to be provided such as legal advice, welfare, translation services and assistance with form-filling.

(g) Children

Children's rights should be paramount:

- (i) Children and families with children should not be detained.
- (ii) Both Governments should be scrupulous in applying to asylum seeking children the UN Convention on the Rights of Children.
- (iii) Regarding deportation, where children are involved in cases where refugee status might otherwise be refused, clemency should be shown. Families should not face the choice of being broken up or sent to a country which the children have never seen or can barely remember.
- (iv) In order to facilitate integration, children should be educated in local schools as far as feasible.

(h) Support and assistance

Regarding the Republic of Ireland:

The Children's Rights Alliance, a coalition of 72 NGO's concerned with children, made a pre-budget submission to the Government of the Republic in which it called for an increase in the weekly payments made to asylum-seekers in direct provision. The recommended increases are from Euro 19 to Euro 38.10 (adult) and from Euro 9 to Euro 17.90 (child). We support this increase but strongly maintain that

such weekly payments should continue to be made to qualified recipients through the Department of Social and Family Affairs rather than be transferred to the Department of Justice.

Regarding the UK

We note with concern that asylum seekers will continue to be expected to live on 70% of the basic levels of Income Support, leading to real poverty and consequent social exclusion. The new regulation requiring asylum seekers to apply for acceptance at the point of entry and 'as soon as possible', this being determined by the subjective judgement of immigration officers, seems set to lead to destitution. We note with concern that those staying with relatives rather than in a Centre may be denied any support.

Regarding Northern Ireland

While welcoming the fact that immigration officers now travel from Liverpool to conduct interviews at Belfast International Airport, we understand that, to date, cost of travel to and from the airport for those required to report weekly has still to be borne by them out of their basic weekly allowance.

(i) Offences

We note the following comment from the Churches' Commission for Racial Justice regarding the UK Immigration Bill, 2002:

"We welcome the fact that people bringing asylum-seekers to Britain will not be held guilty of an offence if they were acting on behalf of an organisation which exists to help asylum seekers. We worry, however, that those within the Churches or outside them who offer sanctuary to asylum-seekers who have been refused the right to stay in Britain but who church members believe would suffer gravely if sent home may be subject to an unlimited fine and fourteen years imprisonment. We intend to continue our attempts to build a sanctuary movement within the Churches in Britain, along the lines of the movement in Germany."

(j) Trafficking and Illegal Working

We note also the CCRJ's statements:

"Those trafficked into prostitution should not be compelled to leave the UK when discovered – this would enable the traffickers to further exploit them on the grounds that going to the police will simply mean their being returned to the desperate situation from which they were trying to escape in the first place Similarly giving the police and immigration officers power to enter and search business premises will not eradicate illegal working and will make those working illegally more subject to exploitation".

Europe and the EU

10. Invited to contribute to a PCI document for submission to a National Forum on The Future of Europe the Race Relations Committee have urged:

- That the issues of Migration, Asylum-seekers and Refugees be viewed within the EU context as primarily a European problem, to be addressed collectively, rather than as one which variously affects individual member

states; and that the EU accordingly work towards a greater degree of equality between member states in welcoming refugees and asylum-seekers.

- That the EU recognise the moral responsibility of the Continent of Europe, both historically and in terms of contemporary economic structures, for those conditions in other parts of the world which produce huge numbers of uprooted people, not least within the continent of Africa.
- That the EU note the long-standing concern of many churches in Europe for refugees and asylum-seekers, recognising that care for 'the stranger' is deeply rooted in the biblical vision of society and of relationships between nations.

11. **Additionally** the PCI questions the effect of the Dublin Convention, requiring asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in the country in which they first arrive. This appears to give too little recognition to factors such as language, already resident family members and friends, and the need to cross other countries to reach, for example, Britain or Ireland by a land route. As noted above, the PCI, with the CCRJ, are concerned lest this lead to injustice, hardship, heartache and physical danger to those being returned to a country they did not intend to be their destination.

Nationality and community cohesion

12. Public discussion about immigration, asylum-seekers and refugees has raised the issue of nationality, and with it citizenship, identity, diversity and unity. While celebrating diversity, a society or nation needs a common vision and shared values which transcend difference and make for social cohesion. It seems to us that part of the alarm created by the arrival in our midst of new neighbours stems from a lack of a positive understanding of what it means to be British, or indeed Irish. As the Presbyterian Church in Ireland we would encourage such a debate.

However as a church we share with others in the Christian family the bond of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, membership in his Body, the Church Universal, and the vision of the Kingdom of God. We are uniquely placed to contribute to the discussion of the unity of that part of the human family which shares these islands.

Local congregations

13. While it is important that the PCI plays its due part in formulating and monitoring legislation, procedures and provision for asylum-seekers and refugees, and in shaping public opinion, as a church the PCI manifests itself primarily at local congregational level. It is precisely there that the church can meet, assist and relate to the asylum seeker and refugee in practical ways.

14. Accordingly the PCI encourages its congregations to become centres of welcome, extending the hand of friendship and a caring heart to those who come as strangers into their locality. While it is sadly true that there have been incidences of hostility in local communities – one first-hand report tells of a refugee being spat at in the street – there are concrete examples of a different attitude. One congregation has initiated a Welcome Centre, now run in

conjunction with other churches, which offers friendship over a cup of tea and referral services for such things as health, education, housing and so on. Such initiatives can best be taken in partnership with other interested parties locally, whether other churches or voluntary organisations, hopefully in partnership with statutory bodies.

15. Many asylum-seekers and refugees are Christians. A survey just completed for the Irish Council of Churches documents the significant contribution being made to church life, sometimes within mainline denominations, more often through both newly-founded ethnic churches or new church fellowships. It also describes some of the genuine difficulties of Christian communities with very different cultural backgrounds relating to one another. One member of our Race Relations Committee describes the integration of new immigrant members into existing local congregations as *“increasingly exciting and increasingly complex”* (Rev Alan Boal). In the Sunday School at Abbey Presbyterian Church, Dublin, some 8-10 nationalities are represented. To welcome ‘the stranger in our midst’, whether Christian or of another faith tradition, can be described as the ‘home leg’ of Overseas Mission.

16. Individual Christians and congregations can foster understanding and counter uninformed prejudice in their local community. Asylum-seekers and refugees make up a tiny minority of the resident population of Ireland, north and south. They face all of the challenges involved in adapting rapidly to a new culture, including, in some cases, learning a new language (though it should be remembered that many asylum-seekers not yet fluent in English are fluent in several other languages already). In addition, they may have had to leave their own country in traumatic circumstances and may be experiencing profound feelings of displacement, loneliness and grief. Therefore those of us who are part of the majority community have a particular responsibility to educate ourselves regarding the wider global context in which we all stand. This would include informing ourselves, for example, about the world-wide refugee population (most of whom are hosted by developing countries facing economic difficulties of monstrous proportions compared to ours); about the reasons people may have for seeking asylum in Ireland or the UK; about the policies of our own governments with regard to asylum-seekers and their need for housing, food, legal assistance, and so on; about the kinds of trauma that asylum-seekers may have experienced and the ongoing effects of such trauma; and about the links between people’s reasons for seeking asylum and wider development and justice issues. We urge our local congregations to seek out or set up adult education programmes covering such matters. One such example is a four-week intensive course leading to an international Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance, available in Dublin, through the College of Surgeons.

For prayer and further reflection:

17. “Who is my neighbour?” We do not need to phone a friend or ask the audience to answer this question. We think we know. The Bible teacher who asked Jesus this same question thought he knew the answer too, but the response Jesus gave, in the form of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, pushes the boundary way beyond what he expected.

18. "Who is my neighbour?" Who is worthy of my help, my understanding, my forgiveness, my respect, my love? God's Word confronts our prejudice, fear, intolerance and hatred, and reminds us that we all need to be changed.

19. "Who is my neighbour?" The question broadens our horizons, breaks down the barriers of religion, culture, race and social class. It sets the scene for how we should treat and value those who come to this country as Asylum-seekers, Refugees or Immigrants.

Here is a Bible check-list for further meditation:

Who is my neighbour?	Luke 10:25-37
How to treat a foreigner	Leviticus 19:33-34
How foreigners can be a blessing	The book of Ruth
Justice, love and fellowship	Micah 6:8
Treating others as we treat the Lord	Matthew 25:31-46
The gift of hospitality	Hebrews 13:2
Breaking down barriers	Ephesians 2:11-22

For further reading:

20. *What the Bible says about the Stranger* (The Churches' Peace Education Programme, Interchurch House, 48 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast BT9 6DW).

No welcome Here? Asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland and Britain. Published by Democratic Dialogue, 53 University Street, Belfast BT7 1FY.

A Place of Refuge? Asylum seekers and Refugees in Northern Ireland: a Needs Assessment, by Dr Robbie McVeigh.

Forced to Flee: frequently asked questions about asylum seekers and refugees, by the Refugee Action Group

(both available from the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, 9 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR).

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Irish Church Relations

2. That the following appointments be made:

To the Irish Council of Churches – Revs S Anketell, Dr S J Campbell; L Conway, OBE; Revs L E Carroll, R Cobain; Mrs Pat Crossley; Revs A D Davidson, G A J Farquhar; Miss D Gilmour; Revs Dr R J G Gray, M C A Gray, R Herron, Dr S Hutchinson; Mrs M Irwin; Revs D Knox, C McClure, D Nesbitt; J A Patterson, Ms Valerie Steele; Rev Dr D J Watts.

To the Irish Inter Church Meeting – Revs L E Carroll, N Cubitt, A D Davidson, Dr H A Dunlop, Dr J Dunlop, Dr R J G Gray, R Herron, I A McKay, J P Taylor; Ms Valerie Steele; Rev Dr D J Watts.

To the Irish Inter Church Committee - Rev A D Davidson, Rev Dr D J Watts.

Race Relations

3. That the document *Policy on Asylum Seekers and Refugees* be adopted as the General Assembly's policy.

4. That 1000 copies of the Policy document and 2000 copies of a popular leaflet for congregations be published as a charge on the Incidental Fund.

5. That the following grants be made from the Incidental Fund:

Irish Council of Churches	£16,400
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	£8,000
Conference on European Churches	£3,500
CEC Solidarity Fund	£1,500
Leuenberg Consultation	£1,000
World Alliance of Reformed Churches	£10,100
World Alliance of Reformed Churches General Council Fund	£1,000

Race Relations Grants:

(i) Diakonia Council of Churches	£1,500
(ii) Churches' Council for Racial Justice	£400
(iii) Multi-cultural Resource Centre	£350
(iv) Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities	£300
(v) Irish Refugee Council	£250
(vi) Christ Holiness Assembly International (Dublin)	£100
(vii) Holocaust Memorial Day Committee	£100

Environmental Panel	£150
General Work of the Board	£5,000

6. That the Inter-Church Relations Board, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 278 of the Code as follows:

OVERSEAS BOARD

Convener: Very Rev Dr S J DIXON

Secretaries: Rev W S MARRS

Mrs MARGARET MYERS

MOBILISING THE CHURCH FOR MISSION IN THE 21st CENTURY

Vision, Mission and Strategy 2010

1. Between 1997 and 1999 the Overseas Board undertook a review process for the Millennium entitled, 'The Way Ahead – Further Steps in World Mission'. However given the rapidity of change in the world today and also the fact that the Overseas Board itself is going through a period of transition in its leadership, the Board agreed that it is timely to engage in a strategic review process for the overseas mission of our Church through to the year 2010. Those charged with the responsibility of conducting this review will be overseeing a process whereby the vision, mission and strategy of our Church in overseas mission are given careful thought.

2. The Scriptures remind us, "where there is no vision, the people perish." Proverbs 29:18. **Vision** has been described as the big 'holiday poster' picture of *where we would like to be* as a Church and as a mission board in terms of world mission. It should be something compelling and achievable, yet stretching. Ideally, vision for overseas mission should not just be owned by an individual leader, one committee, or board but by the Church as a whole. As a servant of our Church in world mission, the Overseas Board has the task of being the custodian of our shared God-given vision.

3. Then there is the **mission**, what we are called to do, our formal declaration of purpose as stated in the mission statement of our denomination and in the policy of the Overseas Board. The latter highlights that "the Presbyterian Church in Ireland accepts the Great Commission given by Christ, our Lord, to proclaim his Gospel in word and action throughout the world". This provides us with a platform for everything we undertake, but before we try to do everything, or anything for that matter, it is important that we reflect on *who we are* in world mission today.

4. Over the years the Overseas Board's policy has provided a platform for a tremendous range of mission activity all around the world. Evangelism and church planting, medical work and education are but a few areas of involvement. It is timely, however, that we consider not only the need to respond to the Great Commission in general, but give careful consideration to our core capabilities, our key strengths, and so identify our weaknesses too. What is God showing us to be our distinctive contribution to world mission, past, present and future? What place do we hold and should we hold in world mission?

5. Examining *who we are* in world mission cannot be divorced from a periodic reality check on our external environment, from considering *what is going on* around us. What is the world like in which we hold a place? We need

to listen to those at the 'coal face' of world mission who provide us with a wake-up call to the world around us - a world of globalisation yet fragmentation, or 'Globfrag' as it has been known; a world troubled with terrorism, tribalism and the persecution of Christian minorities; a world that in the past year experienced the Bali bombing and another war in Iraq. Eager to consider *what is going on* in the world today, we have paved the way for a strategic review by seeking the views of presbyteries on the theme of 'Globalisation, Mission and the Kingdom of God' and giving our Overseas Board Annual Conference in October the title 'Into all the World'.

6. Next in the review process is the challenge of determining our **strategy**. Asking the question, "*How do we get from where we are to where we want to be?*" we are faced with the task of matching our God-given calling, skills and resources as a Church with the needs of the world around us.

7. At present the Overseas Board's policy is carried out by three Assembly Committees and four Board Committees, and is worked out through three strategic thrusts:

- To stimulate prayer and practical interest and engage in the education of individuals, congregations, organisations and presbyteries throughout Ireland.
- To support and encourage those whom Christ has called to His witness and service overseas.
- To maintain and develop relationships with partner churches and organisations sharing our common calling.

8. Crucial to our strategic review will be the need to establish priorities, and then set goals and objectives, so that as we undertake any particular course of action we can both realise our vision and simultaneously be held accountable. Our strategy could be described as our personality in mission, so it is important that, as a Church, we have a strong sense of ownership of whatever strategic direction is established. It is intended that this review of the Board's vision, mission and strategy will be carried out in consultation with the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities, and with a view to reporting to the General Assembly of 2004 with a strategic plan to the year 2010.

GLOBALISATION, MISSION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

9. This theme was highlighted in the Overseas Board's report presented to the General Assembly in 2002. On that occasion the Assembly passed a resolution, "that the report on Globalisation, Mission and the Kingdom of God in Paras 10-17, together with additional material and questions, be sent down to Presbyteries for discussion and report to the Overseas Board Secretary by 31 December 2002, and that the General Assembly encourage the Overseas Board to examine the implications of the globalisation phenomena for the mission of Jesus Christ so that the priorities of our Church in World Mission into the 21st Century will be clearly set out."

10. We are pleased to record that this resolution was implemented and by early 2003 the Overseas Board had received responses from 16 of our 21 presbyteries. The Board would wish to record its sincere thanks to all the presbyteries that contributed enthusiastically to this examination of Globalisation. We believe it led to a great deal of stimulating discussion in many

presbyteries, and would encourage a careful reading of the summary report of the findings set out in Appendix C. We believe this report presents important challenges for the Church today as it sets out its priorities for mission in the 21st Century. A more detailed report of the findings is available from the Overseas Office.

ASIA

11. One of the resolutions appended to last year's Overseas Board report requested the Board to examine the consequences of religious conflict for communities of peoples in our partner churches. Asia continues to be the theatre in which many of these intense dramas are played out. We are thankful for the contribution of members of partner churches in Pakistan, India and Indonesia who have been with us this year and helped develop our thinking. We appreciate the visits of the Board's executive staff to overseas churches and the fruitful discussions taking place throughout the last year.

12. The sense of isolation that comes over small and often persecuted minorities has been addressed, in part, in PCI's ongoing mission partnerships in this past year.

13. As a church we acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our missionary personnel working alongside national and local church leaders and members. Aware of the dangers posed where the church is in a minority, the need for our understanding and informed prayerful support has never been more pressing.

14. The Overseas Board is in a process of review of how our methods allow us to achieve the aims and goals in mission set before us. We have benefited much in receiving insight and encouragement from our Asian partners, even as we have sought to share in our Lord's name.

15. Significant changes in government and the complexion of political opinion have taken place since last year. Nepal has endured a period of political vacuum and the uncertainties thus created have brought deep fear and anxiety for its people. In India newly enacted local state laws have sharply focussed the potential for anti-Christian sentiment and action. Indonesia is still struggling with the challenge of greater regional autonomy in the wake of East Timor's independence. Many of the outer regions in the east of the country have larger Christian populations. As a nation it moves towards national elections in 2004, traditionally a time of increased tension.

16. During the past year, the conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir has lessened. However uncertainty remains around this long-standing problem. Gujrat state is often the locus of anti-Christian activity and the recent enactment of anti-conversion laws in South India increase the worry that Gujrat may also be affected.

17. Rev Devansu Osa, a bursar from our partner church, the **Church of North India** (CNI), is studying at the Irish School of Ecumenics, Belfast through Trinity College, Dublin. He was able to bring a recent report and reflection on the recent crisis caused by the anti-conversion laws enacted in Tamilnadu State in November 2002. Relations between Hindu and Christian people have deteriorated for a number of reasons. Christianity is portrayed as a foreign religion, and the methods of mission used by Christians are perceived in

some quarters as amounting to offering the 3S's - soap - soup - salvation. The growth of the church is also perceived to be a threat by Hindu leaders. The legislation thus seeks to control the use of force, fraud or allurement in propagating the Christian faith. Already Christians have held a day of prayer, and leaders held a day for strategic planning. Bishops are visiting churches to strengthen the flock. However, concerns remain for churches full of new converts, over the threat of conflict between Hindu and Christian and the possibility of other states enacting the same laws.

18. Mr Nigel Eves visited the CNI, in November 2002 and brought the prayers and support of PCI to our partners at this critical time. He attended the CNI Partners in Mission Committee in Ahmedabad on 27-28 November 2002. On 29 November he attended the hand-over of Mavnu village to its residents. This village was reconstructed using the funds raised by PCI through the Moderator's appeal in March 2001 after the earthquake in Gujarat in January 2001. The sum of £750,000 was pledged to the CNI's rehabilitation and reconstruction work and the disbursement of these funds continues through the CNI. A further £78,308, granted by Ireland Aid, has been used for the rebuilding and rehabilitation of schools and hostels within the Diocese of Gujarat.

19. Two of our personnel have suffered major illness recently: Elizabeth Matthews in Mussoorie and Norman Duncan while in Belfast on home assignment. We are thankful that they continue to make good progress. The pressures of cross-cultural ministry are considerable and we value all that our personnel do.

20. The past year has been marked by faithful service by all our personnel in Goa, Chennai, Gujarat and Mussoorie, and we record our thanks to the Lord for His enabling grace.

21. Christopher & Nivedita Macwan will be on home assignment in India this summer. They continue to undertake a heavy work schedule in the Wembley area of London.

22. Professor Arthur James, Principal of Gujranwala Theological College in **Pakistan**, attended Union Theological College in the Autumn of 2002. He with his wife, Salima, brought clear insights into the on-going struggles of our partner church, the **Presbyterian Church of Pakistan**. Karachi has seen several attacks on small Christian communities and the situation remains tense. However the church maintains a strong and vital witness in this Muslim area and PCI's involvement in supporting theological education is greatly appreciated. Mrs Salima James encouraged the development of our support for women's programmes which will have a profound effect on their community in the future.

23. The Amity Foundation continues to develop its teachers' programme in China. As well as the short-term programme, which PCI personnel have been involved in, Amity seeks to support a long-term teachers' programme, enabling better structures and methods to be developed for teaching, especially in remote areas of China. Rev John Hanna has been attending the British and Irish Amity Teachers' Group (BIATG) in the UK and also as an observer at the China Forum of the Churches' Commission on Mission.

24. The relative calm in **Indonesia** in the past year covers over considerable uncertainty throughout the nation. The downturn in the economy, accompanied by political upheaval and constitutional change, ensures that the

church in Indonesia continues to face deep crises. The survival of Indonesia as a tolerant, multi-religious community is a major concern.

25. Church leaders in eastern Indonesia have been conducting regular consultations determined to find a way through their crises. They understand that, unless the church can provide clear and strong leadership at this time, the Christian community in eastern Indonesia will become marginalised and irrelevant. Professor James Haire, who spoke at PCI's General Assembly in 2002, has been involved in these consultations offering wisdom and encouragement to Indonesian friends, and the assurance of PCI's practical and prayerful support.

26. **The Christian Church in Sumba** is under new leadership and continues to promote the Kingdom in its relatively isolated surroundings. The **Evangelical Church in Timor** continues to bear the heavy burden of refugee support as repatriation to East Timor and other areas is not yet complete. Rev Elyse Niap progresses in her post-graduate studies in Ireland, and has recently been married to Mr Barry McCroskery. Rev John Hanna visited the church in Timor in May while attending Elyse's wedding.

27. The **Evangelical Church in Halmahera**, again under new leadership, continues the slow process of bridge-building. There is a striking example in the difficult area of making peace with implacable foes.

28. Rev John Hanna and Mr Nigel Eves represented PCI at the annual meeting of **Eukumindo** (an umbrella organisation of European churches and missions involved in Mission in Indonesia) in Stuttgart. Church leaders in Jakarta (in the headquarters of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI)), are aware of the struggles of the many regional churches and are reminded of the need for their support as they play an important role in advocacy, solidarity and prayer for churches which feel under threat. They have access to government departments and international bodies and should seek every opportunity to ensure security and other fundamental rights are met.

29. **Nepal** has faced considerable challenges in the past year. The country has seen a Maoist insurgency break out. Up to 4,000 people may have died in 2002, and large areas of Nepal are now under the control of Maoist forces. A cease-fire was declared at the end of January 2003 between the Maoists and government forces allowing talks to fill the political vacuum caused by the ongoing 'caretaker' administration in place since last year. We continue to pray for a lasting settlement to this political crisis.

30. PCI has seen several of our own personnel return to Ireland after their terms of service ended and we appreciate the dedication of all who served and continue to serve with the **United Mission to Nepal** (UMN) in very difficult circumstances.

31. Rev Uel Marrs attended the extraordinary UMN Board meeting in Kathmandu in December 2002. This meeting approved documents outlining a new constitution and bye-laws for UMN as well as a Five-Year Strategic Plan. A number of major areas of involvement for UMN in the next five years have been identified: addressing root causes of poverty; addressing injustice; peace and reconciliation; relief; partnership; relationship with the Christian community in Nepal; capacity building; and contributing to national policy development.

32. UMN is aware of the problems it faces and the flexibility required both now and in the future if it is to remain effective in Christian witness in Nepal. It will be more streamlined, with fewer personnel. UMN missionaries will need to be more specialised in their fields of service, and able to integrate effectively with Nepali colleagues in the organisations to which they will be seconded. It will be more decentralised, working in clusters situated in different parts of the country. PCI's participation on UMN's Board and practical support offered as implementation of their strategic review gets underway is greatly appreciated.

33. PCI maintains its commitment to the relatively isolated Christian communities in **Myanmar** and **Thailand**, through our support for the Lamp of Thailand and the **Church of Christ in Thailand** and through scholarships for the **Presbyterian Church of Myanmar**.

EUROPE

34. Europe, unlike Africa or Australasia, has no clear geographical identity. From the Middle Ages until the rise of secularism in modern times it has been identified with Christendom. In recent years the pattern of nation states in Europe and the pattern of church life, developed at the time of the Reformation and the counter-Reformation, are both breaking up, as are the patterns of thought which went with them. People today are confused by all the changes taking place and it is a challenge to the European churches, in their mission in the 21st century, to be a point of reference amidst all that is confusing.

35. Paul, as he sought to take the Gospel into Europe, expressed his gratitude to the Church at Philippi for their partnership in this work. We have sought through partnership to be an encouragement to the Church and have continued to promote relationships at different levels between PCI and our partner churches in Central Europe and in France and Spain.

36. Our relationship with the Synod of the **Reformed Church in Hungary** continues. This year we welcomed Szabolcs Suszter, a bursar who has come to study for a year at Union Theological College. Szabolcs has also been attached to Carnmoney congregation and enjoyed fellowship there. We have been working towards establishing a partnership with the Tiszaninnen District where Dr Istvan Meszaros is Bishop and Dr Daniel Szabo is a lay deputy. Claire Maguire completed her term of service in this District and returned to Ireland on 5 August 2002.

37. We have continued to build up our partnership with both districts of the **Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania**. We were pleased to welcome, on his first visit to Ireland, Bishop Geza Pap from the Transylvanian Church District. This was a time of orientation for him and of mutual learning for both partner churches. Richard Lynas commenced work in this district in September 2002 with the Reformed Mission to Addicts and the Bonus Pastor Foundation.

38. We have had over the years bursars from both districts of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania. In August 2002 Jozsef Kovacs arrived from the Kiralyhagomellek district for one year's study at Union Theological College.

39. In the summer of 2002, three all-age teams were involved in summer ministry in Romania. Two of the teams helped with youth Bible programmes in Mische and Szilagyeseh and the third team linked into the work of Csaba and Ilona Veres in Cluj. Csaba and Ilona with Jasmin and Carissa are involved in youth ministry and work with street children. The team members were well received and the programmes had a great impact on the young people. Team members also provided useful feed-back to their own congregations. Invitations have been extended for teams for 2003 and it is planned to send two teams - one to Szilagyeseh and another to Cluj.

40. A relationship has been developing slowly between PCI and the small **Hungarian Reformed Church District in Transcarpathia**, in the western part of Ukraine. A team went in 2001 and we have had two bursars from this district. Zoltan Literati completed his studies at Union Theological College in June 2002. Rev John Kirkpatrick was invited to visit this district in May 2003. It is hoped that this visit will further our relationship and open the way for a team to be sent in the future.

41. We have a partnership agreement with the **Church of the Brethren** in the **Czech and Slovak Republics** which allows for the development of relationships between congregations. A number of twinings have been established and have been of mutual benefit to the life, witness and service of these congregations. Susan Clarke continues as part of the ministry team of Prague 6 congregation.

42. It is interesting to note that now over 70% of Europeans are urban dwellers. To prepare people for this type of ministry we hope to offer strategic help to the churches in Central Europe through sharing in the sponsorship of students to come to Britain to study programmes for Urban Mission, developed by Westminster Theological Seminary.

43. A small mission called Church Growth Bosnia-Croatia, the directors of which are all PCI members, is engaged in Bible translation work in Bosnia. The Overseas Board has agreed to encourage this work by making a financial contribution towards it.

44. For the past 16 years we have had a church-to-church relationship with the **Église Réformée de France (ERF)**. Rev Uel Marrs made his first visit to the ERF in May 2002 and met PCI personnel working in France. He represented PCI at the National Synod of the French Reformed Church in Nimes and had the opportunity to gain an insight into the life of the church in its witness to French society. Ministers from PCI have served in parishes in the ERF since 1989 and Rev Rodney and Denise Cameron with Claire, Sarah and Adam continue their work in the parishes of Privas and Flaviac. In common with other churches, the number of new ministers being trained and entering the ERF is in decline, and falls short of the number of posts to be filled. Further discussions to progress our partnership with the ERF were to take place during the year but these have been put on hold as both the General Secretary of the National Council, Monsieur Marc Richalot, and Rev Raphael Picon, Executive Secretary for International/Inter-Church Relations, resigned from their posts. Rev Bertrand de Cazenove has been appointed as the new General Secretary of the ERF. Rev Dr Gordon and Sandra Campbell with Aimee, Myriam, Stuart and Marc continue to serve in Aix-en-Provence where Gordon is Professor of New

Testament in the Free Faculty of Reformed Theology, which has a vital role to play in the church of the French speaking world.

45. We continue to support the work of Stephen and Deborah Pacht among Jews in Paris. No outreach took place in the summer of 2002 as a special outreach was planned to take place in Toulouse at the end of September and beginning of October as part of the Jews for Jesus International's 'Behold your God' campaign. This resulted in eight Jewish people placing their trust in Jesus as the Messiah.

46. Over the past number of years strong links have been developed with the **Spanish Evangelical Church (SEC)**. These links were further strengthened through the visit of Revs David McCarthy and Uel Marrs to Spain in April 2002 and their meeting with the Permanent Commission of the SEC. PCI has continued to support the SEC in its ministry to the social and spiritual needs of the English-speaking residents on the Costa del Sol. Mrs Jacki Hartsmith-Foy, leader of the Torre del Mar congregation, has been encouraged by recent developments there. Derek and Jane French have completed their second year working in evangelism, Bible teaching and training with four congregations in the Levante Presbytery. The SEC has for some time been working amongst immigrants from Armenia, Nigeria, Kenya, Columbia and elsewhere, seeking to bring them into the community of faith. There are now two congregations where the majority of members are immigrants. The SEC is willing to share with PCI her experience of working with people of similar cultures now living in Ireland.

47. The **Jerusalem Church in Hamburg** was established in 1845 by Rev James Craig. He was followed by Rev Arnold Frank who ministered there for over 50 years. PCI was invited to attend celebrations from 6-13 April to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Church and the 90th Anniversary of the diaconate work. Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson and Rev J Seawright represented PCI at the celebrations. For some time we have been considering the future of our relationship with the Jerusalem Church in Hamburg and in this regard, decisions will to be made in the near future.

MIDDLE EAST

48. The political situation in **Israel** remains tense and the appointment of the new coalition government has not to date seen any decrease in violence. The decline in tourism has caused financial difficulties for Christian guest centres including the Stella Carmel Guesthouse and Conference Centre, where in recent years a number of our personnel have worked.

49. Rev Professor Cecil McCullough and Rev John Mann travelled to **Lebanon** on 24 February for one week to join in consultation with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon. This visit provided an opportunity to strengthen links with the Near East School of Theology and the local church in Lebanon at a time when the stability of the region was further threatened by the imminence of an invasion of Iraq by coalition forces of the USA and the UK.

AFRICA

50. "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."

2 Corinthians 4: 8 & 9. This description of faithful Christians' experience in a fallen world is particularly apt to the church and the communities in Africa in a much more literal sense than most seem to experience in the developed western world. It is very hard for us to appreciate the huge task it is for many simply to survive in the face of poverty, disease, famine, political instability and persecution, yet they are "not crushed... not in despair... not abandoned... not destroyed." Our brothers and sisters in Christ in these situations shame us with their resilience, faith and vision for the future.

51. Elections in **Kenya** have taken place leading to a change of government with a new President, Mr Mwai Kibaki. This transition took place peacefully and presents the churches and all the Kenyan people with an exciting but challenging situation.

52. We continue to work at maintaining and developing our partnership with the **Presbyterian Church of East Africa** (PCEA). This has involved visits by Rev Uel Marrs to Kenya to meet with the leadership of PCEA and our own personnel. It is of considerable assistance that Mr Marrs knows the leaders and the situation very well, having served in Kenya for eight years. New office-bearers have been elected in the PCEA and Rev Samuel Muriguh, who worked as Associate Minister in Orangefield congregation from 1995 to 1997, is the Principal Clerk. The PCEA's 17th General Assembly took place in Nairobi from 21-26 April 2003.

53. PCI personnel in Kenya continue to be involved in the spread of the Gospel through theological training, education and development work.

54. Rev Joseph Wakaba, a PCEA minister, is with us for one year of study for a Masters in Theology (MTh) at Union Theological College through the Institute of Theology at Queen's University. Mrs Jane Tharao, who is Personal Assistant to the PCEA Secretary General, is approaching the end of a year of study for an HND in Administration and Information Management at the Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education.

55. Rev David Kiarie, a PCEA minister, and his wife, Violet, continue their work in a special ministry in Second Ballyeaston congregation and will complete their two years' service later this year.

56. At the time of writing this report, the President of **Malawi**, Mr Bakili Muluzi, continues to attempt to change the constitution. If successful he would be allowed to run not only for a third term of five years in office, but start a new series of three five year terms from 2004. A Bill to implement this change failed to get through Parliament at the end of January but the attempt led to street protests and some violence. The churches have held interdenominational prayers and sought funds from their partner churches to publish another 'pastoral letter' to the nation.

57. Rev Uel Marrs and Mrs Margaret Myers had an introductory visit to Malawi in November 2002. This gave them the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the situation in which our partner church, the **Church of Central Africa Presbyterian** (CCAP) and our missionary personnel are working. It also enabled them to see the relief and development work being undertaken, particularly with regard to the current food crisis and AIDS epidemic.

58. The Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Russell Birney, and his wife, Arline, visited Malawi from 24 March to 14 April 2003 when they visited the three Malawi Synods (Blantyre, Nkhoma and Livingstonia), met with leadership of the Zambia Synod and visited PCI missionary personnel.

59. Rev Ted Mwambila, Deputy General Secretary of Livingstonia Synod of the CCAP, and his wife, Ida, visited PCI from late November 2002 to early January 2003. This was a new and particularly profitable endeavour both from the visitors' point of view in understanding our Church and the background of our personnel who go to work in Malawi and, through their 'deputation' meetings, helping our congregations appreciate what mission overseas means today.

60. PCI personnel in Malawi continue to be involved in the spread of the Gospel through theological training, education, medical and development work. The AIDS epidemic is putting a tremendous strain on every aspect of life in Malawi through the decimation of the educated people in particular. Hence there is an enormous need for trained people and for trainers if the whole educational, social and political scene is to be prevented from regressing disastrously. Thus we continue to respond as we can to the requests for personnel.

61. PCI has responded to requests for help with funds from each of the three CCAP Synods in Malawi and the Synod in Zambia through block grants which are used at the discretion of the Synods. However other requests, for example for motor cycles and bicycles for ministers, roofs for churches, Youth and Sunday School projects, etc are placed on an 'extra-mile giving' file, and are taken up by individuals, congregations or organisations of PCI. In addition, a project has been undertaken to send containers with educational and health supplies on an ongoing basis.

62. The appeal to our Church for the food crisis in Malawi, together with £10,000 from World Development Appeal and £3,347 from the 2001 Missionary Rally, raised a total of £137,092. The present situation is that this year's rains have been unusually uneven in their coverage. There have been reasonable harvests in those areas where the rains have been good and where seed and fertiliser were distributed by the Government, NGO's or churches. However, in some areas that have had insufficient rain, and in others where the crops were washed away with floods, the emergency continues and many people still depend upon food aid to stay alive. The hardship of the people is further exacerbated by the struggling economy, the falling value of the currency and a new government surtax of 20%. All these factors have had an adverse affect on the income of the churches from local sources.

63. The theological training of ministers is carried out at the United Theological College in Zomba where the CCAP Synods are the major partners. The college continues to expand its numbers and courses and upgrade its academic standards. PCI supports the college with the provision of staff. However, the rapid growth of the church, amongst other things, means that Zomba Theological College cannot meet the demand for ministers, hence Livingstonia Synod has just started an additional intensive course to train ministers. This course will run for a maximum of six years. The Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM) programme, which seeks to equip elders and deacons, is also based on the same site as the college in Zomba.

TEEM depends much more there upon the regular ministry of the churches, than it does in this country.

64. The Christian Literature Association In Malawi (CLAIM) struggles to respond to the huge demands placed on it. It is hoped that, through a new issue of 8 million shares, the work of CLAIM can be revitalised. The PWA is investigating the possibility of supporting this re-launch with funds from its Birthday Thank Offering for 2003.

65. We make a significant contribution to the vital work of ministry to students through the chaplaincy work of Revs John Hanson and David Steele, through the support given by our missionary teachers to the Student Christian Organisation in Malawi (SCOM) and by a grant to SCOM.

66. At the time of writing, the war in southern **Sudan** drags on and the peace process is faltering. Talks between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army resumed in January 2003, later than planned. There have been calls from the civil society, churches and other armed groups to be involved in this peace process. The dynamic of these ongoing discussions has already been badly damaged by the breakdown of the cease-fire in Western Upper Nile and the Government's offensive in the area of the oil fields, together with the continuing build-up of forces in the south. There is a looming tragedy of HIV/AIDS in southern Sudan.

67. Rev Dr Jim Campbell represented PCI at the Partnership Consultation of the **Presbyterian Church of Sudan** (PCOS), held in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2002. He reported that the PCOS in the government-controlled areas (PCOS-Malakal, with 312 congregations and about 562,500 members) and in the Liberated areas (PCOS-Akobo, with 48 parishes served by 120 pastors and evangelists) are virtually separate churches, rather like the Synods of the CCAP in Malawi. New Administrations have been installed in both sections of the church and there is a new spirit of unity in both. The centenary of the founding of PCOS was celebrated in March 2002. Nile Theological College, which trains their pastors, has 26 students three of whom are sponsored by PCI.

68. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the John Knox International Reformed Centre have initiated a Mission in Unity project with the aim of fostering closer collaboration between the six Reformed Churches in Sudan. The Board agreed to encourage this project through a small grant to assist delegates coming together for a consultation in Kampala.

69. Our partnership with the **Église Evangélique Presbyterienne du Togo** (EEPT) will be reconsidered as part of the Overseas Board's strategic review to be undertaken in the coming months. We were invited to attend the Synod meetings of the EEPT in February 2003 but no representative was sent this year.

LATIN AMERICA and THE CARIBBEAN

70. A Partnership Agreement with the **Presbyterian Church in Brazil** (IPB) was signed at the IPB General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro in July 2002 by the Convener and Executive Secretary of the Board.

71. We have received an invitation to the Centennial Celebrations of the **Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil** (IPIB) in July 2003. It is hoped

that Rev Prof Bill Addley and Mrs Margaret Myers will travel to Brazil for this event, also meeting with PCI missionary personnel serving there.

72. PCI personnel are involved in the mission work of the IPB and the IPIB in the remote north east of this huge country and amongst the Caiua people.

73. Rev Uel Marrs attended the Synod meetings of our partner church, the **United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands**, held from 30 March to 4 April 2003 and visited our missionary personnel in Jamaica. He also spent a day meeting with church representatives in Grand Cayman.

74. With the return and retirement of personnel, the number of PCI personnel serving in Jamaica has diminished in recent times but we continue to be involved in congregational ministry and Christian training. Our partnership and commitment to work with the United Church remains as strong as ever, as they face the challenges of bearing witness to the love of God and salvation through faith in Christ in a context of much social deprivation, associated crime and violence.

MISSION EDUCATION

75. It is exciting to see, in this age of information technology, how easy it is to access up to date, relevant information on mission, not least through the Internet. Nowadays more and more Christians, younger and older, are not satisfied just to sit back passively to listen to the missionary speaker who occasionally visits their congregation. Increasingly, they are motivated to seek out a more direct, hands-on involvement in cross-cultural mission either by going overseas in one's and two's or as part of a team. When this kind of direct involvement takes place then learning about mission is enhanced. Quite simply the best way for people to learn fully is by doing.

76. Furthermore, church members are using e-mail to engage in 'e-mission', taking the initiative to develop and maintain relationships with partner church members all around the world with a view to supporting them in the building of God's Kingdom. One aspect of the Overseas Board's approach to mission education is to encourage this new, dynamic involvement in mission, believing that mission is not so much what the Overseas Board does on behalf of the Church but rather the Board seeks to serve the whole church to truly own mission at every level. Such a strong sense of ownership of the missionary task is vital for the future.

77. Traditionally we have seen in the PWA a strong sense of ownership of and commitment to the overseas mission of our Church. This has been greatly valued by our missionaries and overseas partners, but we now face the challenge of emphasising that ownership of overseas mission is the responsibility of all our members. Every Christian is in some sense to be a missionary Christian and every congregation to be a missionary congregation. Mission is to be part of who we are, our very identity, and not something we once in a while do or support.

78. It is essential that presbytery and congregational mission agents, together with others in church leadership, see the key role they have to play in furthering this process of education and ownership, encouraging Christians to ask the right questions about mission. Not, "Is mission for me?" but rather, "What is my role in mission?"

79. Mission agents, missionaries on home assignment and other presbytery representatives came together on 23 May 2002 at Belfast Bible College to undertake a review of presbytery mission tours. The general consensus that came out of the day was that presbytery mission tours should continue. However, the review underlined the importance of good forward planning, the need to tailor programmes to local needs, the need for timely information for presbytery mission agents and also the importance of conducting an evaluation after each tour. Again, the importance of establishing whom we are trying to reach with the tours was highlighted. Since last reporting, presbytery mission tours were held in Templepatrick, Newry, Down and Omagh in the Autumn of 2002, and in Ballymena, Derry & Strabane, Dublin & Munster and Foyle in the Spring of 2003.

80. Over the past year, missionaries on home assignment, returned mission volunteers, members of overseas teams, overseas visitors and bursars, Board members and relations and friends of overseas personnel have enthusiastically engaged in deputation speaking on behalf of the Board. We extend our sincere thanks to all, acknowledging that their stimulating, challenging and informative presentations make a significant contribution to the understanding and commitment of PCI members to overseas mission.

81. We continue with the pattern of holding two deputation training days, one month apart, at the beginning of a deputation period and a review day at the end. The arrangement whereby a missionary on home assignment is guaranteed one Sunday a month free of all deputation responsibilities has been continued and has improved the level of spiritual refreshment amongst missionaries while on home assignment.

82. Training in the use of PowerPoint® has proved popular, but in doing this we endeavour to make sure that missionaries do not become overly dependant on computer technology, but continue to provide effective communication.

83. In 2002 some 90,000 copies of World News were produced and circulated in time for presbytery meetings in September. Much positive feedback was received; however, we are in the process of asking a number of questions about World News. Does the production of the newspaper involve too much effort for too little effect? Where does the local ownership of World News lie? Does it need to be repositioned in the overall planned communications strategy of the Overseas Board? Further critical assessment is required to determine the target readership of World News and therefore what the form, content and frequency of the publication should be in the future.

84. It is understood that the cost of video production has come down substantially since the Overseas Board produced its most recent video series. It is hoped, therefore, to investigate the possibility of producing of a new video series.

85. For occasions when the Overseas Board has an opportunity to promote the mission work of our church at exhibitions, we plan to look into the possibility of developing displays that communicate more effectively the work of the Board.

86. Over the past five years there has been no significant development of the Overseas section of the PCI Web Site, though a number of ideas are afoot.

Recognising that things cannot remain as they are, discussions are due to begin shortly with Web Site designers and it is hoped that the Web Site will be set up in such a manner that updates can be carried out by Overseas Office staff without the ongoing need for outside help.

87. Prayerline is currently being sent to around 950 e-mail addressees each week, of which one third are ministers. Put another way, at least one person in around 70% of PCI congregations is receiving Prayerline each week. Action is being taken to promote the use of Prayerline amongst the 160 congregations where, as far as we know, no one is receiving Prayerline.

88. The Moderator's theme for the year, 'Living in God's Power' was adopted as the theme for the United Missionary Rally which took place on Tuesday 22 October 2002. Rev Prof Arthur James and his wife, Salima, on sabbatical from the Presbyterian Church in Pakistan, addressed the well-filled Assembly Hall on 'Living in God's power in the midst of persecution'. Jacki Hartsmith-Foy spoke about recent developments in the English-speaking congregation of the Spanish Evangelical Church in Torre Del Mar, Spain. Then Naomi Keefe reported on her work at the Valley of the Lord Orphanage, Recife, Brazil where she had been serving among orphans and disadvantaged girls. It was good also to hear the reflections of members of a work party involved over the summer in renovation work at the Henry Henderson Institute in Blantyre, Malawi. The evening was rounded off by the Moderator who reminded us that 'living in God's power is for us too'.

PERSONNEL, VISITS AND VISITORS

89. During the year the following missionaries passed to higher service: Mrs Berti McKee, who served in India from 1963-67, passed away on 25 March 2002; Dr Hugo Hezlett, who served in India from 1934 to 1964, passed away on 22 November 2002; Miss Maureen Patterson, who served in Jamaica from 1957-69, and was Editor of the 'Women's Work' magazine from 1970-82 and Overseas Secretary of the PWA from 1982-85, passed away on 27 March, 2003.

90. We give thanks to God and record our appreciation for the faithful witness and service of David and Sandra Rodgers (Nepal 1995-2001); Neil and Sara Kennedy (Malawi 1997-2002); Adam and Lorraine Coupe (Nepal 1999-2002); Jack and Phyllis Thompson (Malawi, England and Scotland 1970-2002); Linda McKee (Nepal 1985-2002); Claire Maguire (Hungary 1998-2002); Avril Gracey (Israel 1999-2002); Christine McMahan (Jamaica 1998-2003); and Leonora Wasson (Jamaica 1994-2003).

91. We give thanks to God for the faithful witness and service of all of our missionaries during the past year. As they continue to serve in many varied settings, some are rejoicing as they see God's Kingdom extended, while others are labouring in the face of difficulties, frustrations, growing insecurity and increasing opposition to the proclamation of the Gospel. We thank them all for their faithfulness to their calling to serve overseas.

92. Rev David and Mrs Violet Kiarie, from the PCEA in Kenya, continue serving in Second Ballyeaston Presbyterian congregation. They are due to complete their two year assignment in September 2003.

93. We have been delighted to have the following bursars studying in Belfast for the past academic year: Rev Elsy Niap (Indonesia); Mr Jozsef

Kovacs (Romania); Mr Szabolcs Suszter (Hungary); Rev Devansu Oza (India); Mrs Jane Tharao (Kenya); and Rev Joseph Wakaba (Kenya).

94. In the past year the following visits were made to attend consultations and conferences called by our partner churches and the United Mission to Nepal, and to meet with our missionaries to encourage them and listen to their pastoral and other concerns:

- Rev Uel Marrs, Rev Professor Bill Addley, Dr Ruth Addley and Very Rev Dr John Dixon to Brazil to attend the Supreme Council of the Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil (IPB), to meet with the leadership of the Igreja Presbiteriana Independente do Brasil (IPIB) and to visit our personnel serving with these partner churches.
- Rev John Hanna and Mr Nigel Eves to Stuttgart to attend the 52nd General Assembly of Eukumindo, (an umbrella organisation of European churches and missions involved in Mission in Indonesia).
- Rev John Kirkpatrick to the Czech Republic to visit the Children's Hospice project at Maleovice; to Romania to attend the Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Europe; to the Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia to report to the Faculty on the situation in eastern and central Europe; to Ukraine to further relationships with the Hungarian Reformed Church in Ukraine; and to Slovakia to further relationships with the Church of the Brethren.
- Rev Dr Jim Campbell to Kenya to attend a consultation of the partners of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan.
- Revs Uel Marrs & Robin Quinn and Mrs Margaret Myers to Malawi to visit the Synods and institutions of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), to meet with church officials and to visit our personnel serving in Malawi.
- Mr Nigel Eves to India to attend the Church of North India Partners in Mission Committee and the hand-over of Mavnu village to its residents after being reconstructed following the devastation caused by the earthquake in Gujarat in January 2001; and to Nepal to attend the UMN Board meetings in May 2003.
- Rev Uel Marrs and Mr Nigel Eves to Nepal to attend an extraordinary meeting of the United Mission to Nepal Board and to visit our personnel serving in Nepal.
- Rev Professor Cecil McCullough and Rev John Mann to Lebanon to attend a consultation between the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, the Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church and PCI.
- Rev Uel Marrs to Kenya to meet with the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and to visit our personnel serving in Kenya; and to Jamaica and Grand Cayman to attend the meeting of the United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands Synod and to visit our personnel serving in Jamaica.
- Rt Rev Dr Russell Birney, Moderator, and Mrs Arline Birney to Malawi to visit the Synods and institutions of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), to meet with church officials and to visit our personnel serving in Malawi.

- Very Rev Dr Samuel Hutchinson and Rev John Seawright to Hamburg to attend the 50th anniversary of the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Church.

95. During the year seven missionaries were appointed to serve long or short term overseas, in Malawi (5), Romania (1) and Jamaica (1) (see Appendix A). We thank God for these new missionaries and would encourage our people to pray for and support them as they and their families settle into their new locations.

96. Last summer young adults served as short-term volunteers in Malawi (11), Jamaica (1), Kenya (1) and Romania (1) and several medical placements were arranged in Malawi and Nepal, while two Volunteers in Mission went to serve for six months in Malawi. Theological/Bible College placements were arranged in Singapore (1) and India (1) and a 'Year Out' placement was arranged in Malawi (1). During the year the Board organised three team visits to Romania, one to each of Mische, Szilagycseh and Cluj. All-age teams visited Romania from Sloan Street, Lisburn and Newcastle congregations; Malawi from Gilnahirk, Mourne, Newcastle, Swateragh, Hamilton Road (Bangor) and Dunmurry congregations; Ukraine from West Kirk and Ballysillan congregations; and Jamaica from First Saintfield congregation.

97. During the year we were delighted to receive the following visitors from our partner Churches:

- Rev Ted Mwambila, Deputy General Secretary of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Livingstonia, Malawi, with his wife Idah;
- Rev Arthur James, Principal of the Gujranwala Theological Seminary, Pakistan, with his wife Salima;
- Rt Rev Purely Lyngdoh, Bishop of the Church of North India's Diocese of North East India and Rev Probal Kanto Dutta, Chief Co-ordinator of the Church of North India's Synodical Board of Social Services;
- Rev Timothy Nyasulu, Director of the Ekwendeni Lay Training Centre in Malawi, with his wife Brenda.

THE HOME BASE

98. Once again, we convey our thanks to our dedicated and conscientious administrative staff who have fulfilled their responsibilities in an efficient and courteous manner while handling an ever increasing workload. Presently the administrative staff is comprised of a Senior Administrative Officer, two Senior Secretaries, one with special responsibilities for financial affairs and the other for mission education. There is also a part-time Secretary and a Junior Secretary.

99. As was reported at the General Assembly in 2002, Rev Dr R J T McMullan retired from the post of Overseas Secretary on 31 August with Rev W S Marrs taking up this responsibility on 1 September 2002. During the course of the year a sub-committee of the Steering Committee undertook a review of the executive staffing of the Overseas Board, which included an examination of the job descriptions of the Associate Secretary of the Overseas Board and the Education in Mission and Partner Relations Officer. The latter of these two posts will now be referred to as Education in Mission Officer and Asia Secretary. The

Panel for the Overview of Funding had approved the recruitment of an Executive Officer with special responsibilities for personnel and Miss Helen Johnston was appointed to this post. Miss Johnston is a PCI missionary currently serving as Personnel Officer for the United Mission to Nepal and it is hoped that she will commence work in the Overseas Office in October 2003.

100. The task of providing adequate **pastoral care for missionaries** is not only an ongoing one, but also an expanding one. In many mission societies and agencies missionary attrition has been the main cause of a new emphasis on pastoral care for missionaries over the past ten years. However, it has been shown clearly that a 'fire fighting' approach to pastoral care is, on its own, inadequate, even if it is a valid starting point. Rather the challenge nowadays for mission agencies is to adopt a positive, more pro-active approach to this subject so that care for missionaries is provided and developed in such a way that they grow spiritually.

101. The Overseas Board continues to view the facilitation of pastoral care for mission personnel as a very important area of its work. In the course of the year Dr Moreen Gordon was appointed as a second Pastoral Adviser, and is now serving alongside Dr John Ross. The conditions of service and responsibilities of pastoral advisers have been updated. Information sheets containing guidelines on how a home congregation might care more practically for a missionary were sent out to all congregations of our Church. Now, in addition to an operational debriefing provided by the Overseas Board for missionaries on home assignment, an opportunity is provided for missionaries to receive a professional debriefing and counselling assessment at the Edinburgh International Health Centre. Over the past year work has been ongoing at our missionary residences in order to maintain them at an acceptable standard and to ensure that missionaries on home assignment are provided with a modest but comfortable home base.

102. The Overseas Board recognises, however, like many mission agencies and societies, that much more needs to be done, and in particular that the Board's fundamental framework for caring pastorally for missionaries needs to be addressed. In this regard, the appointment to the Overseas Board of Miss Helen Johnston as Executive Officer with special responsibilities for personnel is very timely. One of her tasks will be to provide and develop, through the Pastoral Care Working Group, a pastoral care model which the Board has been endeavouring to implement for some time.

103. The Overseas Board is very appreciative of the ongoing support of the Presbyterian Women's Association whose office bearers and Executive Committee members continue to contribute faithfully to the work of the Board. In 2002 the Annual Grant made by PWA to the overseas work of our Church was £245,000. We commend the PWA for this commitment and enthusiasm to the task of world mission and thank the members of the Association for their prayerful and practical support for our overseas personnel.

104. Civil war, religious intolerance and persecution have continued in a number of the countries where we have partner churches, including India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Sudan. Bursars and others visiting on sabbatical from some of these partner churches have been able to share with us their first-hand experience of the challenges faced and this has both raised the profile of

situations, especially in India and Pakistan, as well as deepening our understanding. During the year we asked the Church and Government Committee, through the General Board, to make representations to the British and Irish Governments specifically concerning the Third Term Debate which has been ongoing in Malawi. These representations were received sympathetically.

105. Aside from the staff in the Overseas Office, many members of the Board willingly give of their time, energy and gifts to serve on one of the Board's three Assembly Committees or four Board Committees. We are grateful to all who, on behalf of the Board over the past year, have attended consultations with partner churches, visited missionaries in their country of service, and spoken about the work overseas in the congregations of our Church. We record our thanks to all who, owning the task of mission in the wider world, have freely dedicated themselves in these ways.

106. Over the past year, in the overseas context, we have continued to encourage congregations and individuals to be mission-minded, and to face up to the challenge that mission is not just something we do once in a while, but rather is fundamental to who we are, integral to our Christian identity. We continue to be heartened by the ongoing commitment of our members to support the work of mission in both tried and tested as well as innovative ways. We record our thanks to individuals, congregations and PWA branches who have provided financial support so faithfully through the United Appeal, and we appreciate the endeavours of the United Appeal Board to ensure that the target of honour for the total appeal is reached each year.

107. We offer sincere thanks to individuals, congregations and PWA Branches who, having met their United Appeal targets, committed themselves through 'extra-mile' giving to many different kinds of overseas projects. Not least, we express our gratitude to those who organised and contributed to:

- The Presbyterian Women's Association's Birthday Thank Offering 2001/2002 which raised a total of £30,674 to enable new outreach initiatives amongst the Samburu and Turkana peoples living in northern Kenya. The Birthday Thank Offering Project for 2002/2003 is raising funds for 'Women in the Church in India and Pakistan'.
- The Young Women's Group's Amity Foundation (China) Education and Health project for 2001/2002 which raised a total of £13,000. The theme for the 2002/2003 project is entitled 'Leadership Training – Brazil'
- The Sunday School and Youth's 'Building Hope' Project which donated £50,000 to help in rebuilding and refurbishing Rajkot Girls' Primary School in Gujarat, India. The theme of the current year's project is 'Moving On' and it aims to provide transport for ministers in India, Pakistan, Malawi and Kenya.
- The Junior Boys' Brigade Appeal 2001/2002 which raised £15,000 for 'Containers for Malawi'. Our thanks to the Container Group who have sent four containers to Malawi in the past year. The Junior Boys' Brigade Appeal launched this year is for 'the provision of a suitable vehicle for the TEE programme of the PCEA'

108. The Overseas Board counts it not only a responsibility but also a privilege to be able to channel these additional funds to where the needs are great.

109. The Overseas Board ended 2002 with a surplus of £114,473 on its current account, compared with the accumulated deficit of £105,414 at the end of 2001. This turnaround is largely due to the profit on the sale of the Manse at 1 Bladon Drive, which was sold at a net gain of £392,049. The Board is indebted to the newly appointed Honorary Treasurer, Mr Mervyn Whittle, for his sterling work in monitoring income and expenditure and preparing accounts for 2002. He has been assisted greatly by the staff of the Finance Office, together with the Finance Sub-Committee, to whom the Board expresses a very sincere thank you.

110. Our membership of Global Connections (formerly the Evangelical Missionary Alliance) allows us the opportunity to keep abreast of new thinking and initiatives in world mission. In the past year we have been represented at their forums on health, personnel and development. Additionally, we are able to attend, as observers, several of the forums of the Churches' Commission On Mission (CCOM). As members of the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS) we are provided with further opportunities to reflect upon mission in our ever changing world.

111. In conclusion, we give thanks to God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for His gracious strengthening and faithful empowering at this time of transition for the Overseas Board, and as the Board seeks to provide servant leadership for our Church as it engages in world mission.

APPENDIX A

In the report most of the names of missionaries have not been mentioned but their names and spheres of service are listed below and are to be taken together with this report.

BRAZIL

Mabel Colson	1990	Director, Caiuá Indian Mission, Dourados
Lynn & Heather Cochrane	1996	Church planting in the North East Presbytery of the Independent Presbyterian Church National Mission in Cruzeta and Natal

INDIA

James & Willi Barton	1966	Education Consultants, Goa
Norman & Joan Duncan	1994	Layman's Evangelical Fellowship and CNI – on Home Assignment
Linda Jackson	1996	Teaching at Woodstock School, Mussoorie
Brian Wilson	1996	Librarian at Woodstock School and CNI, Mussoorie

Elizabeth Matthews 1998 Church work in the Diocese of Agra, CNI – on sick leave

JAMAICA

James & Pat Cameron 1990 Directors, Children's Homes – on final Home Assignment

Joan & Malcolm Scott 2000 Ministering in the Discovery Bay Charge of United Church

KENYA

Stephen & Angelina Cowan 1985/9 Outreach & Development Work, PCEA Tuum

Deborah Ford 1996 Teaching at Presbyterian College, Kikuyu - on study leave

Naomi Martin 1991 Teaching at the PCEA Teachers' College, Rubate – on Home Assignment

Derek & Linda Roulston 1998 Development work, PCEA, Galana District

Paul & Anne Bailie 1998 Teaching at the Presbyterian College, TEE and at Alliance Boys' High School

Andrew & Clerah Clenaghan 1999 Development work, PCEA at Zombe in Kitui District

Gary & Mary Reid 2000 Agricultural work, Honi Farm, PCEA, Nyeri

Stephen & Magali Robinson 2001 Presbyterian College and teaching at Musa Gitau Girls' Secondary School – on home leave

MALAWI

Freda Algie 1969 Principal, Wives' School, Zomba Theological College

Margaret Young 1995 Midwife, Ekwendeni Hospital

Diane Cusick 1995 Crèche and teaching at the Wives' School, Zomba Theological College

Clare McIntyre 1997 Teaching at Karonga Girls' Secondary School

Stephen & Ruth McCracken 1999 Acting Director of Lay Training Synod of Livingstonia – on Home Assignment

Maurice & Sheila McNicholl 1999 Acting Executive Director, Projects Office, Blantyre Synod

John & Rosemary Hanson 1999 Chaplain, Blantyre Synod

David & Clare Kennedy 2001 Teaching at HHI Secondary School and Accountant in Blantyre Synod Projects Office

*Shirley Stronge	2002	Nurse Tutor, Ekwendeni Hospital
*David & Maggie Steele	2002	Associate Parish Minister in St. Andrew's Church and Chaplain to Mzuzu Secondary Schools and secretarial work at Synod Offices
*Maureen Stevenson	2002	Medical Officer in Charge, David Gordon Memorial Hospital, Livingstonia
*Michelle Evans	2003	Teaching at Bandawe Secondary School

NEPAL

Pauline Orr	1993	Nurse/Tutor, UMN - on unpaid leave
Helen Johnston	1996	Personnel Director - UMN
Peter & Åsa McDowell	2001	Co-ordinator, Language & Orientation Programme and working with expatriate personnel and Nepali women – on final Home Assignment

ROMANIA

Csaba & Ilona Veres	2001/1993	Youth work and ministry to street children, Cluj
*Richard Lynas	2002	Working with addicts in the Bonus Pastor Foundation, under the Transylvanian Reformed Church District of the Reformed Church in Romania.

FRANCE

Gordon & Sandra Campbell	1989	Professor in New Testament in Free Faculty of Reformed Theology in Aix en Provence
Rodney & Denise Cameron	1998	Working with the Eglise Réformée de France: Parishes of Privas and Flaviac

GREAT BRITAIN

Christopher & Nivedita Macwan	1989	Working among Asians in Wembley
-------------------------------	------	---------------------------------

Short term missionaries serving for a minimum of two years, are supported in overseas locations. Their names and spheres of service are as follows -

BRAZIL

Naomi Keefe 2000 Valley of the Lord Orphanage, Recife – on study leave, now a candidate for long-term service

CHINA

Stuart Craig 2001 Teaching English, Tai'an Teachers' College, with Amity Teachers' Programme

INDIA

David & Cheryl Adair 2000 Dorm parents at Woodstock School, Mussoorie

INDONESIA

Mervyn McCullagh 1998 Teaching English, writing English language courses and church work, Sumba - on study leave

JAMAICA

*Heather Lennox 2002 Associate Regional Director in the Cornwall Area Council of the United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

KENYA

Norman & Pauline Kennedy 2000 Lay Training and Literature, PCEA - on home leave

Alison Bullous 2001 Diagnostic Laboratory work - PCEA, Tuum

MALAWI

Donald & Una Brownlie 1999 Medical and nursing work at David Gordon Memorial Hospital, Livingstonia

Dibbie McCaughan 2000 Teaching at William Murray Secondary School, Nkhoma

Tracey Lamont 2001 Teaching at William Murray Secondary School and Nkhoma Institute for Continuing Theological Training

Rosalind White 2002 Teaching at Bandawe Girls' Secondary School

NEPAL

Catherine Elliott 2001 Tutorial teacher, Butwal and Kathmandu

CZECH REPUBLIC

Susan Clarke 1999 Church work and hospitality, Prague

SPAIN

Derek & Jane French 2000 Evangelism & Christian Training, Spanish Evangelical Church, Valencia

*Appointed 2002/2003

APPENDIX B**PARTNER CHURCHES & MISSIONS**

We work together with partner Churches and United Missions and we list below those in leadership with their respective positions:

BRAZIL

Rev A Pereira President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)
 Rev S Silveira Vice President, Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPI)
 Rev R Brasileiro President, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)
 Rev L B Morais Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Brazil (IPB)

CHINA

Rev S J Cao President & General Secretary (Acting), China Christian Council

CZECH REPUBLIC

Rev P Cerny President, Church of the Brethren
 Mr K Fojtik General Secretary, Church of the Brethren
 Rev P Smetana Moderator, Synodical Council of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

FRANCE

Pasteur M Manoel President, Eglise Réformée de France (ERF)
 Pasteur B de Cazenove General Secretary (ERF)

HUNGARY & ROMANIA

Bishop G Bolcskei	Presiding Bishop, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary
Rev B Tamas	International & Inter-Church Relations, Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary
Bishop G Pap	Transylvanian District of the Reformed Church of Romania
Bishop L Tokes	Kiralyhagomellek District of the Reformed Church of Romania

INDIA

Most Rev Z J Terom	Moderator of the CNI Synod
Dr V S Lall	General Secretary of the CNI Synod
Rt Rev V M Malaviya	Bishop of the Gujarat Diocese CNI
Rt Rev S R Cutting	Bishop of the Agra Diocese, CNI

INDONESIA

Rev Dr T Messakh	Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Timor
Rev L P Duan	Moderator, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera
Rev M D Boediman	General Secretary, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera
Rev D Umbu Dingu	General Secretary, Christian Church in Sumba

JAMAICA

Rt Rev Dr G Evans	Moderator, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands
Rev Dr M Evans	General Secretary, United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

KENYA

Rev Dr D Githii	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of East Africa
Rev P Rukenya	Secretary General, Presbyterian Church of East Africa

MALAWI*Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)*

Rt Rev Dr F Chingota	Moderator, CCAP General Assembly
Rev Y A Chienda	Secretary General, CCAP General Assembly
Rev M C E Munthali	Moderator, Synod of Livingstonia
Rev H M Nkhoma	General Secretary, Synod of Livingstonia

Rev M Kadawati	Moderator, Synod of Blantyre
Rev D Gunya	General Secretary, Synod of Blantyre
Very Rev C Chimkoka	Moderator, Synod of Nkhoma
Rev Dr W Kawale	General Secretary, Synod of Nkhoma

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Rev Dr Lalengzaau	Administrative Secretary, Presbyterian Church in Myanmar
-------------------	--

NEPAL

Ms J Collins	Executive Director, United Mission to Nepal
Pastor R Khartak	Senior Pastor of the Church in Nepal

PAKISTAN

Elder S F Khan	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev S Alam	Vice Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev H David	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
Rev Dr M Kamil	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

SPAIN

Mr J Cortés	President, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church
Rev A Abad	Secretary, Permanent Commission, Spanish Evangelical Church

SUDAN

Rev J K Dung	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Malakal
Rev S O Awow	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Malakal
Rev P M Nyak	Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Akobo
Rev P R Riak	Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Sudan/Akobo

THAILAND

Rev Dr S Kimhachandra	General Secretary, Church of Christ in Thailand
Rev V Koydou	Director, Lamp of Thailand

TOGO

Pasteur Y F Amiou

Moderator, Evangelical Presbyterian
Church in Togo

Pasteur F Adubra

General Secretary, Evangelical Presbyterian
Church in Togo**ZAMBIA**

Rev V Chilenje

General Secretary, CCAP Synod of Zambia

Rev D Tembo

Moderator, CCAP Synod of Zambia

APPENDIX C**Summary of Presbytery Responses to the Report on Globalisation**

1. 'Globalisation' means many different things to different people. We must carefully distinguish benign or neutral globalisation ("making something global; increasing interconnectedness; seeking global solutions to world problems"; an obvious perspective and component of Christian mission) from "those economic and cultural influences which emanate primarily from the capitalist industrialised West". Recognising also that the worth of globalisation is solely dependent on the worth of those who drive it, we must acknowledge its potential for both good and evil.

2. Within our own shores, globalisation is associated with selfish materialism, growing secularisation and an erosion of traditional moral standards. As 'we become what we own', our families and communities lose their value. Faith is no longer central, but 'worked around the edges' of career and lifestyle. Indeed, Christianity is just one option amongst many faiths and spiritualities, or the option of no faith at all. Growing exposure to new faiths and cultures and international migration force a radical reassessment of our witness as 'the world we are called to win' now comes to us. Frighteningly, there is little left to call them to.

3. Interaction with Christians of other backgrounds and cultures has vitally enriched our life and ministry at both denominational and congregational level. At the same time, exposure to other ways of 'doing church' has resulted in raised expectations and, consequently, tension within our congregations. The consumer mentality has invaded church as well as market-place; those 'born' Presbyterian will not necessarily remain Presbyterian, and 'the settled congregation' is becoming a thing of the past. Growing business pressures call us to revise expectations of our members; rather than their assuming leadership roles and creative outreach within our churches, we must better equip them for their mission in the world as global citizens. New global trends have negatively affected local jobs, economy and trade, particularly in the rural sectors. World concerns must be balanced by effective pastoral strategies for such pressing local challenges.

4. Globalisation has increased standards of living for some of our overseas partners and made us more aware of each other's needs and contexts. In the main, however, globalisation has simply strengthened and perpetuated

existing inequalities, and we may expect our partner churches to face growing difficulties in maintaining existing structures and services. Identification of the Christian Gospel with globalisation and westernisation has provoked a backlash that will inevitably filter down into our church relations.

5. Ease of travel and communication has made mission work more viable, sustainable and accessible, with greater facilities for pastoral care and professional development of mission partners (missionaries). Demands for overseas investment are opening up new windows of opportunity, and new technologies are facilitating the spread of the Gospel in both word and deed. Such benefits are offset by the rising cost of supporting our mission partners (missionaries), while heightened financial inequalities further hinder their acceptance amongst nationals. Revived suspicions of colonialism demand an increased sensitivity to local culture without minimizing our stance on the counter-cultural claims of the Gospel and the uniqueness of Christ our Saviour. Growing poverty and anti-western feeling make mission partners (missionaries) obvious targets and security is an increasing priority for their Boards and Agencies. Rising fundamentalism and global terrorism have limited missionary endeavours in key areas.

6. We therefore call upon our Church to wake up to the reality of globalisation, acknowledging its positive and negative aspects and communicating these clearly to our congregations.

7. In a rapidly changing world, traditional methods of evangelism, teaching and mission must be revisited. We must adopt new mediums and concepts of communication, contextualising and recontextualising our theology, becoming pro-active rather than re-active, doing church in ways that resonate more deeply with our culture. At the same time, we must beware lest our medium distorts, or contradicts, our message, critically examining our ecclesiological and missiological models lest they too owe too much to 'Americanisation', 'McDonaldisation', or even 'Disneyfication'! We must remember also that the small, slow and insignificant may be of greater value than the powerful and instantaneous in God's economy of the Kingdom; man's technological 'know-how' does not necessarily equate with the Father's heavenly wisdom.

8. We must take a prophetic stand against the values of the new global consumer culture, recognising that affluence does not satisfy and that technology is no substitute for God, admitting that we are materially rich, yet spiritually poor. We must adopt a simpler lifestyle, reconsidering our givings and investments, recognising that our daily actions and purchases impact for good or ill upon our global neighbours. We commend the support of campaigns such as Fair Trade and Jubilee 2000 to all our members.

9. Rediscovering our role as 'the conscience of the nation', we must protest against inequality, injustice and greed, refusing to blindly accept what governments, institutions and adverts tell us. Theologians, church leaders and appropriately placed members must engage in dialogue with our economic and political bodies; such 'lone voices in the wilderness' deserve the support of the whole church through education, petition and prayer.

10. In a world in which cultures, communities and identities have been homogenised and destroyed, the Church has a great opportunity to reclaim

human dignity, self-worth, belonging and fellowship for its own, offering 'an alternative globalisation' which affirms individuality, yet equality and unity: the true trans-cultural community, promoting trans-economic significance.

11. Globalisation challenges us to reject the deification of nation, province or culture, renewing our interdependence on each other and on God, 'recognising the Body' on a global as well as a local scale. Our need to learn from other Christians must not be confined to our overseas work: we also need their wisdom and experience to make our witness in Ireland more effective. Globalisation reminds us that global mission is not an option for the Church - it is an essential aspect of the Church's being. Nor do we engage in global mission solely to benefit those at the ends of the earth: we also engage in global mission in the struggle to preserve our own life here within PCI. Without such a global perspective, our Church will atrophy: it may even die.

12. To effectively meet these challenges we need to rediscover an understanding of Christian commitment as 'a whole-life proposition', accompanied by an immersion in God's Word which enables us to distinguish the values of this world from the values of the next as we are 'transformed by the renewing of our minds'. Amidst new challenges and opportunities, and the use of appropriate technologies, our fundamental remit remains the same: preach the Gospel; live out the reality of Kingdom life; equip God's people to live for Him wherever; make the most of every opportunity. In our instant consumer society, this demands a disciplined eschatological focus. We labour in the faith and hope that one day 'the Kingdom of this world will become the Kingdom of our Christ'.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly request the Overseas Board to conduct a review of its vision, mission and strategy, reporting to the General Assembly of 2004 with a strategic plan to the year 2010.
3. That the General Assembly thank all the presbyteries who contributed to the discussion on Globalisation, Mission and the Kingdom of God, that the resulting Report (Appendix C) be noted, and that the Overseas Board draw upon its findings to clarify the priorities of our Church in world mission at the outset of the 21st Century.
4. That the General Assembly give thanks for the new, recently approved constitution, bye-laws and five year strategic plan of the United Mission to Nepal and urge prayer for their effective ministry in new major areas of involvement, as well as for a lasting settlement to the ongoing political crisis in Nepal.
5. That the General Assembly call on all our people to pray for our partner churches in Asia to know God's protection and to be courageous in witness despite often living under oppressive national and state laws, and having their growing minority presence perceived by their Hindu and Muslim neighbours as a threat.
6. That the General Assembly pray that our partner churches in Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Spain, France and the Czech and Slovak Republics

provide an effective witness to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ despite the rising tide of secularism, and that we, in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, would continue to look for the most appropriate ways to share with our European partners in the building of God's Kingdom.

7. That the General Assembly encourage the Overseas Board to review partner church relations in the Middle East as a whole and to continue to seek out the most appropriate ways to share in God's mission amidst all the uncertainty and instability in that region.

8. That the General Assembly give thanks for the peaceful transition to a new government in Kenya, for the positive developments in the Presbyterian Church of Sudan, and urge prayer for progress towards peace in Sudan.

9. That the General Assembly encourage continued prayer and practical support for the Synods of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian as they seek to minister amidst an ongoing food crisis and AIDS epidemic, and for Malawi, that justice and democracy would be safeguarded at this time of constitutional crisis.

10. That the General Assembly give thanks for our partnerships with the Presbyterian Churches in Brazil and the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, and for the opportunities to share in their national missions, sending greetings to the Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil on the occasion of their Centennial Celebrations.

11. That the General Assembly acknowledge the faithful service and witness of our missionary personnel serving overseas, pray for their spiritual empowerment and physical protection in many challenging and sometimes dangerous situations, and give thanks also for the witness of all who come from partner churches to study and serve here in Ireland.

12. That the General Assembly give thanks for the appointment of Miss Helen Johnston as Executive Officer with special responsibilities for personnel and Mrs Moreen Gordon as Pastoral Adviser, and encourage the Overseas Board to continue development of a pastoral care model for missionaries.

13. That the General Assembly give thanks that mission information permeates through church life in such a way as to stimulate prayerful and practical support for our missionaries and partner churches, rejoice in the growing direct involvement in overseas mission at congregational level, and encourage our people to discover new ways of owning the task of world mission.

14. That the Overseas Board, with its associated working committees, be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 279 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND

Conveners: Rev Dr J B MOORE

Very Rev Dr D H ALLEN

Secretaries: Rev Dr D J WATTS

Rev D J TEMPLE

Mrs M MYERS

1. The people of Ireland today, both North and South, are facing strong challenges that cannot be ignored or avoided. Secularism and selfishness, post-modernism and pluralism, apathy and affluence, all threaten to rob people of every age-group of their much needed faith in God.

2. The continuing political unrest, especially in Northern Ireland has allowed people to concentrate on the problems of the present time and to miss out on the divine encounter with Jesus Christ that can transform individuals and communities alike.

3. The influx of asylum seekers and refugees from overseas has brought enrichment and engendered resentment in many communities. It also presents a new dimension for mission and affords an opportunity to reach out in love, in the name of Jesus Christ.

4. The Board of Mission in Ireland is endeavouring, through its Review Group, to take a fresh look at every avenue of its witness in Ireland. This will enable it to identify, evaluate and address the most urgent areas of need in the most efficient manner. (See Appendix A)

5. Through its Evangelism Committee, the Board seeks to encourage congregations to be more pro-active in their approach to mission. The Director of Evangelism, Rev Harold Boyce, has continued his visits to congregations and Elders' Fellowships. He has also produced an excellent tool for Evangelism with his Training Course on "Personal Evangelism For Presbyterians".

6. The Irish Mission is currently pursuing the urgent recruitment of suitable new workers to carry forward its work, particularly in the Republic. The resignation of Mr S Francey and the retirement of Mr T Moorehead, have further reduced the number of workers in active service. The prayers of the whole church are sought so that the strategic pattern, linking Irish Mission outreach and Home Mission ministry, can be maintained.

7. The Home Mission endeavours to serve congregations in our cities in the North and the Republic, in smaller, scattered congregations in the South and West, a number of experimental development ministries in strategic locations and the Nightlight outreach in Belfast's Golden Mile. It calls men and women to staff them and through its prayerline to encourage prayer.

8. Deaconesses are also supported by the Home Mission in hospitals, advice centres and congregations under the PWA Home Department. Presbytery responses to the report on the Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church were received. (See Appendix B).

9. Church Extension is going through a period of retraction and questioning its future role. Pray for guidance for its dedicated conveners and committee, and the continuing Church Extension charges.

10. The Divine Healing Committee longs to see a greater interest among congregations in the Healing Ministry, and plans to organise some local conferences through which to share the vision with our people.

11. As always the demands that face the Board and the opening doors of developing opportunities to share the Gospel, require the finances to enable us to maintain our mission in Ireland.

12. In 1998 two resolutions of the General Assembly instructed the Home Board, or its successor, to report on two aspects of the Strategy for Mission Report.

(i) **Church Planting:** While the Board has been active in helping existing congregations to strengthen their witness in areas of weakness, the only prospective new church plant of which it is aware is in the Liffey Valley. The Rev Keith McCrory has been called and inducted as Associate Minister in Lucan to work in the Maynooth area. A Tentmaking Ministries Scheme was adopted by the General Assembly in 2001. At present the Board is contributing to two workers in Westport. Leave to Call for Kells and Ervey includes experimental work at Navan.

(ii) **Mission Priority Areas:** While some Presbyteries have had discussions on the establishment of Mission Priority Areas, none are known to have been created. The establishment of Home Mission Development areas is not, however, unrelated to the concept.

13. During the year, the General Board remitted the prayer of the Memorial of the Dublin and Munster Presbytery on religious diversity to the Board of Mission. A group to consider the issues has been set up and will report to the General Assembly of 2004.

14. We would sincerely thank Rev Dr J Brian Moore for his leadership during his years as Convener of the Home Board and Co-Convener of the Board of Mission in Ireland. His vision and experience and his longing to see Ireland won for Jesus Christ, have greatly benefited the mission of our Church throughout the land.

Please remember the Conveners, Superintendent, Office Staff, Ministers and Workers and their families in your prayers. Pray also that the new Deputy Clerk will quickly feel at home in the task of Secretary to the Board.

15. We need to remember that in spite of the strident voices to the contrary, the message of forgiveness, peace and satisfying service through Jesus Christ, is still the answer of the hour to the needs of the heart until the end of the age.

IRISH MISSION COMMITTEE

1. Rick Warren in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, reminds us that we were created with purpose, and that we were made for mission. In the Great Commission, Jesus calls us to mission, to go everywhere with the good news of

the gospel. In response, the Irish Mission is mandated to “speak the truth in love” in an ever changing world, and in an ever needy society. The task is an urgent one, for while there is still much openness and many opportunities, there are no guarantees how long this situation will last. We need to make the most of the time, and the best use of the resources that God has given us.

2. We have eight full time Workers who are based in Arklow, Dublin, Kilkenny, Carlow, Athy/Naas, Clonmel/Cahir, Cork, Fermoy and Dungannon. Through the Tentmaking Scheme we also give support to the work of two young women in Westport. Irish Mission Workers work closely with local ministers and such relationships provide real opportunities for mutual encouragement and support, as well as making a greater impact in the community.

3. The openness in Irish society provides the Workers with a range of opportunities, working with all ages, and in many varied and differing situations. Our Workers consider it a great privilege to be used by God, whether it is in a children’s meeting, a school, an adult bible study, a prayer group or in a personal one-to-one situation. There are significant encouragements, and a sense of the on-going work of the Holy Spirit as people respond. As a committee, in giving thanks to God, we pay tribute to our Workers for their faithfulness and dedication in that the work can also be very demanding, and sometimes can appear unrewarding. We ask for prayer support for our Workers, their wives and families.

4. One of our Workers, Mr Tom Moorehead retired at the end of 2002. We thank him for many years of faithful service as an Irish Mission Worker, especially in the Glens of Antrim. We wish him and his wife Annie every blessing as they continue to serve their Lord in their retirement from the active work of the Mission.

During the year Mr Sam Francey resigned from the Mission. We thank Mr Francey for his work in the Portlaoise area, and we wish him and his wife Florence every encouragement, as together they seek God’s guidance for the future.

5. We are at present seeking to recruit more Irish Mission Workers, and are offering support through the Tent-Making ministry. We are encouraged by those, including some indigenous to the Republic, who have shown interest in joining the Irish Mission team. We ask ministers and elders to be proactive in making the need for new Workers known in all congregations. We seek those who are spiritually mature, with gifts for evangelism, along with the ability and flexibility to work as part of a team in a cross cultural context.

6. During the course of the year we have reviewed our selection and interview procedures as we seek not only to avoid any later pitfalls, but also, under God, to appoint the very best of people as Workers. The committee have decided that as an addition to the present interviews, prospective candidates should go through the same psychological tests as candidates for the Ministry. It was also agreed that a candidate should be asked to do some placements to appraise their abilities, and at least one of these placements should be in the Republic of Ireland. We ask for prayer as these changes are implemented, and as we seek to discern those whom God is calling to this vital work.

7. The Irish Mission Committee particularly want to thank our Superintendent, Rev David Temple, for his work supporting and encouraging

our Workers, undertaking many deputation engagements, and editing the Christian Irishman magazine. We also thank our office staff for all the work that they undertake for our Workers and Mission. We wish to commend our Mission, and in particular our Workers and their families, to the prayers and support of the General Assembly.

ROY PATTON, Convener

DIVINE HEALING COMMITTEE

1. A questionnaire concerning the healing ministry was sent out to all ministers in PCI. To date some 200 replies have been received. No detailed analysis of the responses has yet been carried out but some observations were made.

Some sort of regular, formal service of prayer for healing is held in 13 of our Presbyteries; 43 of the congregations which replied to the questionnaire have some form of regular service of prayer for healing; there seems to be widespread interest in, and sympathy with, the ministry of healing; there is a need to explain, from a Biblical perspective what divine healing is and how it may be distinguished from other types of 'faith healing' which are widely available; there is a desire to have help with making the first steps in starting a ministry of healing in congregations.

These responses should help us as a committee to clarify our role in encouraging the ministry of healing throughout the church.

2. Divine healing is not about the possession of some strange gifts (eg healing hands). It is neither a weird psychic gift nor a professional gift. In essence it is not about charismatic gifts. It must be clearly distinguished from faith healing which is a form of religious auto-suggestion – if you believe strongly enough with your mind you will be healed.

The place of faith in healing is to make contact with the Lord who does the healing. Divine healing is the difference that Jesus makes and it happens when Jesus meets someone at their point(s) of need.

As we read through the gospels we see many people meeting Jesus in many different circumstances. The results of these meetings vary but something always happens – meeting Jesus can never be a non-event. As we review the year, we give thanks with those who have known healing in their lives and we look to the future confident that as we draw near to Jesus Christ by faith our lives will never be the same again.

To him be all honour and glory.

STEPHEN WILLIAMSON, Convener

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continue to be encouraged by the work undertaken by Rev Harold Boyce as Director of Evangelism. In particular the committee would commend the *Eleven 1 Fellowship* and the *Personal Evangelism for*

Presbyterians Course. These are valuable resources and will be of great benefit to congregations in the spread of the gospel.

2. Recognising the Biblical mandate to be salt and light in our society, the committee is anxious to encourage Christians to be witnesses in the place of their employment. A list of resources and agencies is being compiled and will be made available to ministers. The possibility of a one-day seminar for church members is also being considered.

3. Following a question in last year's Assembly concerning Bible Sunday the secretaries of the Bible Societies met with the convener to discuss the resources available and the appropriate timing of a Bible Sunday. The Scriptures are available, not only in different printed versions, but also on tape, CD-ROM and video. Different portions of the Bible are also available. The Bible Societies are happy to respond to individual needs of congregations. The committee would encourage congregations to make full use of the resources and to highlight the use of the Scriptures on a particular Sunday.

4. The Director and the convener met with representatives of *Score NI* and were encouraged to learn of the number of our ministers who are now engaged in sports chaplaincy. In these days when it is recognised that there is a missing generation in most of our congregations it is encouraging to note the contacts being made and relationships being built with those involved in sport at all levels.

5. The committee again this year made the following grants:

The Bible Society	£250
The Bible Society for Ireland	£250
The Scripture Gift Mission	£250

JOHN PARKES, Convener

DIRECTOR OF EVANGELISM

The Director of Evangelism, Rev Harold Boyce, reports:

1. With now only twenty months of my five year contract to run I have been conscious of the quickening tempo of my work as more ministers and congregations call on my services. One very encouraging aspect of the past year has been the response to events organised for elders. I am still in the early part of my plan to work through the list of Presbyteries with elders conferences but those already held have brought encouraging attendances and deep interest. Elders training is an area of church life where there is both a great need and a clear desire on the part of elders to be equipped for ministry. I continue also to respond to invitations to speak with individual Kirk Sessions.

2. Ministers seminars continue and I have now held these in the great majority of Presbyteries. The aim is to encourage ministers and perhaps to indicate new directions in which the work of evangelism can go. Consultations with ministers about their own congregations also take place where needed. I have had opportunities to conduct Sunday services and midweek meetings in my role as Director, though there is scope for expansion here. I would encourage ministers to use me in this way and to bear in mind of course that I come "free of charge".

3. I continue the daunting struggle to keep in touch with all that is available in evangelistic work today through books, videos, internet sites, courses and conferences, and to recommend the best of these to the church. I have been given opportunities for some teaching in the Magee Institute. The monthly column in "The Christian Irishman" is something I enjoy and hope proves helpful to the church at large.

4. With the Assembly's Evangelism Committee I have been working on the challenge of "Witness in the Workplace". Hopefully this will soon produce a list of resources for ministers and a series of articles in "The Christian Irishman".

5. At long last the personal evangelism course is ready and the hope is that it will be used widely throughout PCI. It has been written especially with the members of our church in mind. It is best suited for use in small groups where discussion is possible. I want to thank those individuals and groups who have enabled me to "test drive" the course, in whole or in part, in a variety of settings.

6. Another resource produced this year is "The Eleven 1 Fellowship" scheme. It simply encourages all Christians to share the gospel with others in a simple way that requires no training and consists of occasional gatherings for mutual encouragement and prayer. Details are available from the Irish Mission office.

7. Finally I would like to pass on the encouraging news I am getting about such courses as "Christianity Explained". These work best when held away from church property and outside the formal church programme. Where this approach has been tried the response has been very encouraging. My own attempt to run a course for city-centre workers during lunch time has had to be deferred due to the renovation work going on at Church House.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE

PWA HOME DEPARTMENT

Mrs Margaret Myers reports:

1. In 2002/2003 PWA has continued to work in association with the Board of Mission in Ireland to "provide for the recruitment, training, organisation and support of deaconesses in the various areas of the Church's life and interest". Twenty deaconesses currently serve within PCI.

Personnel

2. Mrs Leta Halliday, Woman Worker, retired on 31 August 2002. Mrs Halliday commenced her work in McQuiston Memorial in September 1988 and was ordained as an elder in McQuiston on 17 March 1993. A retirement gift was presented at a lunch in Church House on 7 November 2002 with expressions of appreciation for 14 years faithful service.

3. Miss Jean Gwyn has been appointed Deaconess Chaplain at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.
4. We record our thanks to Miss Mary Angus for continuing to work part-time at the RVH from April to June 2002.
5. Miss Pat Shirley, Deaconess in Greystone Road, Antrim, has been granted permission by the Board to work two mornings per week in Antrim Hospital.
6. Miss Muriel Cromie, City Hospital, has been granted permission by the Board to work two mornings per week in Belvoir Park Hospital.
7. Miss Ruth Petticrew has resigned as a deaconess. The Presbytery of South Belfast has received her resignation with regret.
8. The Board has granted permission for Miss Doreen Draffin to continue to receive income from central funds until 31 May 2003. She remains under the care of Presbytery and the Board of Mission in Ireland as a deaconess.

Vacancies for Deaconesses

9. A number of churches continue to request the appointment of a deaconess. In view of the unmet needs of congregations we continue to invite prayer that God will call new students to study for deaconess work and that more resources for training will become available.

Deaconesses in Training

10. Mrs Sadie McCullough and Miss Robert Irvine will complete their probationary year of deaconess training on 31 May 2003.
11. Miss Michelle McCauley and Dr Amanda Cooper commenced deaconess training at Union Theological College in September 2002. They are members of Banbridge Road, Dromore and Terrace Row, Coleraine, respectively.
12. The Board recommends that probationary deaconesses should not undertake deputation duties until they have served one year in the congregation in which they have been Commissioned.

Hospital Deaconess Review

13. The Review has been completed. The Board recommends that the Chaplains Committee deal with all requests from Presbytery regarding deaconesses in Chaplaincy work. When requests have been quantified, and if a deaconess is the person best suited to fill the post, the Chaplains Committee will bring their request to the Board of Mission Home Personnel Committee.

Conferences

14. "Faith in Action" taken from Micah Ch 6:8 was the theme of the Diakonia European Seminar hosted by PCI Deaconess Association held at Greenmount College from 17-21 June 2002.
Thirty-five delegates attended from a variety of European countries - Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Hungary and UK. The conference was very challenging and many friendships were formed.

South Belfast Friendship House (SBFH)

15. A new and exciting partnership has been established between PWA, Board of Social Witness and South Belfast Presbytery. To facilitate this the Board has agreed that a new Management Committee be formed. In order to take the work of SBFH forward the Board of Social Witness has agreed to implement a pilot scheme promoting SBFH as a family centre. Mrs Eunice Moore and Mrs Roberta Jordan will continue to be involved with the work.

Hungarian Deaconess Training

16. Two students from Hungary worked from 16 September - 14 December 2002 in the congregations of Cuningham Memorial, Cullybackey and Ballyloughan, Ballymena.

17. We record our thanks to Rev David Murphy and Rev David Brice and the members of their congregations for the enthusiasm with which they received Miss Edina Nagy and Miss Agnes Baranyi.

18. Miss Dora Vaszil and Miss Csilla Szondi arrived from Hungary on 20 January 2003. Both are placed in Bangor until 22 April 2003 in the congregations of First Bangor and Trinity, respectively.

19. We record our thanks to Rev Willis Corder and Rev Alistair Kennedy and the members of their congregations for the enthusiasm with which they received Miss Vaszil and Miss Szondi.

20. The Board of Mission has agreed to enter into a new partnership, subject to funding being available, with the Teacher Training College of Károli Gáspár Reformed University.

21. Mrs Margaret Myers will attend a workshop at the Károli Gáspár Reformed University, Hungary, 10-11 June 2003. Mrs Edith Neale, Chairman, Young Women's Groups, will also attend.

PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Mr J W Russell reports:

1. The report of the Society for this year is dominated by the unprecedented level of new investment that reached over £26 million during this financial year bringing the total assets to almost £47 million.

2. The Bank of England base rate has remained at an historically low level during the past year and consequently a dividend of 5% was declared on all shareholdings for the financial year ended 31st March, 2003. This result still compares very favourably with rates of interest offered elsewhere over the last twelve months and the total dividend amounted to £2 million that was distributed to 3,900 shareholders.

3. The level of funds available has enabled the Society to support an increasing number of congregations and individuals with a total of £23 million currently on loan for a wide variety of projects. A further £10 million of surplus funds have been invested in commercial retail property which has generated a healthy return for our shareholders.

4. We are grateful to God for all the success that has attended our efforts and trust that He will continue to guide us in the future.

HOME MISSION GENERAL

1. What are the distinguishing marks of the Home Mission? In many respects it is hard to answer that question since the work of the Home Mission approximates very much to that of the whole Church. The Home Mission is dependent upon the grace of God expressed through the prayers, generosity and hard work of many – both within the Mission and with our Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Yet the Home Mission maintains its own distinctive identity in seeking to develop our Reformed witness for Christ primarily, although not exclusively, within the Republic of Ireland

Liffey Valley

2. One of the most exciting developments of the past year has been the pioneering work begun under the leadership of the Rev Keith McCrory who was inducted into a Church Planting ministry in January of this year. Already a core group of people from the Lucan congregation has committed itself to play a supporting role to him in this work as they seek to establish a new fellowship of believers where none has previously existed. This work will demand much initiative, creativity, sensitivity and hard work. This new venture has developed through the partnership of Home Mission, Presbytery, Union Commission and the congregation of Lucan. The Lucan congregation will feel the pinch as a small but significant number of its members re-direct their support and presence to this new church plant.

Prayer

3. Be it a new venture like the Liffey Valley Project or a more established congregational life, we in Home Mission are dependent on and grateful for the prayers of many. At the Assembly last year we gave a public launch to a prayer line devoted to the works and needs of the Home Mission. We are delighted at the response shown to this prayer line. Currently there are some 170 subscribers, a few of whom subscribe from outside Ireland. We seek to make prayer information available about every 6 weeks and have been pleased by the positive response to our prayer line. Those not yet in receipt of the Home Mission prayer line can sign up by requesting the information. Send an email to the Rev Colin Gamble – cgamble@presbyterianireland.org.

Personnel

4. Every year there is a slow movement of people into or out of the Home Mission Family. In the past year we have been pleased to welcome the Rev Charles Clements who, in March, was inducted into the charge of Irvingstown, Pettigo and Tempo. The Rev David Moore moved within the Home Mission, leaving Drum, Cootehill and Kilmount after 8 years to begin a new ministry in Kilkenny. After 6 years in Tullamore and Mountmellick the Rev Stephen Simpson left the Home Mission in April. We are thankful to the Lord for all that has been achieved in His name under these ministries and we look to the Lord for the new work which has just begun.

5. As a flavour of current ministry *the Rev S Lockington reports:*

There are 25-30 attending public worship on a regular basis in Mullingar each Sunday, therefore we have experienced some growth throughout 2002. As we only have 30 chairs we are in the process of purchasing 40 more, with a similar number of Bibles and Praise Books. We are also trying to meet a need created by the presence of some young children, including toddlers; we have limited space in our buildings, so plans are afoot to utilize the “minister’s room” (the only room of meaningful size, apart from the kitchen) for some sort of optional creche facility. We are facing up to the challenge of how best to minister to these younger folk each Sunday. Plans are also in the pipeline for some kind of children’s outreach in the summer. I continue to open the church building through the week, and usually 15-20 folk will call in each day; worthwhile conversations take place and contacts are made with local people, which are being built upon. This has amazing potential! A monthly Bible Study takes place in each congregation and I am trying in various ways to encourage some sort of congregational prayer life. Ian White is playing a concert in Corboy in May as part of a UCB (United Christian Broadcasters) Promotional Tour, and this potentially could provide us in Corboy with an opportunity to reach out. I have shared with the folk there the potential for witness to the families who have built new houses beside the church, as well as into our nearest village, Edgeworthstown. I don’t think some sort of children’s work is out of the question in the next few years to come.

Vacancies

6. Aware, along with the wider church, of the growing number of vacancies at the moment the Home Mission is as eager as ever to attract ministers to the growing number of opportunities for service within our Presbyterian Mission within Ireland. Our Secretary and Convener are always willing and available to answer questions and help anyone who may be considering such service.

Heritage Protection in the Republic of Ireland

7. The Assembly Reports of 2002 contained draft guidelines, prepared by the four main Churches and submitted to Duchas, the Heritage Service for the Republic, as a possible way towards an agreement that would open the door to the processing of planning applications in accordance with the needs of the Churches and also respect architectural heritage. The proposals were unacceptable to Duchas and it looked as if months of consultation had come to nothing. However, extremely fruitful negotiations between the Churches and Duchas were reopened following a meeting of Church representatives with the present Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

8. The authorities have adopted a more realistic attitude towards the requirements of the Churches to fulfil their liturgy and mission in a contemporary context and would want to see Churches maintained as centres of living worship within the community. It is now expected that both parties will be able to agree guidelines within the next few weeks.

9. Work is about to begin on a reviewable Code of Practice which will assist Churches and heritage and planning authorities to reach agreement on

planning applications. The Board of Mission in Ireland has set up a small panel, to be known as an Historic Churches Advisory Committee, as agreed with Duchas and in common with the other Churches.

Alternating Ministry Scheme

10. There were two meetings with representatives from the Methodist Church; in the autumn and in January of this year. General matters of mutual interest were aired in discussion. While some thought was given to the possibility of uniting the congregation of Drogheda with a neighbouring Methodist congregation, this was discounted in favour of allowing each congregation and denomination to pursue its own witness for the Lord in each situation.

Rev Sam Anketell reports:

11. I have been minister of Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford congregations under the Alternating Ministry Scheme for the past 6½ years. I conduct worship in all three churches every Sunday – a round trip of 60+ miles.

12. Working in Co Wexford has been a great joy with many encouragements.

13. Over the past three years I have been working with asylum seekers from Kosovo, Nigeria and Togo and have seen the Spirit of God working in a very real way; in one case a whole family of five coming to faith after Bible Study with them.

14. Work in the Christian Media Trust, a part of South East Radio, has been a great opportunity of presenting the gospel to a larger audience. I do six services per year on the radio, and I am also involved in “Thought for the Day” and other programmes. One of our members presents a weekly request programme. The response to all of these has been very positive.

15. Over the years I have seen a number of people outside the congregations on a one to one basis and have had the joy of seeing a number respond to the claims of Jesus Christ.

16. Attendances at all three churches are encouraging and it is good to see the interest that many people have in learning more about God’s Word.

St Patrick’s Church, Waterford

17. Negotiations are continuing which may result in the church building being taken over and a new church building provided as part of a redevelopment proposal for the city centre. As can be understood in situations like this, negotiations can be protracted.

Urban Mission

18. This three year scheme whereby the Home Mission can make available £25,000 to assist inner city congregations to finance personnel in the work of mission continues to be of great assistance to a small number of congregations. Six congregations have benefited from this scheme and three congregations, Ravenhill, Ballykeel and Christ Church, Dundonald are currently in receipt of support.

Secretary

19. The Home Mission is looking forward to the appointment of its new Secretary who will rise to the challenge of giving impetus and direction to the mission of our church in Ireland today. During this year, the Clerk Designate, the Rev Dr Donald Watts has been acting as Secretary to the Home Mission. Although he is with us for only one year, he has brought plenty of vigour to his work and placed his own stamp upon his year in office. In particular he has played a supporting role in the on-going review of the work of the Board. Our thoughts and prayers go with him as he soon takes up his new duties as General Secretary.

In Support

20. As always, we are indebted to the staff of the General Secretary's Office whose office skills enable the Home Mission to run so smoothly. Special thanks are due to Mrs Joyce Anderson and Mrs Jennifer McClure. In addition we again pray tribute to the financial talents of Mrs Rosemary Thompson, our honorary treasurer, and to Mr Nehru Dass (Irish Mission) who has taken on much of the role of administering the Home Mission Accounts.

Nightlight

Mr John Luke, Director of Nightlight, reports:

1. The street outreach work of NIGHTLIGHT is continuing in the entertainment area of Belfast with Mr John Luke as Director. A team of 24 volunteers, working on rota, take Christ on to the streets on Thursday night from 8 pm to 11 pm and Friday and Saturday nights from 11 pm through to 3, 4 or even 5 am.

2. The volunteer team are committed Christians of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds who have a burden for the work of NIGHTLIGHT and who have experienced clear direction from God to become actively involved. New team members go through an application, vetting and interview process and then receive "on the job" training. The team is constantly changing as individuals' personal circumstances alter and it is always encouraging to welcome new people on board.

3. NIGHTLIGHT is based at the Kinghan Church in Botanic Avenue, where team members can meet for prayer before and after the work on the streets and it also provides somewhere to bring anyone in need of help and counselling. A regular Saturday and Sunday morning (12 mn to 3 am) Tea Bar takes place on the footpath outside the church and this has become a great contact point.

4. Mr Luke continues to receive numerous invitations to speak to congregations, and this reflects the high level of support and interest shown by the church in general. In March 2003, Miss Linzie Stewart was appointed as Development Officer and will be concentrating on team development and contact follow-up with the volunteer team in the Golden Mile area. Mrs Catherine Dalzell continues as Part-time Resource Worker and in that role she has been able to produce Prayer Letters, Information Packs and Leaflets and other resource material as well as co-ordinating deputation.

5. The Nightlight Executive Committee in consultation with Mr Luke oversees the work of NIGHTLIGHT.

R L CRAIG, Convener

CHURCH EXTENSION COMMITTEE

1. The following is a summary of the work of Church Extension during 2002.

Belfast Area

New Mossley

2. The work of the Church under the guidance of the Rev Ian McDonald, continues to progress through positive leadership and outreach.

3. The Committee has taken decisions regarding the provision of appropriate car park facilities with a view to work being carried out in Spring 2003. The necessary repointing of the brickwork of the Church will also be carried out in early Summer 2003.

Taughmonagh

4. The Rev Robert Love has settled well into the congregation, and was appreciative of the work carried out at the Manse.

5. Following discussions with Church Committee members, agreement has been reached regarding the building scheme proposed to the front of the Church to provide welcome area, crèche and toilet facilities, and Planning Permission is presently being sought.

Coleraine

Ballysally

6. Under the Rev John Coulter's leadership, congregational life has shown encouraging developments and the congregation continues to explore the possibility of bringing the Church to full congregational status.

7. Coleraine Presbytery continue to support the congregation in guiding the way forward.

Londonderry

Strathfoyle

8. The congregation continues to meet in the Church of Ireland building. No prospective purchaser has shown interest to date regarding the site owned by the Church.

9. The Committee would thank the Rev Stanley Stewart for his work and welcome the Rev Jim McGregor to Strathfoyle congregation.

Sites

Carrickfergus

10. The site at Marshallstown Road has been placed on the market for sale and the current thoughts of the Presbytery of Carrickfergus regarding a church on a new location are presently being sought.

Ballymacoss, Lisburn

11. Following negotiations with the Department for Social Development, and bearing in mind the restricted size of the proposed site and the advice offered to them by Dromore Presbytery that the Church Extension Committee should give up the option held on the site, the Committee took a decision not to proceed with the purchase of the site at Ballymacoss.

Dublin

Liffey Valley, Maynooth

12. Due to the rapid development of the Liffey Valley, a request was considered for support in the Maynooth area. This could well take the form of purchasing an appropriate dwelling within the developing area, such a residence to be used for normal “ministerial duties” and small group discussions/meetings and as a base for outreach.

13. The Committee agreed to be responsive to future proposals regarding Maynooth, and to further discussions.

Finance

14. Upon reviewing financial matters it was agreed that it would be appropriate at this time to return £500,000 to the United Appeal. The Committee agreed that decisions will be taken, as and when appropriate, regarding the use of bequests made for Church Extension work.

15. The Committee acknowledge with grateful thanks the generous bequests which were received during the last financial year.

Remit of Church Extension

16. In view of the work of the Review Panel, the Committee agreed that the remit of Church Extension would be examined in due course in the light of decisions to be made.

Support

17. Sincere thanks go to all who serve in Church Extension Charges, Ministers, Interim Sessions and Working Committees. May the Lord guide and encourage them in the work.

18. The prayerful and financial support from many people and various organisations is much appreciated by the Committee.

19. In view of the impending Review Panel report, the Committee agreed that it would be appropriate that the Rev George Moffett should continue as Co-Convener for the Church Extension Committee for one further year.

GEORGE MOFFETT, BRIAN KNOX, Conveners

APPENDIX A

BOARD OF MISSION IN IRELAND REVIEW

(A) THE VISION OF THE BOARD:

To glorify Christ and by his Spirit to work for the building of his Church throughout Ireland.

- To make disciples.
- To develop the life of existing congregations through worship, teaching, fellowship and evangelism.
- To challenge our whole church to faithful prayer.
- To explore new areas where churches could be planted.

(B) THE ROLE OF THE BOARD:

To stimulate congregations and presbyteries to mission within their bounds.

- To work in partnership with other Boards of our own Church, and where appropriate other churches and Christian organisations, to advance Christ's Kingdom in Ireland.
- To provide appropriate training for mission.

(C) THE STRUCTURES OF THE BOARD:

The Board should be structured around the following main areas:

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:

To encourage congregations to have the vision to advance Christ's kingdom at a local level.

To disseminate fresh thinking on mission and other areas of church life.

To provide or gather together resource materials to help congregations become more effective mission centres.

DEVELOPMENT:

To have a strategic overview of the Board's mission in Ireland.

To motivate and resource different types of development in mission and identify areas of potential new development.

To decide where personnel may most effectively be placed.

To consider mutually supportive relationships with others working in the field.

EDUCATION:

To ensure that the work and vision of the Board is effectively presented throughout the Church and beyond.

To stimulate prayer resources.

To develop attractive publications and papers.

These structures need to be supported by Committees dealing with:

PERSONNEL:

To be responsible for the appointment of personnel to particular fields of service and their general supervision (while recognising the role of Presbytery, Home Mission, Irish Mission and PWA); to be responsible with the PWA for the recruitment, selection and training of deaconesses (ie the present work of PWA/BMI Personnel Committee); to overview the pastoral care of all workers in the field (again recognising the role of other agencies).

PROPERTY:

To manage and develop all property owned by the Board; to acquire new property when required for the mission of the Board; to advise the Board on property issues in which it may be involved.

FINANCE:

To be responsible for budgeting, preparing accounts and advising on all financial issues affecting the Board.

APPENDIX B

The Rev Dr D J Watts reports:

THE STATUS OF DEACONESSSES IN THE COURTS OF THE CHURCH

1. The Report to the General Assembly (2002) on “The Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church” was sent down to Presbyteries for consideration and report. Nineteen Presbyteries responded. In doing so many expressed appreciation of the work being done by our Deaconesses in congregational, hospital and community settings.

2. Many of the responses also noted that the status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church may be perceived as one element in the much larger study of ministry and ordination currently being undertaken by the Doctrine Committee. For this reason some urged that no decisions should be made until the General Assembly had the opportunity to consider the Doctrine Committee’s findings. A larger number, however, took the view that after numerous reports over thirty years this was the time to take definitive action.

3. Most Presbyteries focused their comments on the four options originally contained in the 2001 Report. There is, however, no consensus on the way forward. A number definitively took the position that there should be no change, at least until the Doctrine Committee reports, with others undecided. In these responses concern was expressed at the whole issue of status and what other categories of church worker would seek similar status. Some felt that if membership is granted this could distort the balance of Church Courts.

4. A number of Presbyteries opted for membership of Church Courts either by ordination or new legislation. There was not, however, much support for ordination, with many seeing difficulties in terms of call. Of those who

favoured new legislation, some made a distinction between membership of Kirk Session, Presbytery and General Assembly.

5. Some of the responses clearly ask for further consideration to be given to the introduction of “a new ‘order’ of deacons/deaconesses to include other commissioned church workers”. This would not necessarily imply membership of Church Courts as presently constituted.

6. In view of the inconclusive nature of these responses, but a clear desire that the issue be resolved, the Board of Mission in Ireland brings a resolution to test the mind of the Assembly.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Evangelism Committee

2. That the General Assembly commend the work of the Director of Evangelism and encourage congregations to use the Personal Evangelism for Presbyterians Course and to become involved in the Eleven One Fellowship.

3. That the General Assembly, in commending Bible Sunday (7th December), encourage congregations to make fuller use of the available resources and to highlight the importance of the Scriptures in our life and witness.

4. That the General Assembly acknowledge the work being done by ministers of our Church in sports chaplaincy.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

5. That the General Assembly congratulate the Directors of the Presbyterian Mutual Society Limited for the success of the Society and urge congregations and individuals to make use of the lending facilities offered through the Society.

Home Mission Committee

6. That the following be appointed to the Alternating Ministries Scheme Committee: Conveners of the Board of Mission in Ireland and Home Mission Committee; Deputy Clerk; Mrs C Poynton; Rev S G Anketell.

Church Extension Committee

7. That the Rev George Moffett continue as Co-Convenor of the Church Extension Committee for one further year.

General

8. That the General Assembly encourage the Board of Mission in Ireland to continue its review as outlined in Appendix A.

9. That the General Assembly accept there should be no change at present to the Status of Deaconesses in the Courts of the Church.

10. That the resignation of Rev Dr Brian Moore as Co-Convener of the Board of Mission in Ireland be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Very Rev Dr D H Allen continue as sole Convener.

11. That the Board of Mission in Ireland, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 280 of the Code as follows:

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Executive Secretary: Mrs MARGARET MYERS

Theme for year: "Are you listening?"

(This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Board of Mission in Ireland and the Overseas Board.)

1. The PWA theme this year has encouraged members of PWA Branches and Executive Committee to focus on "listening", listening to each other, but more importantly, listening to God. In the midst of all our busyness God calls us to listen to him. Elijah was found listening to God on Mount Carmel when the fire came down, but he also needed to listen for God when he came, not in the miraculous, but in a gentle whisper. PWA members, like Elijah, desire to recognise our Father's voice and be obedient in following him.

2. Mrs Maureen Patterson (Iveagh Presbytery) has served as Central President during 2001/2003. During these two years she has given generously of her time in attendance at meetings of Boards and Committees as well as undertaking speaking engagements. Mrs Patterson together with her husband, Rev Ivan Patterson, visited India and Nepal and met with missionary personnel serving there. PWA wish to thank Mrs Patterson for her dedicated service during her period in office.

3. The Executive Committee, which is responsible for progressing the work of the Association, met on nine occasions throughout the year.

4. PWA Executive Committee record sincere thanks to the office staff, Mrs Rita Maguire, Miss Margaret Young and Miss Naomi Campbell, for the way in which they fulfilled their responsibilities.

5. Executive Committee 2002/03

Office-Bearers:

Central President:	Mrs Maureen Patterson (Iveagh)
Home Vice-President:	Mrs Zoe Vallely (Carrickfergus)
Overseas Vice-President:	Mrs Rosemary Cowan (East Belfast)
Home Treasurer:	Mrs Marbeth Russell (Ards)
Overseas Treasurer:	Mrs Doreen McMullen (South Belfast)

Committee Members:

Mrs Margaret Clarke (Ards)	Mrs Pat Colvin (Dublin & Munster)
Mrs Eileen Greenlee (Armagh)	Mrs Valerie Stewart (Foyle)
Mrs Lorna Brown (Ballymena)	Mrs Jane McClure (Iveagh)
Mrs Helen Murdock (North Belfast)	Mrs Gillian Drennan (Monaghan)
Miss Elizabeth Smyth (Coleraine)	Mrs Jenny Kirk (Newry)
Mrs Sheila Fell (Derry & Strabane)	Mrs Amanda Blair (Omagh)
Mrs Pearl Johnston (Donegal)	Mrs Barbara Thompson (Route)

Mrs Mary Boggs (Down)	Mrs Maureen Weir (Templepatrick)
Mrs Hilary Jess (Dromore)	Mrs Sandra Fleck (Tyrone)
Mrs Arline Birney (ex officio)	Mrs Alison McCaughan (ex officio)
Mrs Edith Neale (YWG, ex officio)	Mrs Rita Maguire (Minute Secretary)
Mrs Margaret Myers (ex officio)	
Mrs Christine Finlay (Co-option, 2002/03)	
Mrs Hilary Hull (Home Vice-President, 2000/02)	
Mrs Gwen Irwin (Overseas Vice-President 2001/02)	

6. New member of Executive Committee 2003/2004

Mrs Zena McAllister (Down)

7. Office Bearers to be installed at the Annual Meeting on 8 May 2003 are as follows:

Central President: Mrs Zoe Vallely

Home Vice-President: Mrs Helen Murdock

Thanks

8. PWA members wish to sincerely thank Mrs Alison McCaughan for her magnificent contribution to Wider World, serving as editor from 1990-2003. Members record their deep appreciation to her for her commitment and dedication to Wider World over many years.

9. PWA members record their thanks to Mrs Adrienne Campbell, whose contribution as editor of the Children's page in Wider World over a number of years has been greatly appreciated.

10. We record our thanks to Mrs Margaret Clarke who, due to ill health, resigned from Executive Committee in October 2002.

11. Executive Committee wish to thank members of PROP (Presbyterians reaching other people) for their practical help spanning almost 25 years.

Events 2002/2003

12. The Annual Prayer Meeting was held on 18 April 2002 in the Chapel, Church House. Prayers were led by Mrs Maureen Patterson.

13. The Annual Meetings were held on 9 May, 2002, in the Assembly Hall, Church House. The Guest Speaker, Miss Clare McIntyre, gave a challenging address on the theme "Are you listening?"

14. The Executive Committee hosted a Coffee Morning in the Minor Hall on 30 May 2002 for PROP and retired personnel.

15. Rev Roy Vallely, prior to the Executive Committee meeting on 5 September, 2002, conducted a Communion Service in the Chapel, Church House.

16. A special Conference for PWA Branch Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers was held in Church House on 14 September, 2002. This provided a forum for Executive Committee and over 1100 members to be encouraged together in the work of the Lord. The Conference was an opportunity to discover new ways of developing branch meetings.

17. General Committee met on 6 February 2003 in the Minor Hall, Church House. Members heard reports from probationary deaconesses and

missionaries, and were greatly challenged by the Guest Speaker, Rev Stephen McCracken, PCI missionary in Malawi, who spoke of issues facing missionary families living overseas.

Home Personnel

18. Executive Committee wish to thank most sincerely Rev Dr Donald Watts, Clerk Designate, for his willing support and invaluable advice given during the year.

Overseas Personnel, visits and visitors

19. PWA continues to be involved in the overseas work of the Church; we record our thanks to Rev Uel Marrs, Secretary to the Overseas Board, for the contribution of his time and for his willing support and advice.

20. Mrs Margaret Myers, Executive Secretary, together with Revs U Marrs and R Quinn, made a visit to Malawi 9-19 November 2002, and attended the Assembly meetings of Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP). Time was spent with PCI personnel in the Synods of Livingstonia, Nkhoma and Blantyre and with the leadership of CCAP. Visits were made to Day Care Centres for Aids Orphans in Blantyre City, a sick-parent headed family and a child-headed family. Visits were also made to feeding centres in a famine stricken rural area.

Finance

21. PWA continues to receive the generous financial support of the branches. The Executive Committee acknowledges, with a deep sense of gratitude, the faithfulness on the part of individual members that enables PWA to meet its financial commitments.

22. PWA supports, in part, 20 deaconesses serving in congregational, community and hospital work.

23. PWA supports fully 2 probationary deaconesses and 2 deaconesses in training.

24. PWA seeks the prayerful and financial support of the members to enable more deaconesses to be trained for congregational work.

25. PWA gave a grant to the Overseas Board of £245,000.00 to provide financial support in part to all missionary personnel.

Birthday Thank Offering Fund

26. The final total of the Kenya/Coleraine Fund (2001/02) is as follows:

Samburu/Turkana peoples of Northern Kenya:	£30,674.67
Willowbrook, Coleraine	£10,000.00

The India/Pakistan (2002/03) Birthday Thank Offering to date (25 March) amounts to £13,451.10. This account closes in December 2003.

Bequests

27. PWA acknowledges with thanks the following bequests:

Gladys Mary Lennox:	£3,000.00
Anonymous:	£6,415.25

Wider World

28. Wider World has enjoyed another excellent year and has included articles about our Church's work in Ireland and overseas, news of personnel together with articles which seek to inspire and challenge. The children's page is a great favourite with our younger readers and we are grateful to Mr Raphael Sutter for his photographs for the magazine covers.

29. PWA wishes to thank all who have contributed to the magazine and its wide promotion.

30. Printed quarterly copies of the magazine are sent to partner churches on all five Continents.

31. Selected extracts from Wider World continue on-line and an edited version of each issue is available on audiotape for those who are blind, partially sighted or have difficulty holding a magazine.

32. PWA send their prayerful good wishes to Mrs Alison McCaughan and Mrs Adrienne Campbell who have stepped down as editor and children's editor respectively.

Young Women's Groups

33. The 2002/2003 theme "Are you listening?" was shared by the PWA and YWG.

34. The YWG annual rally was held in Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church, Lisburn on the 10 April 2003. Miss Naomi Keefe, missionary home on study leave, gave the address.

35. Cheques were handed over to Mrs Margaret Myers, Associate Secretary of the Overseas Board, for Brazil, supporting missionary and ministerial training and helping disadvantaged children. The Rev Dr Donald Watts, Clerk-Designate and Secretary of the Board of Mission in Ireland, received a cheque for Mums and Toddlers Groups and children's work in the South of Ireland.

36. Office-Bearers 2003/2004

Chairman:	Mrs Edith Neale
Secretary:	Mrs Linda Thompson
Treasurer:	Mrs Gwen Wakefield
Newsletter Editor:	Mrs Olive Hanna

37. The Home project for 2003/2004 will develop the family care aspect of the work at South Belfast Friendship House, providing educational and play equipment for children, aiding the homework clubs and other family care programmes.

38. The Overseas project for 2003/2004 will support the diaconate training at the Teacher Training College of Károli Gáspár Reformed University, Hungary.

RESOLUTION

1. That the Report be received.

BOARD OF SOCIAL WITNESS

Convener: Rev R VALLELY

Secretary: Mr LINDSAY CONWAY, OBE

Only a Social Club

1. “Jesus Christ gave His Church the public duty to be the **“salt of the earth”** and the **“light of the world”**. If we are only a social club, if, as Christ warned in the Sermon on the Mount, the salt has lost its saltiness, then it is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled by men.

2. The ingredient which gives Christians that essential salty tang and which brings them to the heart of most social problems is Love. It is the same love that brought Christ to a stable in Bethlehem and then to His death on a wooden cross. *“The Church is here to serve our community, as Christ served His, and it earns the right to be heard by showing love, as Christ did, in a selfish and cynical world”* (Quote from Sir Fred Catherwood in “It can be done”).

3. The Board is currently reflecting on its work and how it promotes itself to the wider church. We are forming the opinion that what we do is not widely known by the majority of people sitting in our pews, or those associated with the wider Presbyterian family. The fact that we offer over 350 beds each night, employ more than 300 staff, in 14 locations, offer a wide range of social care programmes, basically goes unnoticed.

4. Our work continues to develop and grow responding to the many changing needs of a secular society. A headline in a recent newspaper summarises to-day’s mixed-up society and our dilemma over the status of the family - *“Three year old Ruth has three fathers. One is the man her mother lives with. One is the sperm donor she used to conceive. The other is this man, a former lover who insists HE be called Daddy.”* **Welcome to parenthood in 2003**. How do we compete with satellite TV and the world of the Internet? The whole area of the family is a major concern not only for the Church but also for society in general. Putting the “Family in Focus” is a major priority as we plan for the future. Traditionally we have provided organisations for children and young people, women and occasionally men’s groups. We now need to look at the family as a unit, to promote more family activities and the whole promotion of training for parents. This work has already commenced in partnership with the PWA and our operation of the South Belfast Friendship House as a “Family Centre”.

Survey

5. A survey has recently been circulated to ministers. The survey will measure the level of social witness being provided by congregations. It will also detail the facilities and equipment that individual churches have. The Board is grateful to the Board of Social Witness agents who are assisting in this process.

New Legislation

6. New legislation impacts on all that we do and on the different groups we work with. “Supporting People” – a new method of funding some of our residential programmes and the “Northern Ireland Social Care Council” – a regulation body for all Social Work and Care Staff are two such pieces of new legislation.

Key Staff Forum

7. The Board in all its departments is now meeting on a more regular basis. A member of staff from each unit now meets regularly in the new Key Staff Forum:

- To promote the work of the Board;
- To communicate to the whole Church;
- To encourage participation;
- To celebrate service;
- To build on our success.

Child Protection

8. The protection and safety of children and young people is paramount. Thousands of children and young people are catered for in a wide variety of activities, in numerous locations, by an army of hard working leaders. The child protection debate has now expanded to include the complex areas of Health and Safety and Insurance. Although our Guidelines (Red Book) were updated in 2001 a new rewrite is already underway. As well as the format being different and more user friendly it will look at issues such as the Internet, chat rooms, texting, transport, photographs and videos.

“Come Monday Morning”, Board Conference

9. “Come Monday Morning” was the title for our recent conference. This was an attempt to develop the “Engaging with the Community” agenda in congregations and communities. A range of speakers gave their perspective on this area of work and how they had approached the work in their own congregation or community. We were challenged to look at the issues confronting individual communities and to respond in a Christ-like manner. Some of the participants summed the conference in this way – “Community involvement is a Church without walls” – “We should do what we do out of compassion and respect for others – not to get them.” “Community is an expression of God’s presence with us.”

10. We are a resource-rich Church, rich with volunteers willing to help, rich with buildings and facilities that are under-used, rich with skills and experience that so often go untapped. Society will continue to set the agenda and the communities we work in will always challenge us and demand more. The conscience of the early Church was awakened by the raw needs of communities crying out for help – responding to poverty and the deplorable conditions that people were living in. In a similar way we as a Church in the 21st Century must respond to the poverty of today’s Church. To do that we must redefine the concept of what poverty is. There may be more bread on the table, but less love

or focus on the family. There may be satellite TV in the living room – but no one speaks. There may be a car at the front door – but the family does nothing together. Our work, Monday to Saturday, must respond to those ever-changing needs. A recent Government publication “A Better Future” celebrating 50 years of Child Care in Northern Ireland made the following revelation, “One of the earliest records of fostering is the Biblical Story of Moses who was brought up by Pharaoh’s daughter.” A tremendous heritage to follow and an equally daunting task to meet the ever-changing challenges of a new age!

Funding

11. Total income for the year 2002 was derived from the following sources:

Income from services	£3,693,000
United Appeal	138,000
Donations and Bequests	369,000
Grants	107,000
Other	270,000
Total Income	£4,577,000

Total expenditure for the year 2002 was as shown below:

Older People	£2,965,000
Addiction and Education Services	401,000
Ex-Prisoners	269,000
Student Accommodation	227,000
Unemployed People	26,000
Deaf People	123,000
Learning Disabled	117,000
Relationship Counselling	11,000
Publications	4,000
Management Costs	134,000
Total Expenditure	£4,277,000

12. The Board’s work is totally dependent on donations from Government and within the Church family, United Appeal, the Presbyterian Women’s Association, Young Women’s Groups and the continued support of individual members and congregations.

Thanks

13. **Rev Dr George Grindle.** Dr George Grindle has been minister, teacher, social worker and pastor to the Deaf Community for 36 years. The Kinghan Mission under his leadership has provided the wider Church with an opportunity to minister in this special way. Dr Grindle has also played an important role in the wider community offering support to those who have required advice, or an interpreting facility for Church services, Court

appearances or medical matters. He has developed a real talent in being able to communicate in a very meaningful manner, bringing the Gospel alive to both hearing and deaf people alike. We thank God for calling and using George in such a unique way and pray that God will bless George and Pearl in their retirement.

14. **Rev Trevor McCormick** completes seven years as Convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust Committee. During this period Mr McCormick has dedicated himself to the work of the Trust and has steered them through many major developments. He has been a tremendous support to the individual homes and staff, bringing both warmth and humour to a very stressful work.

Rev Roy Valley writes:

15. The Board welcomes Mr Lindsay Conway OBE as Director of Social Service and Secretary to the Board, rejoicing in the professional skills and the Christian commitment which he brings to the position. We also give thanks for the continuing commitment to the work of the Board of the staff in the Board Office in Church House and throughout the centres and units. We commend the formation of the Key Staff Forum which regularly brings staff together for prayer, discussion and fellowship.

Minister in Recognised Service – (Called by the Board of Social Witness under Code Par 281.3)

Rev Douglas Baker, Mediation Network Northern Ireland, reports:

1. In the course of the past year I have delivered “Handling Conflict in the Church” training for PCI Licentiates, theological students in other denominations, Kirk Sessions, The Junior Ministers’ Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Redemptorist’s Pastoral Ministry Course at the Marianella Centre, Dublin, and a new mediation panel being established by the Church of Ireland.

2. Mr Joe Campbell, Assistant Director of Mediation Northern Ireland, and I continue to serve on the Conciliation Panel and assist with supervision of casework with PCI congregations.

3. Since October 2001 I have served as co-leader for Partners in Transformation, which is a joint initiative of Mediation Northern Ireland and The Irish School of Ecumenics. The aim of this project is to “*enhance, nurture and support the capacity of churches and faith communities in their calling to be peace builders and agents of transformation.*” The project is targeted towards ‘church leaders’, by which we mean both those who hold executive level positions within denominations or are Conveners, Chairs and members of key Boards and Committees, as well as local clergy and lay leaders. My role with this project involves a combination of facilitating dialogue within and between denominations, delivering training on peace-building and serving as a consultant to various denominational groupings developing peacemaking work as an integral part of their life and mission.

4. Finally, I continue to serve as Convener of the PCI Peace and Peacemaking Committee.

CHILD PROTECTION MONITORING COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to provide advice and help and training to congregations in this important area. We are indebted to those who have experience in the area of child protection. We continue to look for representation from the Republic, and females, to serve on the Committee.

2. With the retirement of Mr Norman Chambers the new Designated Person in Church House is Mr Lindsay Conway OBE. The General Board has also appointed a female co-designated person at this level, Mrs Margaret McGuigan.

3. Trainers in child protection are available to help congregations and Presbyteries raise awareness of this issue. Please contact the Board office if training is to be carried out locally. We are reviewing our Training procedures and are looking seriously at employing someone on a part-time basis to oversee this growing and important part of our work.

4. The second edition of the Guidelines have been well received but stocks are almost exhausted. The Committee has decided to produce a third edition which will incorporate new legislation and improved advice. The bulk of the Guidelines will remain the same, but in an ever-changing area like child protection we need to constantly update and improve advice in the light of situations that arise. The new edition will also emphasise good practice in the area of health and safety.

5. The third edition of the Guidelines (with accompanying CD-ROM) will probably be in a loose-leaf file format. This will facilitate photocopying of forms and the incorporation of new appendices to the Guidelines. The General Assembly should also be aware that the current Guidelines are available to download off the Board of Social Witness web site.

6. A small group continues to work on Policy and Procedures in the event of allegations of abuse against Ministers and employees of the Church. This is a sensitive and complicated area involving confidential referral, pastoral care for all concerned and financial and practical arrangements on the ground. This work is proceeding well and should be finalised before the end of the year. The Procedures will be independently assessed and will be presented to next year's Assembly for approval. Interim procedures were put in place at last year's Assembly pending the completion of these guidelines.

7. The Convener thanks the Committee, the staff of the Board of Social Witness and the Director for their help over the past year.

N A L CAMERON, Convener

SOCIAL WITNESS SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Director and Convener continue to meet and discuss the way forward. The Board is committed to developing appropriate initiatives in the South. It is encouraging that individual congregations have launched major projects. Both residential and community based projects are in the planning stages.

2. These are opportunities to learn from cross-border experiences and to share ideas.

3. As a Committee we need to seek God's will with regard to the future direction of the Committee.

D BOYD, Convener

THOMPSON HOUSE

1. The character of the work in Thompson House is such that the sectarian unrest of other adjacent areas of our city can have implications and ramifications for our work. Neither Thompson House nor any of its residents had connections with or a relationship to Holy Cross/Ardoyne troubles in 2001 or the early days of 2002, yet from January to March 2002 Thompson House was subjected to attacks, weekend after weekend.

2. The Director and staff of Thompson House would want to record their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Probation Board for Northern Ireland for their support and practical help through a very tense and stressful three months. The individual Probation officers and the staff of Thompson House have a very good relationship – as they each fulfil their responsibilities to residents. The care and concern carried out in such a spirit of love and unity must make an impact for God and for good in this needy section of our society.

3. We express thanks and gratitude to the Director, Mr David Farrow, (who had to cancel his booked holiday) and also all the staff, including the volunteer, for going the “second mile” over this period. It is no picnic when at nights missiles are landing through the windows – especially on nights when these things are almost succeeding in entering Thompson House.

4. The staff and volunteers with courage continued to run the hostel and service the residents, who no doubt had their own fears and sense of stress. In these incidents, as in the daily running of the hostel, the staff and volunteers display a high standard of Christian action, love and fortitude.

5. Again we thank David Farrow and all his staff and volunteers for their work over the past year.

6. The work in the Craft room under the patient leadership of Mr Bryan Marshall continues. He not only directs and leads the residents in these activities for another year, he has led our Bible study – while we have no miraculous results to report, we have had a very encouraging year. Eternity alone will reveal the success of this work.

7. Thanks are due to the Management Committee for their faithfulness, interest and commitment. This year we had a training day with the staff. These events are no doubt helpful to all concerned; we note the dedication of the officers of the committee, Rev R. Thompson Hon. Secretary, Mr A Henderson Hon. Treasurer and our Property Convener, Mr G Crooks, who had a busy 18 months.

8. The occupancy level has been 70% for the year; this is low, however the attacks on the hostel are largely responsible. A number of residents moved out during the attacks, other referrals were afraid to move into a hostel that had been attacked due to fears of a repeat of the attacks.

9. Thompson House is ever grateful for the practical and prayerful support of the wider church. They would be happy to share with PWAs, men's groups and Youth fellowships something of the work and ministry of Thompson House.

10. We do covet a place in the prayers of God's people throughout the church.

J C BUICK MBE, Chairperson

PCI ENTERPRISES

1. During the past year we have concluded our work with the unemployed in the York Road premises. Mrs Myna McCullough left us at the end of July to take up a post with the Community Relations Council. We thank her for the tireless work she did on our behalf and wish her well in her new position.

2. PCI Enterprises now needs to develop a new role in the area of support for local congregations in the North Belfast area. First of all we have to identify programmes of work that could be offered. These could be in the Child Care, Community Support, Thrift Shop or co-ordinate training opportunities for a range of groups. The Committee is pursuing avenues of funding that will resource the development of this work

3. The North Belfast Area continues to be an area of great social need. Street disturbance is still a characteristic of the area and crime against the elderly is on the increase.

4. Our future work must operate through the local churches in harmony with the local community, very much seeing our work as Christ in action.

M GIBSON, Chairperson

COMMITTEE ON LEARNING DISABILITY

1. The Committee continues to work at raising the awareness of the Church to the need of a real and effective ministry to those with a learning disability.

2. We have been greatly encouraged by the success of "Willow Brook", the supported housing project in Coleraine. For the tenants and support staff this first year together has been one of building relationships and establishing a pattern of life and work under the able leadership of the project manager, Mrs Anne Campbell. We are pleased to be able to report that in this first year of operation the on-going running costs of the project have been adequately met. A local support group "The Friends of Willow Brook" is a great blessing to both the tenants and staff.

3. The need for such supported housing projects has become clear to us and requests for further projects are being seriously considered by the Committee.

4. Following a church-wide survey aimed at identifying areas of need in our ministry to the learning disabled, the Committee is currently working on a strategy that will enable us to identify and prioritise areas that require attention. In this regard focus groups are presently addressing the issues of,

- (a) the education of ministers and deaconesses-in-training and other church workers in the issues of learning disability, and

- (b) the provision of resources and advice for congregations seeking to communicate the love of God in Jesus Christ to those with a learning disability and to integrate them into their church life.
5. We are aware also of other areas of concern that will need to be addressed, in particular the provision of other forms of support for individuals and families, such as respite care and befriending, and the need for the Church to be involved in lobbying national and local government on the needs of the learning disabled.
6. The Committee continues to be encouraged by the prayerful interest of many individuals and congregations in our work and thanks the members of the Board and the General Assembly for their on-going support.

W J WARING, Convener

ADDICTION AND EDUCATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to take a keen interest in helping with information and education on the BIG issues of drugs and alcohol.
2. The problems caused by drug use, the damage to lives, and the cost to society are spiralling high. Pressure groups and government opinion lean heavily towards decriminalisation of some drugs, yet lives are still being destroyed. The need to work, pray and educate is urgent. The church is at the frontline, and we will continue to labour in the conflict, in the knowledge that we serve One who is able to liberate both body and soul. As we educate and inform, so we also pray that many will choose a different lifestyle, and more importantly a different master.
3. Alcohol, too, gives grave cause for concern. Often regarded as a social drink, alcohol is a drug with strong addictive tendencies. We can share with Paul in writing "All things are permissible, but not all things are beneficial." The benefits of alcohol as a beverage are limited. The effects are limitless. The escalating number of road accidents and deaths, and the cost of alcohol related problems to health, welfare and industrial budgets are frightening. The harm caused to family life and the hurt to individuals make it well nigh impossible for any Christian or Christian body, to stand by and condone or even encourage the use of alcoholic beverages. We would urge all within the Church to uphold the decision taken some years ago and wholly support Total Abstinence as the preferred and best policy. We dare not cause even one person, of whatever age, to stumble and fall into a sorry condition caused by alcohol.
4. The **volunteers scheme** continues to operate. There are 20 volunteers serving the Church and wider community. These volunteers are widely located and are available to visit any church group for the purpose of alcohol and drug education. Contact can be made through the Social Witness office or through the Committee Convener. Church members are asked to make use of and pray for these men and women as they give of their time and effort to serve the Church.

5. Miss Louise Kane has moved on from the Insight Office and from her role as Volunteer Scheme Co-ordinator. We would want to thank her for all her good work and for the manner by which she endeared herself to so many people. We would also want to wish her well as she seeks to discover where and how God would use her in His service in the future. To date no successor has been appointed but we are urgently endeavouring to have this situation remedied, since the co-ordinator is essential to the smooth running of the volunteer scheme.

6. **Vision of Hope** prayer meetings continue to be held in the Ballymena and Carrickfergus Presbyteries. These focus on the province wide "Drugs problem". We would encourage other Presbytery Agents to consider introducing similar Prayer Meetings in their Presbytery.

7. It is hoped that we will shortly have available a leaflet on the subject of **Gambling**. This too has become a major concern with so much easy access to gaming machines, scratch cards, lottery tickets etc. The aim of the leaflet is to alert people to the risks and consequences of gambling and to advocate a better way to live and to earn our income.

Carlisle House

8. The staff at Carlisle House continue to provide a therapeutic service to those who suffer from addiction to alcohol or drugs. Within a modern and relaxed environment staff are able to offer a high quality service. The 24 hour Help Line deals with a constant stream of enquiries on a wide range of addiction issues.

9. 331 people were referred during 2002. Of these 181 people presented for assessment. Of these 135 were men and 46 were women. 128 had an alcohol problem, 17 with drugs and 36 with a dual problem.

10. Carlisle House offers a range of support groups, for a wide range of problems. All groups are attracting 12-27 ex-residents on a regular basis. There are also opportunities for relatives to gain support through some of the groups.

Gray's Court

11. Gray's Court has now been open for three years, offering a valuable move-on facility for those leaving Carlisle House. It is very beneficial to have such a resource for clients at a very vulnerable time of their lives.

12. Regrettably Gray's Court has sustained some damage by local youths. CCTV and an entrance porch have been added to increase the safety for both residents and staff.

A BEATTIE, I McDONALD, Co-Conveners

KINGHAN MISSION COMMITTEE

1. Within our Church psyche we are convinced that to be a Missionary involves travel overseas. It is supposed to involve uprooting oneself and family from home shores and replanting them in foreign fields. It involves sunnier climes, interesting foods and painful inoculations. It means being the only white face in a sea of faces of differing colours. That is the Missionary's lot. How

wrong that is! The Kinghan Mission is exactly what it claims to be – a mission. But it is not in some far-flung location, but on our very doorstep. From its beginning in 1857 to the current day it has seen four Ministers overseeing its work. The current Minister, Rev Simon Henning, will be only the fifth minister in a 146-year history.

2. Centred in Belfast, the Kinghan Church is deeply involved with people who use a different language and exist within a different culture. Deafness has been described as ‘the invisible disability’, for while on the outside Deaf people are no different from you or me, the lives they lead, due to their deafness, can often leave them feeling lonely and isolated. The work done by Kinghan goes some way to deal pastorally with their situations in a way that gives them the dignity and value they so deserve. Deaf people are not simply hearing people who cannot hear! At Kinghan we aim to meet their needs directly, in a way that restores a deaf person’s dignity and sense of self worth. We also attempt to be involved in, and to understand their culture, which includes an appreciation of and competency with British Sign Language. This is probably the most difficult and challenging part of our Mission.

3. The refurbished Church in Botanic Avenue is now 13 years old and continues to provide Deaf people with a centre for Worship which caters for their own very special needs using PowerPoint presentation, as well as Sign Language and a powerful loop system. The Wednesday night teaching continues and pastoral care is available to all who need it, irrespective of Church membership. Within certain Christian settings (Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals) Interpretation and Communication Support is offered. An awareness of deafness and its effects is promoted through various deputations and speaking engagements, which all the staff in Kinghan are involved in. Work with young people continues, but as with most churches within our denomination, we too are finding it difficult to reach Generation X.

4. After 35 years of tireless service to the congregation of Kinghan, Rev Dr George Grindle retired in April 2003. Special services and celebration evenings were held to mark the end of what can only be described as a remarkable era within the history of the Church. George and Pearl will be sadly missed by all within the Deaf Community and will be long remembered for the ceaseless dedication and service shown to those in Kinghan, and beyond. We wish them both God’s blessing in what will be a well deserved, if not busy retirement.

5. Rev Simon Henning continues to learn Sign Language, and since January has taken over the day to day running of the Church.

6. Mrs Anne Rodgers, the Lay Assistant, is now in her fifth year of service and continues to serve the congregation tirelessly.

7. The Committee is grateful to all who support the Kinghan Mission, both financially and through prayer. We are especially grateful for the amount given through the United Appeal, which helps to sustain the vital work that is done here.

8. 2002/3 has been a difficult year of transition for the congregation of Kinghan but we pray that each person will grow closer to God as we worship Him together, and that as His Church we will reach out into the deaf community.

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY COMMITTEE

1. The Marriage and Relationship Counselling Service has had a busy year, and the Service has expanded. Many of the relationship problems faced by couples and single people include marital abuse; this includes sexual, mental and physical abuse problems, sexual orientation, violence, anger and pornography. "Affairs" and growing apart in marriage are also on the increase. The Committee would encourage people to come for help as soon as possible after realising and admitting that there is a problem. Ministers are encouraged to be aware of problems in their congregations and to direct people to counsellors at an early stage.

2. In June a new Counsellor joined the team and was soon seeing clients. In the autumn three applicants were interviewed and selected to follow the Level One course organised by Christian Guidelines. It is hoped that some of these applicants will commence Level Two training in September 2003.

3. The Counselling Service is affiliated to the Association of Christian Counsellors, and our supervision and some training is provided by Christian Guidelines. Intensive training has been completed during the last few months. Training sessions and Information Mornings were provided by Women's Aid and Nexus on abuse and violence to women. Sexual Therapy and Eating Disorders training days were also attended. The Counsellors benefit greatly from training sessions and look forward to future training on a range of topical issues.

4. Most of the counselling is now taking place at Knock Presbyterian Church, though some continues to take place in Church House. The anonymity provided at Knock helps people to come for counselling as recognition in Church House can cause problems and unnecessary stress. Knock can also be used in the evening, which is helpful to both counsellors and clients and easy car parking is useful. Church House is often preferred by those who attend counselling sessions in their lunch hour and work in the city centre. Other venues include High Kirk in Ballymena and Ballywillan Church in Portrush. We are very grateful to all who have provided venues, which occasionally includes having to use manses.

5. The extensive Review of the Panel on Remarriage has continued throughout the year. The Report is appended. The Committee is very grateful to those who took part in the Review, the Sub-Committee members and Presbyteries for their responses to the Questionnaire. The Committee would particularly like to express gratitude to Rev Norman Cameron, who has worked tirelessly to produce this comprehensive Report.

6. The Marriage and the Family Committee is very grateful for the time, dedication and professionalism shown by all the Counsellors who give their time and services freely and willingly to the Glory of God. Counsellors are grateful for the prayerful support provided by many members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Committee is very grateful to Mr Lindsay Conway OBE for his support and interest since his appointment and also to Mrs Stephanie Windrum and all those in the Board office who have any contact with the Clients and do so with sensitivity and confidentiality. The Committee asks for continued prayerful support for the Clients and the Counsellors in all the work they do in response to Christ's command to "Love Thy Neighbour".

REVIEW OF THE PANEL ON REMARRIAGE

Introduction

1. The General Assembly in 2001 resolved that the Marriage and the Family Committee should “*review the arrangements for interviewing divorced persons who wish to remarry, in the light of the experience of the Panel on Remarriage and report to the next General Assembly*”.

2. A sub-group was appointed by the Marriage and the Family Committee to carry out the Review and a Report was presented to the General Assembly in 2002. That Report included a summary of responses from a questionnaire circulated to ministers seeking information on their use of the Panel and opinion as to its value.

3. The Report to the 2002 Assembly noted that not all ministers use the Panel despite a strong recommendation in the Code that ministers refer divorcees seeking remarriage to the Marriage and the Family Committee. It noted further that attitudes within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have changed over the past twenty years regarding the remarriage of divorcees with only a very small minority of ministers absolutely refusing to conduct such weddings. In practice it was also made clear that the Panel does not conduct a decision-making or vetting function – rather it carries out a pastoral function and helps the couple and the minister come to a decision as to the appropriateness of a Christian wedding, or whether there are areas where further counselling needs to be sought.

4. The Report looked at recent trends in society, doctrinal and pastoral considerations and current practice amongst ministers. It was clear that there is a strong tension between Biblical ideals and applying these to the complexity and sinfulness of life. Nevertheless, there is still a strong feeling within the Church that the Christian view of marriage should be strongly upheld and promoted, and that the Church should not capitulate to the world and the demeaning of the marriage bond.

5. The Report noted that, in general, there was a willingness to offer in grace, remarriage and a fresh start to divorced persons, especially if they are viewed as the innocent party in the breakdown of a previous marriage. However, there is also willingness to offer in grace, remarriage and a fresh start to a divorced person, even if they are not viewed as the innocent party, if the person is approaching remarriage in a fitting or penitent spirit. It was further recognised that it can be difficult to assess innocence and guilt in a marriage breakdown; often both partners share responsibility in the breakdown of the marriage.

6. The report noted the key role of the minister in deciding on the appropriateness of a Christian wedding, but in the past the second opinion offered by the Panel has proved very valuable. It also appeared from anecdotal evidence that in general the couples, while initially apprehensive about meeting the Panel, found the experience on the whole positive and helpful.

7. The 2002 Report recognised some shortcomings regarding the process and made six recommendations regarding the Panel and seven recommendations regarding ministers, with a view to improving the procedure, clarifying the role of the Panel, and providing practical help to ministers.

8. The General Assembly of 2002 agreed to send the Report to Presbyteries for study and comment.

SUMMARY OF PRESBYTERY RESPONSES

General

- Nineteen out of twenty-one Presbytery responses were received.
- In general Presbyteries found the Report helpful and a good summary of the issues. Some thought more information would have been helpful from the interviewees themselves.
- Presbyteries recognised the difficulties of applying Biblical standards in our modern world where there are so many marriages failing, but agreed that this is not an excuse to follow the world's agenda.
- All but two Presbyteries agreed that there should still be a role for the Panel. Two Presbyteries believed that the Panel could no longer provide a useful function and should be thanked and discharged. Despite the confusion as to the Panel's role and function and the lack of information coming from the Panel, ministers seem to have found the Panel on the whole helpful to them.
- A number commented on the misleading nature of Par. 85 (6) which suggests that a vetting function is exercised by the Panel when this is not the case in practice. It was suggested that the Code be amended to emphasise the pastoral function of the Panel.
- Presbyteries agreed that, although outside the remit of the Report, some guidelines for ministers dealing with cohabitation situations would be appreciated.
- Most Presbyteries confined their comments to the specific recommendations of the 2002 Report. In general the responses were in broad agreement with the sub-group's recommendations with one or two notable exceptions.

PRESBYTERY RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE PANEL

1. *Panel should continue to exist? Recommendation that all Ministers refer to it all divorced persons seeking remarriage?*

Most agreed that the Panel should continue. Two Presbyteries felt the Panel was no longer necessary in its present form, although the possibility of a small Panel being retained for complex cases was suggested. Most Presbyteries felt that referrals should not be compulsory but at the discretion of the minister. It was also strongly felt that the Panel needs to be more accessible to those Presbyteries further from Belfast.

Some questioned whether the existence of the Panel did actually produce consistency across the Church especially when a large number of ministers do not refer to it.

2. *Panel membership with requisite experience and skill?*

All agreed that this was necessary. Some felt it would be helpful to know who sat on the Panel. Is there input from those previously divorced? Is there a

gender balance? Do ministers sit on the Panel? (The answer to these questions is affirmative.)

3. *Able to advise on complex cases?*

It was generally felt that this would be helpful providing we could get people with such expertise.

4. *The Panel should have in place a clearer framework of biblical and pastoral guidelines?*

There was broad agreement that this was very necessary, and this would help to offset the confusion that existed regarding the remit of the Panel.

5. *Practical arrangements to be improved?*

Broad agreement that this was very necessary. Interviewing and waiting room facilities need to be improved. The geographical location of the Panel is a big issue for Presbyteries located some distance from Belfast.

6. *Ministers better informed as to the role of the Panel?*

Agreed, with perhaps some thought to be given to the amendment of Par 85 (6) of the Code.

PRESBYTERY RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING MINISTERS

7. *Redraft the forms?*

General agreement that this is necessary. Some felt that the current forms were satisfactory.

8. *Ministers have a key role?*

Specific guidelines to be made available. Broad agreement that ministers make the ultimate decision. Guidelines would be greatly welcomed to help them in this important role.

9. *Teaching of Church on sanctity of marriage to be more widely known?*

Agreed

10. *Precondition that couples attend a pre-marriage course?*

While Presbyteries were in agreement in principle with a preparation course, most felt that this could not be imposed as a precondition to marriage, but should rather be a strong recommendation.

11. *Pre-marriage preparation still necessary for second marriage?*

Agreed. Such couples would probably have to be prepared separately from first time couples due to the sensitivities of the circumstances.

12. *Ministers encouraged to seek help from Presbytery informally?*

Agreed. Some felt this could obviate the need for a Panel.

13. *Ministers can ask a colleague to perform a wedding on grounds of conscience?*

Agreed.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The sub-group have a strong sense that the overall experience of having the Panel in place is helpful for ministers and couples involved. While some ministers do not use the Panel and others have had reservations about the process and have seriously questioned the value of the Panel, it is clear that there

are aspects of the Panel interview process, which complement the role of the Minister and have real pastoral value. In particular we would mention the following positive aspects of the Panel, which would impoverish the process if the Panel were to be disbanded.

(i) **Anonymity**

Time and again the Panel has shown its value in providing an anonymous, yet caring environment where sensitive issues can be explored. The sub-group feels strongly that the Panel has the freedom to probe more deeply and directly some issues that couples are hesitant to discuss with their minister.

(ii) **Gender Balance**

The gender balance of the Panel has proved to be of positive value to the process and has helped couples to share sensitive issues.

(iii) **Confidentiality**

While the sub-group realises that more practical work needs to be done on improving the interviewing arrangements, the confidential nature of the exchange between the Panel and couples has proved to be very helpful.

(iv) **Experience**

The Panel has a broad range of experience amongst its membership, and this is of benefit to the minister who refers the couple to the Panel. Younger ministers, and those who do not often deal with such remarriage situations, appreciate the value of a second opinion from wiser and more experienced heads.

(v) **High view of marriage/divorce**

Although some might question the view that referring couples to the Panel sends a message to them that the Presbyterian Church does not take divorce lightly, we believe that this message is more likely to come across if the Panel continues.

2. While we do not underestimate the improvements that need to be made to the process, the sub-group stresses that even with the weaknesses of the current system and the confusion as to the roles, the process has been helpful to ministers and couples alike in exploring the appropriateness of remarriage and a Christian wedding. We believe that the recommendations appended, if implemented, will improve an already positive pastoral experience for all involved.

3. It has also become clear to the sub-group that ministers would strongly welcome practical guidelines, not only on marriage and divorce issues but also regarding cohabitation. It is hoped that the sub-group's recommendations will provide real help to ministers struggling with the tensions of applying Biblical principles in our world today. The provision of guidelines would also help to provide some consistency of practice within the Church. As one Presbytery commented, we recognise the need to aim at consistency in our principles even more than in our mechanisms. A Resolution to the Assembly asks the Marriage and the Family Committee to prepare Guidelines for 2004 Assembly on the circumstances that justify the remarriage of a divorced person by a minister.

4. The sub-group did not look at the proposed Marriage Law Reform proposals but recognises they may have an impact upon Church weddings if implemented. Any proposed guidelines should bear in mind amendments to civil law and practice.

5. An improvement to the practical arrangements will have a financial cost. The Marriage and the Family Committee should be encouraged by the General Assembly to look seriously and realistically at accommodation requirements in the light of growing needs in this area and in relationship counselling generally.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding the Panel

1. That the Panel on Remarriage continue to exist under the Marriage and the Family Committee and that ministers continue to be encouraged to send couples to the Panel where at least one person is a divorcee.

2. The Panel membership should consist of people with requisite experience and skill.

3. In addition to remarriage referrals the Panel should have access to expertise, including legal and professional experience, to help ministers dealing with complex marriage cases or unusual legal circumstances.

4. The Panel should have in place a clear framework of Biblical and pastoral guidelines from which to operate.

5. The practical arrangements for interviewing couples should be improved, especially:

- improved interviewing and waiting room facilities;
- additional venues outside Belfast to facilitate couples residing a distance from Belfast;
- improved communication of information between the Panel and ministers and vice versa, before and after interviews;
- improved communication of information from the minister to the couple on the role of the Panel and who makes the final decision.

6. The Panel should ensure that ministers are clear as to the role of the Panel and the criteria it applies in interviewing couples. The Code Par. 85(6) should be amended to clarify the role of the Panel and to show that it does not exercise a vetting function, but rather a pastoral function.

Regarding Ministers

7. The forms of referral should be redrafted to elicit more specific information from ministers, and ministers should make efforts to provide detailed comments for the Panel.

8. The primary role of the minister should be recognised. Specific guidelines should be drawn up by the Marriage and the Family Committee and made available to assist ministers when they are consulted regarding the remarriage of a divorced person or other sensitive situations.

9. The teaching of the Church on the sanctity of marriage should be more widely known and be actively promoted by ministers and other Church leaders.

10. Ministers should strongly encourage couples to attend a pre-marriage preparation course run by the minister, Presbytery, or some other Christian agency.

11. Where remarriage is sought and one or both of the persons is divorced, pre-marriage preparation should still be strongly encouraged and should be undertaken with sensitivity to the circumstances of the couple.

12. In addition to using the Panel, ministers should be encouraged to seek advice and assistance informally from colleagues in Presbytery.

13. Ministers should be reminded of the Biblical principle of conscience, and if they are in difficulty, that they are permitted on grounds of conscience to ask a colleague to conduct a wedding.

ROSEMARY SIMPSON, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN RESIDENTIAL TRUST COMMITTEE

1. With an increasing number of reports of vicious and horrific attacks on the elderly, there is trauma for the victims, a sense of vulnerability and fear for neighbours, and anxiety for relatives of older people living alone in high-risk areas. These are among the major factors, alongside deteriorating health, which lead to an application for accommodation in one of our homes. The high quality of care, the sense of security and the Christian ethos of our homes, are widely recognised and appreciated, to the extent we record another year of high occupancy in all of our homes and repeated commendations in Registration and Inspection Unit reports.

2. Staff in all our homes have demonstrated professionalism and commitment, in what are often challenging situations. Many have added to their skills and experience by taking up training opportunities, and several have successfully completed their NVQ courses. Some homes have continued to experience difficulty in recruiting staff. We express thanks to Heads of Home, who have ensured adequate staffing levels in these difficult circumstances.

3. The overall management and guidance by the Residential Services Manager, Mrs Linda Wray, and her Assistant, Mrs May Gordon, with the administrative back up of the office staff, ensures that the work progresses efficiently. All of their work is marked by a deep commitment to serving Christ and His Church through caring service.

4. Harold McCauley House in Omagh has reached its tenth anniversary. The Staff and House Committee are to be congratulated on the thoughtful and appropriate ways in which this milestone was marked; a Communion Service conducted by The Moderator, a Celebration Party, and a Thanksgiving Service.

5. The replacement of Corkey House is well under way, with anticipated completion of the building in early autumn and occupation before the end of the year. Plans for a replacement of Sunnyside House in Bangor have been

submitted to the appropriate authorities. Our partners in this scheme are Fold Housing Association, who have included this project in the current funding cycle, so that as soon as planning permission is received we will be able to proceed without delay.

6. The Committee is aware that Ard Cluan House in Londonderry needs significant work to secure its future. We will be entering into discussions with the Health Trust, the House Committee and the local Presbytery to determine the needs and the perceptions in the area.

7. The possibilities of developing a ‘Village Concept Project’ with a continuum of care from sheltered housing, through residential care, to nursing or EMI (Elderly Mentally Infirm) facilities, has been considered in consultation with Fold Housing Association. The recent offer to PRT of a portion of land in the outskirts of Belfast may encourage more detailed planning for such a project.

T J McCORMICK, Convener

SOCIAL ISSUES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee continues to provide resources for the wider church on a range of social issues and to respond to individuals, the media and statutory bodies on various issues.

2. The Committee is glad to report that the third in the “Challenging Issues” series of Bible Studies presented at last year’s General Assembly has been well received. It covers matters surrounding the Family. The Committee is currently working on the fourth in this series. This will look at the question of manhood. In our society we have no set rites of passage into manhood. There is also an increasing lack of strong male, Christian role models in the home, church, school and society. Marriage breakdown and the negative presentation of men on TV, films etc., also has an impact on our perception of manhood. This study is designed to help us grasp a Biblical framework for true manhood that will assist us in evaluating many of the negative influences on manhood in our society today and to help men see how they fulfil the role for which God made them.

3. The Committee has produced a wide range of resources on complex issues over the years. Some of these have become outdated both in content and presentation. The Committee is currently working to update these materials and to present them in a consistent A5 format. The leaflets presently being worked on cover Abortion, HIV/AIDS, Contraception, Euthanasia and Cloning. Once completed these will be available individually, in pack form or may be downloaded from the Board of Social Witness Web Site.

4. The Committee received the book, *“From Despair to Hope – a Christian perspective on the tragedy of suicide”* published by the Methodist Church in Ireland and contributed to by a member of our Committee, Mrs May Anderson. The Committee commends the book to the Assembly and, as the cover says, to all those *“working with, and concerned for, the tragedy of those for whom life no longer has any meaning.”* Copies may be obtained through Familybooks.

5. The Committee continues as part of the Board to monitor the social needs of congregations and issues raised by the “*Engaging with the Community*” booklet. In the light of information gleaned in recent Board surveys the Committee will continue to produce materials to encourage and assist congregations as they seek to witness to the love of Christ in their local areas.

R A LIDDLE, Convener

PRESBYTERIAN WAR MEMORIAL HOSTEL

1. Derryvolgie Hall continues to provide a home for 88 young people, where the community spirit is good and its programme of events is busy and varied. Worship and teaching sessions on Sunday and Monday evenings are very well attended.

2. The Committee is very grateful to the Rev Steve Stockman and his dedicated staff for their enthusiasm and commitment in all the activities, which included an In House weekend in November and a mid-semester break in Lucan in January. A group of students are also working voluntarily at Friendship House in Sandy Row. Plans are already being formulated for yet another visit to Cape Town in the summer of 2004, working with Habitat for Humanity.

3. Combining the work at Derryvolgie with the role of the University Chaplaincy has given opportunity for widening the outreach activities of the Derryvolgie community, and the Committee have recently purchased No 14 Elmwood Avenue, next door to the existing Chaplaincy facility (the Bush). It is anticipated that refurbishment will take place over the next 18 months.

J H MARTIN, Convener

OLD AGE FUND, WOMEN'S FUND AND INDIGENT LADIES' FUND

1. The Directors report that during the last financial year, which ended 31 December 2002, 116 beneficiaries (35 in the Old Age Fund, 62 in the Women's Fund and 19 in the Indigent Ladies Fund) received grants.

2. The changes in beneficiaries during the year are as follows:

	Old Age Age Fund	Presbyterian Women's Fund	Indigent Ladies Fund	TOTAL
Beneficiaries receiving Quarterly Grant At 1st January 2002	25	62	18	105
New Grants provided	9	-	1	10
Deaths	(2)	(3)	(1)	(6)
Grants no longer required	(2)	(4)	(1)	(7)

At 31st December 2002	30	55	17	102
Beneficiaries receiving one-off donations	1	-	-	1
Deaths and Grants no longer required (as above)	4	7	2	13
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
No. of Beneficiaries receiving assistance during the year	35	62	19	116

3. The total distribution of the Funds in Grants, Donations and Gifts was £80,977 (£21,035 from the Old Age Fund, £46,550 from the Women's Fund and £13,392 from the Indigent Ladies' Fund).

4. A 'Special Gift' of £150 (2001: £150) was sent to every beneficiary prior to Christmas.

5. During the year the Directors responded sympathetically to various problems which had been brought to their attention. They gave one-off donations, as needed, to assist in particular cases where immediate financial aid was more appropriate than annual grants. Ministers are asked to bear in mind the possibility of help from these funds in similar cases connected with their own congregations.

6. The Directors assure the Church that all monies that come to the Funds are carefully and wisely spent.

7. The Directors of the Funds deeply appreciate the kindness and thoughtfulness of those who have remembered the work of the Funds either by gift or bequest, and hope that their example may encourage others to support this vital aspect of the Church's outreach.

8. The Directors of the Funds wish to thank the Staff for the sensitive and sympathetic way in which they carried out the efficient administration of the Funds during the year.

W P H ERSKINE, Hon Sec

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the resignation of Rev Trevor McCormick as Convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and the Rev John Noble be appointed in his place.
3. That the Recommendations numbered 1-13 in the Report on the Review of the Remarriage Panel be approved.
4. That the Marriage and the Family Committee prepare Guidelines for the 2004 General Assembly on the circumstances that justify the remarriage of a divorced person by a minister.
5. That the Marriage and the Family Committee review the wording of the Code Par 85(6).
6. That the Marriage and the Family Committee explore ways of improving the accommodation arrangements for the Remarriage Panel.

7. That the General Assembly commend the book "*From Despair to Hope – a Christian perspective on the tragedy of suicide*" to all those 'working with, and concerned for, the tragedy of those for whom life no longer has any meaning'.

8. That the customary grant made by the Social Issues and Resources Committee up to a total of £3,000 be met from the Incidental Fund.

9. That the Board of Social Witness, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 281 of the Code as follows:

OVERTURE ON THE BOOKS

Anent Par 132 of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 132 of the Code a new sub-paragraph (4) be inserted as follows:

"(4) Ministers, licentiates, accepted students for the ministry, deaconesses and all appointed to, or training for, posts of ministry or mission shall disclose promptly to the Clerk of the General Assembly, in confidence, any police investigation, summons, or conviction for offences against children, offences involving dishonesty, sexual misconduct, indecency, violence, alcohol or drugs, or any other serious offence."

And that sub-paragraphs (4) (5) (6) and (7) be renumbered as (5) (6) (7) and (8) respectively.

N A L CAMERON

NOTICE OF MOTION

That notice of motion be received to add Willow Brook to the list of agencies recognised by the United Appeal.

R VALLELY

SHANKILL ROAD MISSION COMMISSION

Convener: Rev J S DALLAS

Superintendent: Rev W M CAMPBELL

1. The business of the Shankill Road Mission (SRM) continues to be Urban Mission.

2. The impact of para-military activity, social exclusion, economic deprivation coupled with spiritual apathy and hardness makes for a daunting task to those committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. If Shankill Road Mission did not exist it would have to be invented to be able to bring comfort, help and encouragement to ordinary people living in such a deprived area as the Shankill Road.

4. Good will exists largely because of the undoubted practical and spiritual contribution made to the well-being and welfare of Shankill people during the 100+ years of SRM's existence.

5. Given the limited resources available, the Staff at SRM use these most effectively and efficiently to reach out in Christ's name to the wider Shankill community.

6. The Café and Coffee Shop are the first points of contact for many. The cheerful, homely Christian atmosphere attracts a variety of people from all age groups. The food provided is both tasty and nourishing. The Christian literature on the tables and the quiet ministry of the Mission Worker is appreciated by all who come in. It is regarded as an oasis of peace in a troubled community.

7. Mr Albert Lofthouse continues to reach out directly into the Shankill area visiting homes, leaving literature and invitations to come to various activities organised by him during the week.

The outreach to men remains steady, with more interest expressed in the directly spiritual elements of the meetings.

8. The whole team at SRM work for each other and for the Kingdom's sake. It is a happy band who serve the Lord on the Shankill.

The support of Commission, especially the Convener (Rev J Dallas) and the Honorary Treasurer (Mr I Spence) is greatly appreciated.

9. The prayers and practical gifts of countless members of congregations as well as organisations within congregations serve as a real encouragement. They keep SRM ever hopeful and able to continue to "fight the good fight of faith" in the cause of Jesus Christ in this particular part of the Kingdom.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

2. That Mr Albert Lofthouse be commended to the prayers of the General Assembly as he continues to work in the Lower Shankill.

Motion on the Books

3. That the General Assembly rescind the decision of 1998 to appoint, as Trustees of the Shankill Road Mission, the following office-holders provided that such office-holders are for the time being members in full communion of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland:-

The Superintendent of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Honorary Treasurer of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Conveners of Commission of the Shankill Road Mission for the time being;

The Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being;

The Financial Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being;

The General Assembly's Solicitor of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the time being.

General

4. That the following be appointed as Trustees of Shankill Road Mission:

Rev W M Campbell

Rev A W Boyd

Rev Dr I Hart

Rev G F McKeown

Mr W Caswell

Rev Dr D J Watts

Mr A J Rankin

5. That the Shankill Road Mission Commission be appointed for the ensuing year in accordance with Par 129 of the Code as follows:

YOUTH BOARD

Rev R JAMES HYNDMAN, Convener
Miss ROSALIND STIRLING, Youth Officer

1. The Youth Board continues to support and serve congregations in developing strategies and programmes for youth ministry, training volunteer and full time youth leaders and in creating opportunities for Presbyterian young people to participate in evangelism, discipleship, fellowship and worship. The Board is greatly encouraged to see the development of new and creative opportunities for evangelism and discipleship and believes that youth ministry must be a priority for the church in the years to come.

2. The Youth Board wishes to record its gratitude to the vast number of volunteer youth leaders and growing number of full time youth workers in local congregations for the excellent work that they do. Many leaders work long hours and give sacrificially, a commitment that is many times overlooked and without praise, yet without their dedication and perseverance the development of an effective youth ministry would not be possible.

3. The Board is deeply grateful to those employed to serve the church through the Youth Office. Miss Roz Stirling, Youth Officer and the team of administrative staff, Miss Lois McIlrath, Mrs Claire Child, Miss Pamela Patton, Mrs Helen Bruce, Mrs Marianne Trueman and Mrs Rhonda Love (who is covering a maternity leave) The Board is deeply indebted to Mr David Pattison for his expertise in organising and compiling the Board finances.

4. Many congregations have benefited from the support and training of the Youth Development Officer for Northern Ireland and the Youth and Support Worker for Donegal and Monaghan Presbyteries. The Board extends its gratitude to Mr Graeme Thompson and Mr Richard Houston for the insight, vision and enthusiasm they have brought to their work. The Board would encourage Kirk Sessions and congregations to make use of the training, resources and advice they offer.

5. The Board wishes to thank Mr David Smith, Preparing Youth for Peace Programme Officer, for the excellent work that he has done in planning, developing and delivering this single identity programme that assists leaders and young people in exploring the issues of reconciliation and citizenship. The Board is deeply grateful to the many facilitators who committed themselves to the training programmes and are now delivering programmes.

6. The Board wishes to extend its thanks to Mr Reuben McCormick, Mrs Gillian Brownlow and Mrs Marie-Claire Douglas, the staff and volunteers at our Youth Centres for the work they have done in facilitating the ministry of centres and camps.

7. The Board wishes to record its deep gratitude to Mr Maurice Kennedy and Mrs Helen Kennedy for their work with Nexus Ireland, the Youth Centres and the wider work of the Board in past years. Mr Maurice Kennedy in his role as Youth Board Development Officer was tireless in his work of searching out sources of financial support for the work of the Board. Both will

be greatly missed but the Board wishes them God's richest blessing as they continue to serve Him overseas.

The Board welcomes the appointment of Mr Lawrence Walker as Centres Director. Mr Walker will be implementing a strategy for the development of our youth centres.

8. The Board wishes to change the title of the Youth Officer to Director of Youth Ministry. The reason for this proposed change of job title is that the current title has proven itself unsuccessful in communicating the key leadership dimension of the Youth Officer's position. This is particularly a problem in correspondence with other denominations and youth agencies, where the term 'Director' has become a widely accepted professional designation. Thus, the Youth Officer regularly needs to explain her role since her current title gives the impression, for example, that she is one of a number of Youth Officers rather than department head. This change is also in line with other Church House officials whose titles reflect the leadership dimension of their role, eg, Director of Evangelism, Director of Ministerial Students, Director of Social Services.

9. The Board wishes to thank all those who supported the Youth and Sunday School project 'Moving On' 2002/2003. The money raised will be a great help in developing the facilities at Rostrevor Youth Centre.

10. The Board is encouraged by the implementation of Youth Link's strategic plan and is confident that this will continue to bear fruit in the future.

11. The Board is indebted to the Church for the finance received through the United Appeal allocation. The Board deeply appreciates the effort required by congregations to meet their targets permitting its work to continue. The Board seeks to use this financial assistance with great prudence.

Miss Roz Stirling writes:

12. Following the resignation of the Rev James Hyndman, the Youth Board records its deep gratitude to him for his enthusiastic and visionary leadership as the Board Convener over the past three years. His passion that young people hear and receive the message of Jesus Christ and be integrated into the life of the church has been central in every decision made within the ministry of the Youth Board. We thank God for his practical and insightful leadership. He concludes his period of service in this capacity at this year's Assembly. We pray God's blessing on him and his continued ministry in First Saintfield.

13. The Youth Board also records its gratitude to the Rev Edward Hyndman for his commitment to the work of the Youth Events Committee. We thank him for his wisdom, guidance and leadership during his convenership of the Committee, which he now resigns to take on the convenership of the Board.

YOUTH EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Events Committee continues to plan four major events each year. Two Youth Nights take place at the end of the General Assembly each year. The Bible Conference Route 66 (for ages 17+) is held in August, the MAD

weekend in October, and a social awareness event similar to the TGI event is planned for Christmas in December.

Youth Night

2. At Youth Night 2002, Rev Dr Gary Millar, minister of Howth and Malahide addressed two large gatherings of young people on the theme 'When Love Hurts.' We look forward to Duffy Robbins speaking at Youth Nights in 2003 on the theme 'Roaring Lambs'. The band, ID from Edenderry, will lead the praise.

Route 66

3. The Bible conference held at Loughry College continues to provide a high quality and relevant teaching programme for young people and this year recorded increased numbers attending. The conference aims to cross the whole terrain of scripture over a three-year period, providing a thorough base to Bible understanding. In August 2002 the main speakers were Andy Hickford (Pastor of Maybridge Christian Fellowship, Worthing) and Rev Andrew Smith (Minister of Dun Laoghaire). In 2003 the main speakers are Rev Dr Trevor Morrow who will guide through the book of Ruth, and Rev Alistair Begg on the subject, 'Jesus: Prophet, Priest and King.'

MAD

4. The keynote speaker at MAD 4 in October 2002 was Mark Oestriecher (President of Youth Specialties). The purpose of the MAD weekend is to create the format of a youth weekend for youth groups to attend, so removing the organisation from leaders and allowing them to work on relationships and evangelism with their own young people. The event continues to draw in more applications than there are places available, and is clearly providing a high quality programme much in demand by youth groups. The 2003 weekend will be held from 24 – 26 October.

TGI Christmas

5. TGI Christmas was designed as a 'pre-evangelistic' event addressing unchurched young people and the last was run in 2001. Another Christmas event is planned for 2003 similar to TGI with a strong social awareness theme, aimed at engaging with this same group of young people.

E J HYNDMAN, Convener

YOUTH TRAINING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The Committee gives thanks to God for His continual guiding and leading in the work carried out through its Working Groups. This Committee provides training, developing of resources and other opportunities to encourage local church youth leaders to be effective in reaching, nurturing, equipping and

challenging young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ within the context of Ireland.

Certificate in Youth Ministry Course

2. This certificate course continues to equip those involved with young people and provides a challenging introduction to the theory and practice of youth ministry. This past year saw an optional residential weekend held in Portrush and this added greatly to the pastoral dimension of the course. The Working Group is continuing to liaise with Union Theological College with the hope of commencing an advance certificate course in September 2003.

National Youth Leaders Convention

3. This title has replaced the very successful Training Trevor series of events. The NYLC is in partnership with Youth Link, the Methodist and Church of Ireland youth departments. To be held in June 2003, it provides practical training for all those working in the ministry with young people in the church context.

Alter

4. This year saw the first of a new event, 'Alter'. Held in March 2003 its aim is to help equip our Christian young people to share the gospel with their peers and to live for Jesus Christ in today's society. The speakers are Gordon McDade and Simon Hall, worship led by Revive. Various workshops included topical issues such as sharing the gospel, and addressing some of the difficult issues presented to young Christians.

Youth Link: NI

5. Youth Link seeks to help support and complement the work of the Youth Board. This year Youth Link has grown, taking on two new members of staff.

Resources

6. The Resources Working Group continues to keep ministers and youth leaders informed of the current resources that are available. They are seeking to increase the awareness of resources through the web site, various mailings and publications.

Previously the working group produced 'A Quick Flick' information leaflet and they hope to do this again.

Web Site (www.pciyouth.org)

7. Over the past year this new Working Group has put in place the new look web site. Many young people, leaders and ministers are making use of the forums to air issues and exchange news.

Preparing Youth for Peace

8. David Smith, Programme Officer for the Preparing Youth for Peace programme, continues in this role. Information regarding the programme has now been sent out to youth leaders, and ministers, and David is visiting various Presbyteries. Seven groups are currently running the programme. Approximately 20 facilitators are being trained to deliver the programme.

J MOXEN, Convener

YOUTH HOME MISSION COMMITTEE**Year Team**

1. The Year Team continues to play an important role in the congregations in which they have been placed. They help in many ways, as deemed necessary, under the direction of each Kirk Session, with advice and guidance from the Year Team Working Group

2. Members of the team continue to benefit greatly from their work, developing their spheres of service both as individuals and as a team.

3. Work is already well under way to establish a team for the year from September 2003 as well as from September 2004. Congregations are encouraged to recommend young people to serve on the Year Team as well as considering having the Year Team placed within their boundaries.

Summer Outreach

4. Summer Outreach continues to provide an opportunity for people from 16 years upwards to serve God, people of all ages to be reached with the Gospel and congregations to be assisted in their work for a short period each year.

5. The interest shown by congregations in receiving a team continues to be an encouragement. The working group oversees the assessing of the usefulness of existing teams and the assigning of new teams so that the effectiveness of limited human resources can be maximised.

6. Congregations wishing to apply for teams are reminded that they should do so by March in the year prior to a team commencing work, eg application for a team commencing in July 2005 should have an application with the Youth Office no later than 31st March, 2004.

7. Summer Outreach teams are not just for young people but are open to everyone over the age of 16. Congregations are encouraged to recommend people of all ages to serve God on summer outreach teams.

General

8. The Committee wishes to express thanks to the working groups, chairpersons (Revs W Sinclair and J Flaherty), Youth Officer and Youth Office staff for all their hard work and dedication, often beyond the call of duty.

9. The prayerful support of all our members is sought that God might continue to use our efforts in His service and that His blessings might continue to flow upon us.

D J PAUL, Convener

YOUTH OVERSEAS COMMITTEE

1. The Youth Overseas Committee continues to provide opportunities for young people to be exposed to the Lord's work in other cultures and contexts by sending teams to and receiving teams from various locations around the world. Those who serve on the Committee are deeply passionate about this area of the Board's work and believe it can make a lasting impact on the lives of young Christians. We thank God that this is something in which we have seen blessing through young people on teams and who have received help from the Project Concorde Funds, and also in the congregations who have hosted visitors from overseas.

Outgoing Teams Working Group

2. In 2002 a team visited Wembley in north London to work in two congregations alongside Christopher Macwan. The team, under the excellent leadership of Lesley-Ann Lockington, was very well received and contributed very effectively to the work of two Holiday Bible clubs. A full team was sent over and this certainly helped not only the quantity but also the quality of the work done. In 2003, due to Christopher Macwan's visit to India and the retirement of the minister within one of the associated congregations, there will be no team travelling to Wembley. We do hope and pray, however, that in 2004 this work will resume.

3. Due to the ongoing review process of this area of the Board's ministry, no other teams were sent out in 2002. However, in response to a request from Andrew and Clerah Clenaghan, via a Youth Board team to Kenya in 2000, Philip Houston and Alastair Chestnutt took up the challenge of equipping and establishing a travelling library which would go around 13 schools in the Zombe-Nendeni area. The Kenya team had gathered together books which were sent out to Kenya, and in September 2002 Philip and Alastair travelled to Kenya to establish this ministry. By all accounts things have gone very well and the library, by January, was organised and ready for action. The project is now up and running with the two volunteers helping with reading classes in the various schools. The committee have been following this work with close interest and may be interested in developing projects such as this in the future.

4. In 2003 one team will travel to Uganda under the leadership of Rev Ian McDonald to be involved in the 'Jesus Cares For All' ministry in the Kampala area. The purpose of the team will be twofold. Firstly, to help with building work at the Jagala Christian Centre established for street children and secondly, to do evangelistic work in the Stephen Jota Children's Centre.

Incoming Teams Working Group

5. In the summer of 2003 a team from France will visit the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. For the first week of their stay they will be staying on the north coast, where it is hoped they will be joined by young people from PCI on a work camp to develop a programme for Christian street work. This group will then be taken on tour around the province working in connection with local congregations. This is a new venture and one that has exciting potential, and we ask for prayer support for the team.

Concorde Travel Fund

6. The work of distributing funds from the Concorde Fund to young people involved on an individual basis in Christian work around the world continues with increasing demand each year. In all circumstances the work venture is worthy of our support and the plans in many cases are exceptional. The amount of funds available each year depends on the interest gained from the sum invested. This means that we have to work with a set amount to be distributed among the applicants. The more applications received means less that can be shared. This is frustrating, as so many are worthy of far more than we can give.

7. We are encouraged that so many young people from PCI are open the Lord's call to serve him around the world and often in challenging and difficult circumstances. In that respect we are therefore committed to our work within the committee and see it as a valuable part of the ministry of the Youth Board.

PETER C LYLE, Convener

YOUTH CENTRES COMMITTEE

1. Within the past 12 months of the ministry at our three youth centres, significant changes have taken place and challenges arisen.

Staffing

2. In October 2002 the Youth Board said a sad farewell to Maurice Kennedy who has given significant service to the ministry within our three youth centres over 11 years. Maurice, ably supported by his wife Helen, has worked tirelessly in seeking to maintain, manage and develop both the physical and the spiritual aspects of the work.

3. The appointment of Lawrence Walker as the Youth Centres' Director in December 2002 has brought great challenges and exciting opportunities. Lawrence's significant experience has afforded new insights into the high standards required in regard to health and safety and the necessary care that we should be giving to both our staff and the users of our facilities.

Summer Activities

4. The summer activities for 2003 are as follows:

Surf the Rock, Guysmere (27-30 June) for young people aged 13 and upwards

Guysmere Boys' Adventure Camp (10-18 July) for boys aged 12 and upwards

Creative Arts Camp, (13-19 July) at Rostrevor for young people aged 14 upwards

Guysmere Girls' Camp (26 July-2 August) for girls aged 12 and upwards

Lucan Sports Camp (31 July-4 August) for young people from 12 to 18 years of age

Lucan Senior Summer Camp (9-14 August) for young people from 16 to 18 years of age

Adventure Camp, Bushmills Education Centre (11-15 August) for young people aged 14 to 16 years of age

Lucan Summer Camp, 19-24 August for young people from 12 to 15 years of age

5. We commend these Camps to the young people of our congregations and express our sincere appreciation to all who plan and staff the activities.

Lucan

6. The centre at Lucan is facing immense challenges. The fabric of the accommodation building is deteriorating rapidly and the funding to replace it is not, at present, forthcoming. Major decisions regarding the way ahead need to be made in the near future.

7. The staff at Lucan, under the direction of Reuben McCormick, continue to provide an excellent service for those who use the Centre, whether from the local community during the week or groups travelling from further afield for weekend retreats or camps.

Guysmere

8. Plans have been drawn for replacing the accommodation block at the Centre with a building offering two floors of twin rooms with shared en suite facilities. It is hoped that this significant project will bring the centre in this wonderful location up to the very highest standards.

9. Thanks are due to Gillian Brownlow for the excellent job she does as Resident Warden and to the local Management Committee for their commitment to the ministry of the Centre and its on-going development.

Rostrevor

10. The centre at Rostrevor is to benefit from the generosity of those who support the Sunday School and Youth Project. It is planned that money provided will be used to upgrade the facilities including provision of new toilets and showers and accommodation for disabled visitors.

11. The members of the hardworking Local Management Committee were sad to lose Roberta McMillan as Caretaker but thank her for her immense commitment to the ministry of the Centre. Marie Claire Douglas was appointed in October 2002 and has settled in well in giving invaluable service over and above the call of duty.

12. The Committee is thankful to God for how He is using the three Centres and the activities organised as a means to touch the lives of many young people. It is our desire to continue to provide centres which offer the highest quality of accommodation, lively, challenging and effective programmes and Christian care to all who would choose to use the facilities.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Revs, Dr William Crawley, John Peacock and Mr Trevor Long be appointed as representatives on the Youth Link: NI Council.
3. That the following grant be paid from the Incidental Fund:
Youth Link NI £6500.
4. That the title of Youth Officer be changed to Director of Youth Ministry.
5. That the resignation of the Rev James Hyndman as Convener of the Youth Board be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev E J Hyndman be appointed in his place.
6. That the resignation of the Rev E J Hyndman as Convener of the Youth Events Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that be appointed in his place.
7. That the Youth Board, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 283 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Convener: Rev JAMES McALLISTER, OBE

Secretary: Rev Dr D J WATTS

1. Remembering that Christ's commission at the end of his earthly ministry was to "Go and make learners of all nations";

remembering that one of the 3 requisites asked of any congregation by the constitution of our church is to have "at least one (Sunday) School in connection with each congregation;"

remembering the long history of Presbyterian involvement in Education, including a determined struggle to keep a Christian ethos in our day schools;

and being deeply influenced by a very large number of professional educators on the Board, and their insistence that education should be integrated, continuous and whole from the cradle to the grave:

2. The Board has been working assiduously, with insight, enthusiasm and care to fulfil its role in this precise but influential field of work for the Kingdom. The Committee Reports will delineate briefly our involvement in the differing aspects of our work. This includes the Report of the Review Body on Religious Education in schools. This review, it will be remembered, has been undertaken alongside a review of all other subjects; except that the RE review is being done by a body provided by the four main Christian Churches under joint Chairmen – Mr T H Shaw and Dr Aiden Donaldson. Everybody engaged in this field is indebted to Mr Shaw (and Dr Donaldson) for doing this job expertly, quietly, efficiently and with deep Christian dedication.

3. Another servant of the Board who also deserves our thanks is Rev Jack Drennan, our Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland since 1991. Mr Drennan has brought to this office a precise and incisive ability to see issues clearly, to explain them openly, and to talk about them helpfully. He has been a quiet but persistent deliverer of our point of view, has been engaged always with an open mind and a caring heart, with his first thoughts always for the children, parents and teachers and the Name that he represents. The Church thanks him sincerely for his years of excellent service and prays for him vigour, insight, patience, stamina and blessing in the work to which he is now called in Crumlin Road, Belfast.

4. We are grateful to Rev Nancy Cubitt who takes over this task, to add to the "office" she already holds, where she is our invited representative on the Church of Ireland Board of Education in Dublin and for which we gladly add our thanks.

5. Staying in Eire this is no bad time to pay tribute to Mr Brian Duffy, our Director of Secondary Education in the Republic and his co-representative Rev Mary Hunter, both of whom have played an influential and significant role on the Secondary Education Committee. The Church would like them to know that they are not considered to be the southern end of a North/South Body, but very much part of one body (PCI) in appreciation, in prayer, in Christ.

6. Since last General Assembly, like other Boards of the Church, the Board of Education has been anxious to discover what might happen to it under any shake-up that might take place under proposals brought by the Committee on Priorities. In the early absence of any indication of the way changes might be made this Board spent some energy looking at its present role and usefulness in the light of delivering the avowed objectives of the Committee on Priorities. Two very simple things emerged – cohesion at congregational level was far more important to the delivery of mission than amalgamation at committee or board level. A small precise board with well defined parameters could deliver as well as or better than larger more nebulous ones.

7. In the light of the fact

- that education has such a high profile in public concern and debate
- that there was huge expectation and/or huge trepidation about new legislation
- that a curriculum review was taking place that was not only changing the subject matter but the way teaching was to take place
- that there was a significant review of the RE syllabus taking place in which we had a very important role
- that a Review of Administration was taking place in which the position of the Transferors is likely to be revisited

the wisdom of doing anything that would diminish the Church's ability to make its undoubted insights known or portray the idea that our Church's interest in and concern for Education was lessening, would be very unwise.

8. There would also be concerns if State Education and Church Education were to be separated. The history of that subject in this state had been of a huge struggle. The debate has not gone away. The position of the Church in any new public debate would hardly be strengthened by adopting structures that would say loud and clear that we do not think it important that these should be together.

9. The Board also took notice of the fact that our University Education Committee work was growing particularly in Dublin and in Belfast, in very differing but equally exciting ways. Not to see that as part of the Education auxiliary of our Church would seem to be removing it from its obvious and natural foundation.

10. When the professional educationalists (and the Board has teachers, head-teachers, lecturers both in Universities and Further Education, Professors, educational administrators, inspectors, researchers, and learners on it) brought their minds to bear on the idea that the present structure might be broken up, they were adamant that education is one and indivisible. The entire education scene at home and abroad is focused towards a holistic view, and any dispersal of the various functions of the Committee of the Board of Education would be flying in the face of educational good practice.

11. This also has further significance when set alongside the point made earlier about the separation of Church and State Education.

12. When it was added that the Biblical unit of nurture and mission is the family, and all education starts in the home and continues to the grave, this Board's conviction is that the prime mission expressed by the Committee on Priorities of the Congregation as the centre of mission is as well served by

leaving the committees of the Board of Education intact, as it would be by dispersing them and the whole work of education as a priority of the Church will not be compromised.

13. The new Deputy Clerk of Assembly will not be Secretary of the Education Board, but it is important that the position is filled without undue delay. This Assembly will receive a report from the ad hoc Committee on Priorities and decide the future remit of the Board. It is therefore proposed that the General Board should have power to approve the arrangements for an appointment of an Education Secretary. It is also proposed that Rev Dr R F S Poots continue as Convener of the State Education Committee. Appropriate resolutions are appended.

Recognised Ministries

Rev David Bruce, General Secretary of Scripture Union (Northern Ireland) reports:

1. There are 1,221 schools of all kinds in Northern Ireland. There are Scripture Union groups meeting in 307 of them each week, involving 11,000 children and young people. The number of groups has been growing steadily at between 8-10% per year for the last ten years. In partnership with the churches, we plan to employ a number of district workers who will seek to create further links between Churches and Schools – and two projects of this kind are already established in Lisburn and East Belfast.

2. This summer there will be 36 Camps and Missions run by SU in Northern Ireland, staffed by 750 volunteer leaders and reaching 6,500 children. On behalf of SU I would like to thank the many Presbyterian ministers and Kirk Sessions who give their prayerful and practical support to this work in many centres across the country each year.

3. Insurance premiums for liability cover within SU (NI) have risen by 1000% (one thousand per cent) in the last 18 months. This reflects a widespread trend of increases noted in a report produced by the Federation of Small Businesses in Northern Ireland published in March this year. In SU, we have sought to meet these unanticipated additional costs from reserves, but this is clearly a short term measure. Is it possible that there might be similar problems ahead for the Presbyterian Church as a denomination, where extensive work with children is carried out, both residentially and day to day?

4. After eleven years in post, I have been offered a new challenge within the SU movement. From 1st September I will become the Regional Secretary for Great Britain and Ireland, which includes development responsibilities for the former Soviet States. I would invite the Assembly to give the same wholehearted support to my successor in Northern Ireland as has been given to me in the past, and would thank the Assembly for its continued interest in our work, both here and overseas.

STATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The State Education Committee has continued to be consulted by the Department of Education (DENI) and other educational agencies, has engaged with the five Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards, met representatives of different political parties and has endeavoured to maintain the legitimate place of the Church as a respected 'partner' and 'voice' in the affairs of education. The Transferor Representatives' Council has, again, proved an invaluable vehicle for discussion and joint-action by the three main Protestant Churches.

Review of the RE Core Syllabus

2. The Churches' Working Party has all but completed the review under the joint-chairmanship of Mr T J Shaw, CBE, whose report appears below, and Dr Aidan Donaldson, but there is still a process of public consultation and approval to be gone through. In order not to impede the implementation of the Revised RE Core Syllabus it will be necessary to append a resolution asking the General Assembly to renew the authority, given to the General Board last year, to act on behalf of the Assembly in taking any necessary decisions and approving the final draft.

3. Mr Shaw's report will show that approximately 30% (quite a high response rate) of all RE teachers in Northern Ireland responded to a questionnaire about the present Core Syllabus. The Education Committee and the Board were gratified that teachers are generally satisfied with it and consider that it has made a significant contribution to the teaching of RE in Northern Ireland schools. It has been particularly gratifying to work with our partners in the TRC and with representatives of the Northern Bishops in a process which will make an effective Core Syllabus even better.

4. The Committee and Board have approved the draft to go forward to consultation.

Post Primary Review

5. Representatives of the TRC were invited to meet the Permanent Secretary and senior officials of the Department of Education to discuss the response of the Churches to the 'Burns Report'. An announcement from DENI is still awaited.

CEA Curriculum Review

6. The Churches made a full response to the consultation document issued by the Council for the Curriculum, Examination and Assessment. They specifically affirmed the importance of Religious Education in the Curriculum and the importance of an appropriate RE Department in every post-primary school.

Review of Public Administration

7. Representatives of the TRC have met with officials involved with the Review of Public Administration. The Church representatives reminded them of

the historic rights of the Churches in education, the on-going contribution made by Transferor representatives at every level of educational administration and urged upon them the importance of maintaining administrative structures between the Area Boards and DENI.

Ethos of the Controlled Schools' Sector

8. The Chief Executives of the Area Boards have asked the Churches to define what they understand as the ethos of schools in the controlled sector against what is an increasingly diverse society and to assist Boards of Governors in the maintenance of such an ethos in their schools and in setting out the requirements of this ethos in a school's Prospectus. A clear definition would assist Board Advisers in dealing with in-school issues and would offer protection to teachers and Boards of Governors from parental complaints, in that parents would be aware of the ethos to expect in the selection of a particular school.

Director of Primary Education for the Republic

9. The Rev J S B Drennan has resigned from this advisory role. The Rev Nancy Cubitt has been appointed in his place.

Review of Agreed Core Syllabus for Religious Education

Mr T J Shaw, CBE, Joint-Chairman of the RE Core Syllabus Working Party, reports:

1. As reported to last year's Assembly, the Working Group met for the first time in April 2002 under the joint chairmanship of Dr Aidan Donaldson, the nominee of the Roman Catholic Church, and Mr T J Shaw, CBE, the nominee of the three main Protestant Churches.

2. During May and early June the Working Party prepared a detailed questionnaire designed to gather information about provision for teaching RE in schools throughout Northern Ireland; to seek RE teachers' views on the fitness for purpose of the existing RE Core Syllabus; to obtain the advice of RE teachers on how the Core Syllabus might be revised to take account of wider curriculum change and the increasing ethnic and religious diversity of our community.

3. The preparation of the questionnaire was finalised with the support of two researchers, Dr Gerry McCann of St Mary's University College and Dr Leslie Caul of Stranmillis University College who also analysed the information from some three hundred and fifty completed forms that were returned. The findings revealed that, generally, RE teachers are content with the Core Syllabus and believe it has contributed significantly to the strengthening of Religious Education in schools. Those working in post-primary schools would like a reduction in content, particularly in relation to church structures, and would support the introduction, for 11-16 year olds of teaching about world faiths other than Christianity. A summary of the research will be published as an appendix to the draft proposals for the revised Core Syllabus.

4. During the winter period the Working party has aimed to draft a revised Core Syllabus which takes account of the survey findings and reflects

some of the changes proposed for the rest of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The members of the Working Party have sought to achieve progression throughout the Core Syllabus, removing unnecessary repetition of topics and ensuring that the inclusion of the study of two World Faiths other than Christianity does not result in an overall increase in content and hence workload for teachers. An additional aim has been to strengthen the relevance of the content to the needs and interests of young people, particularly those in the 11-14 age range.

5. Dr Gavin Boyd and Dr Alastair Walker of the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) briefed the Working Party in June 2002. Subsequently representatives of the Working Party met a number of the Council's professional staff who specialise in curriculum design. The purpose of these meetings was to seek more information about the proposed specification of the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum and to establish the potential for inter-relationships between the Agreed Core Syllabus for Religious Education and the proposed new form of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

6. It will be necessary to exemplify ways in which Religious Education can contribute to the ongoing development of pupils' essential skills and qualities as set out, in due course, in the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum. The Working Party concluded, however, that to attempt to do so in anticipation of final decisions on the rest of the curriculum would be premature. Consequently, it was decided that the proposals for the revision of the agreed Core Syllabus for Religious Education should be presented largely in the same format as the existing Core syllabus. This, the members believed, would also facilitate consultation.

7. The draft proposals were considered by Education Boards and Committees of the four main Christian Churches in the period from January to March 2003. Approval to proceed to public consultation was agreed.

8. In March, members of the Steering Group were trained in Equality Impact Assessment, a process which all publicly funded policy developments must undergo. Following that, a further meeting of the Working Party was held to take account of the guidance given in the training and make any necessary presentational changes to the draft revised Core Syllabus prior to public consultation. It is expected that the consultation will begin in May 2003 and conclude in June 2003.

9. In due course, the draft will be amended, as necessary, in the light of the comments received from consultees. This version will be submitted to the four main Christian Churches for approval in the early autumn of 2003. When it has been approved, it will be submitted by the leaders of the Christian Churches to the Minister, hopefully by November 2003. It is intended for implementation, in step with the rest of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, beginning in September 2004.

10. It is important to remember that the Agreed Core Syllabus for Religious Education specifies only part of that which a school must provide in its Religious Education programme. The rest of the programme is a matter for the Board of Governors of each school to determine in conjunction with the principal and parents, taking account of the vision, aims, ethos, community and context of the school.

Summary of and comments on Changes Proposed in the Core Syllabus at Key Stages 1 and 2

Key Stage 1

- The content at Key Stage 1 has been sub-divided into two to correspond with the Foundation Stage and the new Key Stage 1 proposed in the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- The non-statutory Statements of Attainment have been revised thoroughly and include more references to Old Testament characters.
- While the basic content has remained unchanged, the approaches taken in the Foundation Stage are intended to reflect the educational thinking behind this proposed stage in the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum and to ensure correspondence with approaches being taken in other areas of the curriculum at this stage.

Key Stage 2

- The content and structure of this Key Stage remains basically unchanged.
- The non-statutory Statements of Attainment have been revised thoroughly and include more references to Old Testament Characters.

Summary of and comments on changes proposed in the Core syllabus at Key Stages 3 and 4

- The content related to Attainment Target 1 - The Revelation of God - has been reduced at both Key Stages (see below 1).
- The content related to Attainment Target 2 - The Christian Church - has been reduced at both Key Stages (see below 2).
- The content related to Attainment Target 3 - Christian Morality has been increased (see below 3).
- Changes have been made in the format of some topics to improve clarity and practicality.
- Some topics have been removed to promote progression between the Key Stages and avoid unnecessary repetition.
- It is proposed that all pupils should study the Christian Church from a Roman Catholic and a Protestant perspective. Currently all Maintained Schools do this as do some Controlled Schools.
- The study of two World Faiths other than Christianity has been included under a new, fourth Attainment Target "World Faiths" only at Key Stage 3 (see below 4).
- Format changes have been made at Key Stage 4. Some material is omitted as a result (eg the sections on the "Challenge of Covenant" and "Church Structure and Organisation").

Notes

1. Attainment Target 1 - Revelation of God

Key Stage 3. This involves the streamlining of material on the life and ministry of Jesus to avoid overlap with work at other Key Stages.

Key Stage 4. The reduction of content is intended to allow more time for a wider exploration of issues and themes related to the person and ministry of Jesus.

2. Attainment Target 2 - The Christian Church

Key Stage 3. The purpose of the changes in content is to enable pupils to consider and appreciate the radical demands made by Christianity. Looking at the lives of people throughout history, who because of their Christian faith have made a difference to others, will help pupils to consider what Christians are and should be doing today. The aim is to make this as interesting and inspiring as possible.

Key Stage 4. The focus is on the central practical aspects of the worshipping Church to prevent the topic becoming too dry and seemingly irrelevant to the pupils. This is the area of the existing Core Syllabus which received most criticism from teachers.

3. Attainment Target 3 - Christian Morality

Key Stage 3. Topics have been selected under three areas and are geared to the stage of development and experience of the pupil.

Key Stage 4. Three areas have been identified of which two must be selected. One is compulsory (Personal and Family Issues), the second topic (either Life Issues or Global Issues) is to be chosen according to the ethos and context of the school, resources etc.

4. Attainment Target 4 - World Faiths

Key Stage 3. All pupils are to study two World Faiths in addition to Christianity. It is proposed that the selection of the World Faiths should be a matter for the school, to reflect its community and ethos. The Core Syllabus will specify those aspects of the World Faiths which should be studied. An appendix to the Core Syllabus will include exemplar frameworks for studying each of the following:

Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and the Baha'I Faith.

The exemplar frameworks will include guidance on origins, beliefs, sacred writings and symbols, worship and prayer, feasts and festivals, family life, and religious ceremonies. It is intended that the study of the World Faiths will require only a modest amount of teaching time in each of two years of Key Stage 3.

5. Explanation of the term “Statements of Attainment”

Statements of attainment relating to each attainment target are non-statutory and are included in the Core Syllabus as illustratory material for

teachers. These may be re-cast as “learning outcomes” in the final version of the Core Syllabus.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Primary Schools

Rev J S B Drennan, Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

1. This year all is quiet on the western front for Primary Schools under Presbyterian patronage. Teachers continue to do their best to keep up with all the changes and the increasing amount of paper work. We need to keep in mind the difficulties in finding teaching staff especially in the country areas and whenever it comes to employing a principal teacher.

2. I would ask all Presbyterians to continue to pray for our teachers, Boards of Management, pupils and parents in Presbyterian and other schools as they seek to work together in partnership.

3. The big change for me, personally, this year, is that I have accepted a call to Crumlin Road Presbyterian Church in Belfast. This means that I have tendered my resignation as Director of Primary Education in the Republic of Ireland. I have held this post for nearly 12 years and have enjoyed all that has been involved. It has been my privilege to serve the church in this way. I thank all those I have worked with in the schools, the Department of Education and the local Boards of Management as well as colleagues on the State Education Committee and the Board of Education. Do pray for my successor and for God’s hand to be obvious in all the work.

Secondary Schools

Mr B Duffy, Director of Secondary Education in the Republic of Ireland, reports:

Secondary Education Committee

1. The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a body comprising representatives for the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Religious Society of Friends. PCI is represented by Brian Duffy and Rev Mary Hunter on the SEC.

2. In the school year 2001/2002 the total amount received from the Department of Education and Science (DE&S) was _4,693,574 (previous year _4,443,114). The rate of the block grant will remain static this year as a result of the Government’s budgetary adjustments. Because of inflation this is an effective cut in real terms. As the Committee has maintained a reserve for such an eventuality it is possible to alleviate this by a small increase in the level of grant.

Educational Legislation

3. A handbook containing templates for enrolment policies and codes of behaviour has been prepared and is being circulated by the Committee on

Management. A template first requires a school to consider and define its ethos as the foundational document and to construct all subsequent policies in relation to that.

Chaplaincies for Secondary Schools

4. The possibility that a pilot scheme to fund the salaries of chaplains in voluntary secondary schools would be put in place has yet to come to fruition. However there has been general support for such a pilot scheme from all partners and it is to be hoped that this will go ahead in the next school year.

Comprehensive Schools

5. There are ongoing discussions regarding the expansion of boards of management in the Comprehensive Schools and PCI should support the proposals agreed by the schools and the Patrons.

Rev Patricia McBride, Chaplain at the Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe, Donegal, reports:

1. My work as chaplain at the Royal and Prior has continued apace this year. In a world where young people are faced with many competing value systems, it is a privilege to have the opportunity to meet with young people in their daily lives. By having a full-time chaplain, church, school and government are acknowledging that Spiritual Development is an integral part of whole-person education.

2. We continue to have daily year-group assemblies, providing a regular short time of worship. Special services to mark the beginning of the school year, to ask God's blessing on our Leaving Certificate Students as they complete second level education, and the annual Carol Service are further opportunities for worship in the school setting. Mr Sam Stevenson, who works for Scripture Union in the Border Counties was our special speaker at this year's Start of Year Services. He had met with some of our pupils during a Scripture Union Camp last summer, so it was an opportunity to build on links which had already been established.

3. Mr Stevenson also led opening meetings for our Christian Union Group, which meets at lunchtimes. Some Senior Students participated in a leadership training weekend and are taking a more active leadership role this year. We thank God for lively meetings which encourage our committed members, and which are also open and friendly, so that friends feel happy to 'come and see' what Christian Union is like.

4. Teaching Religious Education and other subjects for several hours each week facilitates my deepening relationships with students, staff and parents.

5. Working with the rest of the pastoral care team continues to be an important part of my role as Chaplain.

6. I ask the General Assembly to continue its prayer support.

R F S POOTS, Convener

CHURCH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The Sunday School Organiser continued to lead training classes for Sunday School teachers, Bible Class leaders, Holiday Bible Club leaders and Children's Church leaders at congregational and at Presbytery level.

2. Training in the use of the Sunday School Teacher Training Manual has been given and is still available at Presbytery level.

3. The Sunday School Organiser delivered a series of ten lectures on Christian Education to ministerial students, during the second semester, in Union Theological College.

4. Other events taken by the Sunday School Organiser during the year included children's and youth leaders dedication services, services based on the theme of Christian Education and many children's and youth services.

5. The eight Teachers' Guides and Worksheets with a 'Presbyterian flavour' available in book form: Baptism, Communion, Leadership, Children and Young People, Evangelism, Mission, Our Church and Worship continue to be well used.

6. The total raised for the *Building Hope* Sunday School and Youth Project 2001/2002 was a magnificent £81,841.25. After expenses for the production of the project pack and slide sets of £4,732.90, the total to be dispersed was £77,108.35. The money was dispersed as follows: Willow Brook: £27,108.35 and Rajkot Girls' School, Gujarat, India: £50,000.

7. The current *Moving On* Sunday School and Youth Project for 2002/2003 is going well, and has a twofold focus. The overseas part of the project involves the provision of transport (bicycles or motor bikes) for church workers in India, Pakistan, Kenya and Malawi. The home part of the project focuses on the refurbishment of the Rostrevor Youth Centre. This project closes on the 1st September 2003. A free video and Project Pack was sent to every congregation and a Power Point presentation was also available from the Sunday School Office.

8. The Fun Day was held at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra on 10 May 2003. Catering arrangements were considerably improved and the programme of events offered many new attractions eg mountain bike obstacle course, bungee run, archery, electric Rodeo bull, street drama Babcock and Bobbins (entertainers), together with the other activities long associated with this event.

9. The Committee expresses thanks to the administrators of the Local Bible Fund for enabling it to make the following awards of Bibles during the year:

5 teachers with 30 years or more service

37 children with 5 years or more unbroken attendance

2 children for repeating the Shorter Catechism

10. The Committee expresses thanks to Mrs Donna Thompson and Mrs Valerie Moore, for the proficient way in which they manage the affairs of the Sunday School Office and their friendly manner towards all who seek help and advice.

11. The Education Board, in partnership with Union College, continues to provide in-depth training over a ten week period for those who are working

with children. One in the Autumn of 2002 in Coleraine was attended by 25 people, with 19 successfully completing the set assignment. A Course planned for Lucan sadly had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. The next course will be located at First Bangor and will commence on Thursday 18th September 2003. The Presentation of Certificates was made on Wednesday 14th May 2003 at Knock Presbyterian Church, Belfast, with the Moderator and the Principal of the College both participating.

12. A very successful Children's Workers' Conference was held on Saturday 30th November 2002 at Stranmillis University College. The conference was jointly sponsored by our own Sunday School department, together with the Methodist and Church of Ireland children's departments. Scripture Union were also sponsoring the day. The administration of the event was very efficiently handled by Donna and Valerie in the Sunday School Office. Two hundred and ten people attended.

Penny Frank from the Church Pastoral Aid Society gave two inspirational and challenging addresses. Seminars covered a wide range of children's ministry issues eg working with small groups and limited resources, reaching the unchurched child, story-telling and drama, children's talks and others. Harry Barrett from One Way UK gave an inspiring puppet presentation which helped many to see how valuable puppets can be in children's ministry.

On the 22nd and 29th November 2003, two Children's Workers' Conferences will be held – one to be located in the North and the other in the South.

13. A sub-committee was established to consider the future direction of children's ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland – seeking to assess current effectiveness across a broad spectrum of children's work at congregational level, with a view to the possibility of a major push to raise the profile of children's ministry generally within our denomination.

I T McKEE, Convener

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. The work of the University Education Committee has continued to grow and develop as opportunities have presented themselves.

2. Our four joint Methodist/Presbyterian University Chaplains working in the Dublin area, Rev Katherine Meyer at Trinity College Dublin, Rev William McLaren at Dublin City University / Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Rev Stephen Skuce at University College Dublin and Mr Baird Lewis at Dublin Institute of Technology, have settled into their new positions and are fully occupied and well accepted in their different situations. The new relationship between ourselves and the Methodist church in the development of these posts needs to be strengthened so that it is seen by all to be a genuine joint chaplaincy effort. We are seeking with the Chaplains to further develop each post, as each college has quite a different set up and expectation of their particular chaplain.

3. In Belfast, the work of the Queen's Chaplaincy has developed, at both the Bush Chaplaincy Centre in Elmwood Avenue and at the Derryvolgie Halls

of Residence under the guidance of the Chaplain in Residence, Rev Steve Stockman. Miss Lynn Ferguson was appointed during the year as Assistant Chaplain and her contribution has added considerably to the strengths of the chaplaincy team, and a very full programme of activities has run throughout the year.

4. The recent purchase of the property at 14 Elmwood Avenue, adjacent to the Bush by the War Memorial Hostel Committee of the Board of Social Witness is encouraging as it will add considerable to the future potential for activities at the Bush.

5. In September Rev Peter Lyle our part-time chaplain at UU Coleraine resigned his post after almost six years. We would thank him for his commitment to both staff and students in Coleraine and wish him God's blessing as he continues his ministry in Ballyholme. Rev Jim Frazer took over in a temporary capacity during the important time of student enrolment until we were able to appoint Rev John Coulter, minister of Ballysally Church Extension Coleraine, to this post. He has joined the existing University of Ulster Chaplaincy team of Rev William Crawley at U U Jordanstown, and Rev Joe McCormick at UU Magee.

6. The Committee would wish to thank the many other ministers throughout this island who give of their time and talents to support staff and students at various institutions of third level education where we do not have a recognised Presbyterian Chaplaincy.

7. Please continue to pray for the University Chaplains, that God may provide them with opportunities to encourage and support both staff and students and that they may be a witness to Christ in all areas of University life.

Queen's University

Rev Steve Stockman reports from Queen's University:

1. The first year at Queen's Chaplaincy with our brand new team on board has been very full and satisfying. Steve Stockman took up his reshaped role as Chaplain In Residence and along with Lynn Ferguson, who took up the new post of Assistant Chaplain, they have attempted to make Queens "one Chaplaincy in two locations" – The Bush Café and Derryvolgie Hall. They have been ably supported by Maureen Rankin (Bush manageress), Liz Gibson and Karol Creighton at the Bush, Carol McMahon who is covering Lorna Dunlop's maternity leave and the volunteer Alain Emerson. The Chaplain would like us to thank the entire team for their dedication.

2. A trip to Cape Town last summer to build houses with Habitat For Humanity was a very satisfying project. Two teams of 25 in each, spread over 5 weeks completed six houses and were involved in the building of three others. Some of the money raised for the trip enabled eleven more to be built. The trip covers cross culture experiences of faith, world mission, social action, reconciliation, personal discipleship as well as team building. David Smith from Presbyterian Youth for Peace travelled on one of the teams and Craig Sands from Youth Link the other, organising all kinds of Church leader visits and also a meeting with F W De Klerk. We also played soccer matches against teams

from the Guguletu township and visited AIDS clinics and more besides. Another trip is planned for 2004.

3. The Bush continues to be busy as a café and the building is used very regularly by the Christian Union for Bible Study groups, evangelism groups and various other projects. This year we ran acoustic nights, and a new study/worship group for Chaplaincy students living outside Derryvolgie had a healthy beginning. The offices on the top floor have become a real drop in place for students to meet staff, which we are very encouraged about.

4. Derryvolgie continues to be a lively and exciting community where we continue to worship and study and challenge outreach in various ways. We have looked at what it is to be passionate for Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount in worship, as well as dealing with vocation, romantic love (in Boys and Girls Groups), fair trade and issues of war and peace. A new early morning prayer group started by students has been encouraging. We also had an inhouse weekend and one away at Lucan Youth Centre where we mixed Biblical teaching with social activities.

5. Chaplaincy has also been involved with the Christian Union in a Power To Change evangelism event, as well as the Late Love project which reaches out to Club leavers on a Thursday night. Students have also been helping out in After Schools Clubs at Friendship House on Sandy Row and Mornington Community Centre on the Ormeau Road. A group were involved in a "Four Main Churches" Habitat For Humanity Build in Downpatrick. Relationships with The Students Union have also been very good this year and we were involved in their Sponsored Walk for Children of Chernobyl.

University of Ulster

The Rev Dr William Crawley reports from the University of Ulster, Jordanstown Campus:

1. The chaplaincy at Jordanstown has welcomed two new Roman Catholic chaplains during this academic year. Fr David Delargy and Sr Anne Matthews are now well-established members of our team and have brought great gifts and great humour to our shared ministry.

2. We were delighted to send two teams of students to work overseas in our continuing and very rewarding partnership with Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland. In June 2002, our teams built houses for impoverished families in both El Salvador and Honduras. I am again enormously grateful to the Rev Anne Tolland, minister of Cairncastle congregation, for serving as my co-leader in El Salvador. I was glad to tell part of that team's story in two travelogues which were subsequently broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster.

3. The debate about war in Afghanistan turned into a debate about war in Iraq during the course of the year. We have continued to work closely with other University departments and staff in provoking moral discussion, through various forums and encounter groups, on various ethical dimensions of that global crisis. Bruce Kent, Vice-president of CND and President of the Movement for the Abolition of War, was our distinguished guest for a series of public lectures and discussions.

4. It has been a year of challenging pastoral situations, ranging from questions of spiritual identity and vocation to crisis intervention following sexual abuse. We have noticed a worrying increase in student alcohol-abuse and are actively pursuing a new co-operative strategy with other University support agencies as a response to that trend.

5. Students continue to appreciate our chaplaincy retreat weekends, which have been held this year in both Castlerock and Newcastle. We will end the academic year with a four-day retreat in the north of England. These are enormously valuable opportunities for deepening friendships and forming faith, complementing our campus-based discussion, worship and study opportunities.

6. I am much encouraged by the formation, this year, of a University Chaplaincy Council, which is made up of all the University's chaplains, both full-time and part-time, in all four campuses. This new body will seek to develop a more co-ordinated approach to our ministry throughout the campuses and has been warmly welcomed by the University. The Chaplaincy Council has embarked on a strategic review of inter-campus ministry with a view to making costed proposals for the development of our work to the Provosts' Committee.

7. During the past two years, it has become clear that our chaplaincy's current, very accessible location on the Mall has an uncertain future as a consequence of the University's building plans. We have had a number of meetings with senior officials of the University to explain our location needs and have explored with them a number of alternative venues.

8. In other denominational spheres, I have served on a number of Presbytery commissions and committees throughout the year and I continue to chair the Youth Board's Working Group on Youth Ministry, which has responsibility both for the denomination's Certificate in Youth Ministry and for the development of an Advanced Certificate.

Coleraine Campus

Rev John Coulter reports from the University of Ulster, Coleraine Campus:

1. I was appointed to the part-time Chaplaincy post at Coleraine just before Christmas 2002, so I am still in the 'settling in' period as I write. The Presbyterian Chaplaincy at Coleraine is basically a one day per week commitment and I am at the University all day on Wednesdays. During the past few months I have been trying to make contacts with Presbyterian students at the University, getting to know the other members of the Chaplaincy Team, making contacts with members of staff and meeting other students from various backgrounds who drop in to the Chaplaincy Office from time to time. There are tremendous opportunities for ministry at the University and I am looking forward to carrying on the excellent work which was done by my predecessor, Rev Peter Lyle.

Magee Campus

Rev Joe McCormick reports from the University of Ulster, Magee Campus:

1. Chaplaincy facilities continue to be made available to Presbyterian students at Magee. Once again we report that it is disappointing that so few of

our young people make the North West their choice for third-level education and those who do generally go home at weekends.

2. A number of overseas postgraduate students were welcomed to Derry and briefly were part of local church life.

3. The Roman Catholic chaplain, and I continue to work together for the benefit of both students and staff. Talks are on-going in an effort to enhance the role of the chaplains at Magee.

Trinity College, Dublin

Rev Katherine Meyer reports:

1. As full-time Presbyterian and Methodist chaplain in Trinity College Dublin, I work as part of a team which includes, in addition to me, one Anglican and two Roman Catholic colleagues. As the College continues to welcome an increasing number of international students and students of many different religious traditions, and to recognize and respect the growing diversity of its student body in appropriate ways, we continue to receive wide support for our presence and work, which seeks to combine a public witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with a commitment to warm and enriching engagement with those of other religious perspectives.

2. Many of the events associated with the chaplaincy have as their focus a simple and unconditional offer of hospitality. So, for example, the incoming students on the Trinity Access Programme are invited to our Common Room for coffee early in the new academic year. We also arrange an annual walking tour of Dublin, led by an enthusiastic member of the academic staff, which takes place on a Saturday morning, brings both Irish and international students together early in the year, and gives us a chance, over coffee, to meet one another. The students whom we get to know (and who get to know us!) in these informal ways early in the year often provide our most solid base of commitment and enthusiasm for events held throughout the rest of the year. Any incoming Presbyterian or Methodist students of whom I have knowledge are of course also contacted in the first term.

3. Other events are explicitly designed to invite students to engage openly with questions of Christian faith and practice. Such events in 2002 included a four week evening series entitled "101 Things to Do with a Text" (different approaches to reading the Bible), a weekend in Co Wexford on the Psalms in Christian prayer, and a series of evenings in which scientists talked about the religious questions which arise in their work.

4. We also continue to try to make as creative use of the College Chapel as possible. In addition to regular weekly services of various kinds, we host special liturgical events throughout the year. These vary according to the timings of the Christian and academic years, but in 2002 such occasions included a video presentation on the themes of Easter and Pentecost, and a Mardi Gras celebration which filled the College Chapel. This late evening event began in Front Square outside the Chapel with sparklers and a local gospel choir, and then moved into the Chapel for a celebration of the generosity of God through music, dance, speech, food and drink.

5. Outside of College, I continued to serve on the Irish Christian Aid Committee and the Churches' Asylum Network in Dublin. I am also one of the authors and editors of the recent Veritas publication, *From Despair to Hope: A Christian perspective on the tragedy of suicide*. This pastoral guide was a project initiated and brought to fruition by the Council on Social Responsibility of the Methodist Church in Ireland, and I was pleased to be invited to cooperate with Methodist colleagues in this way.

6. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation once again to the University Education Committee for their interest, their support, and their ongoing prayers. For all three, I am grateful.

Dublin City University and Royal College of Surgeons

Rev William McLaren reports

1. As I indicated in my previous report, ministry in two such different colleges is challenging, demanding but also very rewarding. I am grateful for the support of colleagues of all denominations as well as academic staff and students in both institutions who have offered me their encouragement and their friendship.

2. At DCU a weekly "Friendship Lunch" of Soup, bread and cheese is well attended and provides an opportunity for informal discussion of topical issues.

3. I worked with DCU Christian Union and One World Society to promote "Fairtrade Fortnight" and using material produced by Christian Aid to increase awareness of fair trade issues.

4. With a group of American students in DCU I planned and conducted a memorial service to mark the first anniversary of the tragic events of September 11 2001. Together with chaplaincy colleagues and students of several nationalities I participated in a service to mark "International Friendship Day" 2003.

5. At RCSI a weekly "Friendship Lunch" is also well attended and a number of students moving from the pre-clinical to the clinical years asked for something similar in the teaching hospital. The result is that I am hosting a weekly "Chaplain's Coffee Break" in the Student Centre at Beaumont Hospital.

6. I have welcomed the opportunity to participate in seminars on professional ethics at RCSI.

7. I sit on the Student Affairs Committee at RCSI.

8. In January 2003 I attended the annual Third Level Chaplains Conference, held this year at NUI Galway.

9. It is a great privilege to minister in Third Level Education and I hope the above gives some flavour of the work. I have found students to be friendly, open, and deeply appreciative of the work of the chaplaincy. In both DCU and RCSI groups as varied as the CU, the Drama Society, the Rugby Club and the GAA have welcomed the interest and involvement of the Chaplain.

T R BUICK, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

State Education Committee

2. That the General Board be authorised to act on behalf of the General Assembly in taking any decisions related to the review of the R E Core Syllabus.
3. That the Rev Dr R F S Poots continue as Convener of the State Education Committee.

Church Education Committee

4. That the General Assembly thank Sunday Schools and Youth Groups for their generous support for the current "Moving On" Project 2003 and commend the new Project "Reaching Out" to the Church.

General

5. That the General Board be authorised to approve arrangements for the appointment of a Secretary to the Education Board once the proposals of the ad hoc Committee on Priorities have been decided.
6. That the Board of Education, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 284 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF STUDIES AND CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Convener: Very Rev Dr A W G BROWN

1. The Board of Studies and Christian Training has had another interesting and worthwhile year. Work on the Union College buildings has progressed at a steady pace, and it is exciting to see the project take shape. It has however been a mammoth undertaking to run a college on what is virtually a building site, and tribute must be paid to students and staff who have put up with many inconveniences. We are grateful not least to those who have worked long hours far beyond the call of duty to enable the college to open in September, and to handle some of the initial difficulties in settling in residents, and setting up a new office system.

2. Last year we were able to report growth in the number of ministerial students, and once again this year we have a sizeable number of applicants for the residential interview (a likely 20 from the 23 who made initial application). It was especially encouraging to have a good number of second year students to assign for assistantships, and also to have more than enough applications for assistants in spite of the growing trend to appoint additional pastoral personnel in many of our congregations.

3. Two years ago we had a most valuable conference for people who were having thoughts about entering the ordained ministry, but who were not yet sure if this was in fact what God was calling them to do. It had been our intention to repeat such a conference this year, but because of the present state of the College buildings it was decided to postpone it until the spring of 2004.

4. We are happy to report again this year that we have seen yet another significant increase in the number of undergraduates who choose Union College for their courses in theology. We believe that this is a most valuable opportunity to teach the Christian faith at this level, and we believe it will prove a wise investment in helping to train future teachers, and Church leaders, and hopefully in helping some to hear God's call to the ordained ministry.

5. In spite of all these encouragements, the fact is that we will still have a considerable shortfall in ministers for a number of years to come, especially in the light of retirement levels. It is important that the Church should look again at ways of helping to train others to assist in aspects of a minister's work. It is also vital that ministers and Kirk Sessions should set the need for ordained ministers before our congregations, and encourage suitable people to explore the possibilities, and to open their minds and hearts to the possibility that God may be calling them to this task.

6. The Magee Institute for Christian Training, as it is now called, has had another worthwhile year, providing excellent courses that have been well supported. Progress has been made in providing a growing number of video based courses. It is with particular sadness that we learn as we go to press of the

death of the Rev Howard Lewis who had played such a significant part in recent courses.

7. We have continued to discuss with the Personnel and Planning Committee of the Union Commission the issues raised for our Board by the increasing use of pastoral personnel. We believe that care needs to be exercised as to the appropriate qualifications of those engaged in such work, and also for their in-service training. We were happy to be able to offer the resources of Union College and of its Magee Institute as a helpful provider of suitable training modules.

8. We were in discussion with the ad hoc Committee on Priorities during the year about proposed new structure for Boards and Committees. We were glad to note that their proposals for our Board involved little change.

9. We are happy to report that the Assignment Committee and Students' Bursary Fund Committee are now operating very successfully as Committees of the Board. The Rev Stewart Mackay has replaced the Rev Tom Conway as Convener of the Students' Bursary Fund.

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Prof W P Addley reports:

10. The Ministerial Development Programme (MDP) was presented to the General Assembly by the Strategy for Mission Committee in 1998 and details of the scheme approved by the General Assembly are set out in Annual Reports, 1998, pp. 259-262. The Programme is intended 'to help individual ministers in the development of the perspective and skills required to give leadership and inspiration in the ongoing commitment of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to be a Church centred on Christian mission' (p. 260).

11. Two main elements compose the scheme: In Service Training and Sabbatical leave. The former is designed to enable ministers to set aside one week per year for professional development; the latter is primarily intended to give ministers a longer period of study leave (up to eight weeks in one year). However, Sabbatical leave may be used in conjunction with the In Service Training week to give two weeks study leave in one year. The scheme is funded centrally through a levy on local congregations and administered mainly at Presbytery level.

12. Eligibility for Sabbatical leave was introduced over a three year period, with only those ordained 27 or more years being eligible in 2000, those ordained 14 to 26 years in 2001 and all others in 2002. Although the programme started in 2000, the introduction of the necessary administrative arrangements took time to come into full effect in all Presbyteries. Only 32 ministers availed of the scheme in 2000, but this number rose to 89 in 2001 and 72 in 2002 (as of 31st January 2003), and the initial allowance of up to £125 per week was raised to £200 in 2003. While most ministers have attended conferences and courses, a small number have taken approved supervised study, for example, at Union College, enabling them to engage in intensive personal study and preparation.

13. While the approval of applications for the scheme and payments rests with Presbyteries, the Board of Studies and Christian Training established, at the

request of the General Assembly, the Ministerial Development Committee (MDC), presently under the convenership of the Rev Prof Bill Addley, to monitor the introduction and implementation of the programme and evaluate the procedures periodically (see Annual Reports, 1998, p 260, par 3.2). Moreover, the 1998 report states: 'In the light of experience the Board of Studies and Christian Training would seek modification to the scheme where necessary' (p 260, par 2.4). Having consulted with Presbytery representatives in January 2003, the Ministerial Development Programme Committee has identified a number of areas/issues where it feels that appropriate changes could improve the operation and effectiveness of the present scheme.

14. At present all claims, irrespective of the amount of money involved, are handled in the same way. Three changes are proposed:

- (a) The process of making claims for less than 20% of the annual allowance for In Service Training should be streamlined. Rather than submit a written application to Presbytery prior to attending a short course or day conference, it would be sufficient to ask and receive verbal approval from Presbytery (or its MDP committee/representative). In addition, a less detailed claim form could be submitted.
- (b) For claims of £500, or above, approval must be sought well in advance from Presbytery in consultation with the Ministerial Development Committee.
- (c) At present the Presbytery finance committee has responsibility for approving all claim forms. It would streamline the process if this responsibility could be undertaken by the Presbytery MDP representative or committee.

15. An important element of the scheme is the provision of 'one Sunday free of duties per week taken'. However, the cost of this must be sought from and met directly by congregations. It is felt that this has deterred some ministers from taking up the Programme, and it is therefore proposed that in future this cost should be covered by the scheme with the weekly allowance being raised to incorporate the supply fee.

16. As approved in 1998 the scheme requires ministers to save up each week of Sabbatical leave before it may be taken. While the principle of 'banking' weeks for Sabbatical leave should be maintained, special arrangements ought to be introduced for ministers approaching retirement. Here there may be clear advantages to both minister and congregation if Sabbatical leave is taken before the minister has banked the required number of weeks. With the permission of Presbytery, in consultation with the MDC, the minister could take the Sabbatical, making up the necessary number of weeks in the subsequent years of service prior to retirement.

ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson reports:

17. Interviews for fifth year students, and some others who are taking theological courses outside Ireland, were held on 23 December 2002. 20

requests were received for assistants, but only 12 students were available, all of whom are now placed. One subsequently withdrew. It is anticipated that around 15 students may be available for assignment next year.

18. It was agreed by the Board that in future the Assignment Committee should be consulted about the appointment of a Moderator's Assistant.

19. The present scheme for Licentiate Assistants and Associate Ministers has been in operation since 1995, when it replaced the previous scheme, which provided for a six month period as a licentiate followed by one or two years as an Ordained Assistant. The Committee feels that the time is now right for the present scheme be reviewed to see if any further improvements can be effected. A resolution to that effect is appended.

STUDENTS' BURSARY FUND COMMITTEE

Rev D Stewart Mackay reports:

20. The Students' Bursary Fund Committee continues to administer our church's financial provision for our students for the ordained ministry and their families.

21. Total income for the fund was £78,747 and total expenditure £216,683, which eliminated a surplus that the Committee had carried for a few years due to the unexpected drop in the number of students. Now however as our student numbers continue to rise towards the levels of the 80's and early 90's the demands upon the fund increase proportionally so that the continued generosity of the church to the United Appeal is essential.

22. The Committee is also grateful to all who contributed through offerings taken at services of installation, ordination etc. This is a vital source of income for the fund and so we would request Presbytery Clerks and Vacancy Conveners to ensure that such an offering is taken, that use is made of the literature available, and that advantage is taken of the Gift Aid scheme at services in Northern Ireland.

23. In respect of former students who did not complete 5 years service with PCI beyond Licensing, the Committee continues to try to strike a balance between exercising good stewardship of the finite resources of our church and exercising pastoral sensitivity to each former student's circumstances.

24. The Committee was sorry to lose, after one year as Joint Convener and a second as sole Convener, the leadership of the Rev Tom Conway. His clarity of thought, sense of fairness and genuine interest in the welfare of the students were great assets to the Committee's work. We are pleased that he has agreed to continue as a member.

QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE

Par 217 (8) (d) (ii) requires that "only such degrees or academic awards as are approved by the Committee shall be recognised for the requirements or official records of the Church". Following a recent request for advice the Committee met, and discussed the issues involved. Further consideration needs to be given and it is anticipated that a report will be presented to next year's General Assembly.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STUDIES

1. The Committee met three times during the year.
2. Through the Director of Ministerial Studies (DMS) it continued to give advice to prospective candidates and to set courses and administer examinations in accordance with the Regulations of the General Assembly and the direction of the Board of Studies & Christian Training.
3. In the academic year 2002/2003 there were 30 students under the care of Presbyteries (25 in 2001/2002, 22 in 2000/2001), as listed in the appended Schedule.
4. Three students were granted permission to study at Universities/Colleges other than Union: one at Princeton and two at Westminster. Another student was granted permission to study for 1 semester at Trinity, Singapore. The Committee also noted with regret the withdrawal of a student and the withdrawal of an applicant prior to the Phase II Interview.
5. The Committee expresses its thanks for the work of the following external examiners:
 - OT Language and Biblical Theology - The Rev I J Patterson, BA, MTh
 - NT Language - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD
 - NT Greek (Qual) - The Rev W P H Erskine, MA, BD
 - Systematic Theology - The Rev D Bradley, BA, BD
 - Church History - The Rev Dr W D Patton, BSSc, BD
 - Homiletics, Public Worship and Pastoral Work - The Rev Dr D C Irwin, MA, BD

Study In A Missionary Partnership

Rev Dr Ian Hart reports:

6. Students who are studying for the ordained ministry of our church at Union College are encouraged to spend one of the 3 theological years (or, if they prefer, a “year out”) studying theology in a country where we have a missionary partnership. Such a time can be a very enlightening and stimulating experience. For example, overseas churches are often struggling with very different issues from those we are preoccupied with in Northern Ireland. We sometimes need to be freed from localistic practices, and we may realise that we have been following social conventions rather than the gospel. In recent years students have taken up this opportunity in Kenya (St Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru), in Jamaica (United Theological College, Kingston), and in Singapore (Trinity Theological College). At the time of writing, Mr David Brown, a second year student at Union, is spending a semester at Trinity, Singapore.

Pre-Theological Summer School & Phase I Interview

7. The Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview was held in Union College from 18-21 June, 2002. The interviewing Panel comprised: Revs Drew Abernethy, Prof Bill Addley, Robert Allen, Robert Bell, Fred Bradley, John Braithwaite, Jim Campbell, Maynard Cathcart, Jim Gordon, Ronnie Hetherington, John Hutchinson, David Knox, Robert Lockhart, Colin

Morrison, Philip McCrea, Brian McMillen, Ian McNie, Derek Poots OBE, Brian Savage, David Thompson; Mrs Mary Robinson, Mrs Jayne Wright; Messrs Wilbur Clarke, Henry Plester, Dr Robert Rodgers OBE, together with the Very Rev Dr Godfrey Brown (Chairman), Rev Harry Robinson (Coordinator), Rev Stephen Moore (Secretary) and Dr D E Eagleson MA, DipVocG and Mrs H Mullan BSc PGCE (Vocational Consultants acting as advisors to the Panel).

8. Eighteen candidates were in attendance and completed the normal aspects of the interviewing process. Twelve are being recommended to the General Assembly of this year, together with two candidates from previous years whose Applicants' Courses had been extended.

9. Dr Dorothy E Eagleson, after many years of invaluable service to the Board, indicated that she wished to retire as from the 2002 Interview. The Board, and our Church at large, is greatly indebted to her for the insights and advice she offered. We are delighted that Dr Joan McQuoid of St John's, Newtownbreda, and a former colleague of Dr Eagleson, has agreed to fulfil this important role from 2003.

10. The 2003 Pre-Theological Summer School and Phase I Interview is planned for 17th to 20th June, the size and personnel of the Interviewing Panel having been approved by the Committee.

STEPHEN P MOORE, Convener

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE OF STUDENTS

ARDS	Amanda Best	Union
	Nigel D Craig	Union
	Colin Dickson	Union
	Paul Jamieson	Union
	Chris W P Kennedy	Westminster
	James W D Rogers	Union
ARMAGH	S J Mervyn Lindsay	Union
BALLYMENA	Jonathan E Sloan	Union
CARRICKFERGUS	Heather M Rendell	-
NORTH BELFAST	William G Hamilton	Union
	William J Hayes	Union
	David J Laney	Union
EAST BELFAST	Mark Welsh	Union
COLERAINE	Darran B McCorriston	Union
	Emerson McDowell	Union
	Philip B Wilson	-
DERRY & STRABANE	Roy A Campbell	Westminster
	Nigel J E Reid	-
DOWN	Samuel Newell	Union
	Leslie Patterson	Union
DROMORE	Michael R J Anderson	Union
	Michael McClenahan	-
	Colin McKibbin	-

DUBLIN & MUNSTER	Karen Campbell	Union
NEWRY	Richard C Kerr	Union
OMAGH	David J Irvine	Union
ROUTE	Glenn A Chestnutt	Princeton
TYRONE	David H Brown	Union
	Knox A Jones	Union
	Adrian T S McAlister	-

COLLEGE AND MAGEE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Since last General Assembly the Committee has met 4 times.
2. During this year we welcomed the new Principal of the College, Rev Prof Patton Taylor. We look forward to his leadership and thank him and all the staff for their ongoing commitment to serve the Church in what continues to be a very difficult working environment.
3. This year saw the full integration of the College, Magee Institute (formerly, Christian Training Centre), and the office of the DMS under the umbrella of Union College.
4. A considerable amount of the Committee's time continues to be taken up with the redevelopment programme. Phase 1 was completed in September, though until recently there were considerable ongoing building snags making life difficult for the staff and students. The administration and residential blocks are completed and fully functioning. Phase 2, which includes the library area, main hallway and the remainder of the classrooms, will be completed by the time this Assembly meets, and the final phase, which consists largely of fitting out the chapel area into conference facilities, will be completed in September. The programme is currently running within budget, which included the disposal of the Principal's House and the rear car park.
5. Plans are in order to celebrate our 150th Anniversary on 4th December 2003, exactly 150 years to the day since the opening lecture in the Presbyterian College, Belfast.
6. In the Academic Year 2002-2003 there are 119 full-time degree students (including 23 ministerial and deaconess students), and 174 part-time students (at A-level, UG degree level and PG level). There are also almost 40 students from other Queen's departments and faculties who take individual modules in Theology with us. These numbers show an increase of almost 50% over the previous year.
7. The College continues to work closely with the Youth and Education Boards in the provision of training courses for Youth Workers and Sunday School Teachers.
8. This year-on-year increase in the student numbers continues to add to the pressure and workload of all our staff. We are particularly pleased to anticipate a growth in students for the ordained ministry studying at Union.
9. Informal discussions with the University Chaplain and representatives from the War Memorial Hostel are proving fruitful. It is our aim

together to provide pastoral support and outreach to our residents and student community, as well as streamlining the administration of the former group.

10. In September 2002 the Christian Training Centre relocated from 7 Rugby Road to Union Theological College and in the light of new structures being developed within the college now operates as the Magee Institute for Christian Training. A new 24 week, Level 2 course in pastoral care and Christian counselling was introduced, building upon the existing eight-week Level 1 course; both courses are run in conjunction with Christian Guidelines. Various courses, most running for six weeks, with about 370 participants were conducted by the Rev Harold Boyce, the Rev Dr Rodger Crooks, the Rev Howard Lewis, Mr Colin Millar and Dr Desi Alexander, the Director of Christian Training. For those who attended the autumn course on Spiritual Warfare, as for many others within PCI and beyond, news of the death of Howard Lewis in March 2003 came as a great shock. As a gifted communicator and Bible teacher, he will be missed. Recordings of the two courses which he taught in 2002 are among various new teaching resources available from the Magee Institute. Details of courses and resources are available on the internet at www.mageeinstitute.co.uk.

11. The Management Committee records its appreciation of the work of the Magee Institute and College, and commends the academic and administrative staff for their interest in the students and for the delivery and promoting of courses within a warm fellowship of pastoral concern.

GRAHAM CONNOR, Convener

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCING CHRISTIANS FOR MINISTRY

1. During the year, the committee ran learning modules in various places. Howard Lewis taught a course on spiritual development and one on spiritual warfare at the Magee Institute. Courses on personal evangelism were organised, with Harold Boyce teaching one in Belfast and Colin Millar one in Coleraine. Rodger Crooks led a course on leadership in Strabane. Desi Alexander taught two courses in Belfast – a training course for elders and one on the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. All of the courses were well attended.

2. We have put together several resources packages, which can be used by groups or by individuals. Howard Lewis' courses on spiritual development ("Going for Growth") and spiritual warfare ("Fitted for the Fight") is available on audio cassette and CD format, and the notes can be downloaded from the Magee Institute website. A six video set to help elders and members prepare for conducting public worship is also available.

3. The committee is in debt to Dr Desi Alexander, the Director of Christian Training, for all his help and practical advice. It also wishes to express its gratitude to those who administered and delivered the various learning modules, and to those who prepared the resource packages.

RODGER M CROOKS, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly note with gratitude to God the continued increase in numbers of those making application for ordained ministry, and encourage ministers and Kirk Sessions to identify suitably-gifted members so that this increase may be sustained.

Ministerial Development Programme:

3. That the General Assembly approve the proposals outlined in Paragraph 14 for streamlining the procedures for the processing of claims.
4. That the General Assembly approve the proposal in Paragraph 15 that the weekly allowance be raised to include the Supply Fee incurred.
5. That the General Assembly approve the proposal outlined in Paragraph 16 for the taking of sabbatical leave by Ministers approaching retirement.
6. That the assessment for the Ministerial Development Programme be 0.75p per £ of stipend.

General

7. That the Board of Studies and Christian Training, in consultation with the Union Commission, Board of Mission in Ireland and other interested parties, carry out a review of the current legislation relating to Licentiate Assistants, Ordained Assistants and Associate Ministers, and report to next year's General Assembly.

8. That the following candidates, their nominations having been sustained by the Board of Studies and Christian Training, be accepted as students for the Ordained Ministry and placed under the care of their Presbyteries:

T Neil Bingham	Newcastle	Iveagh
David S Brownlow	Hazelbank	Coleraine
Mark E Donald	Clough	Ballymena
Alastair J Dunlop	Knock	East Belfast
Richard A Johnston	Orangefield	East Belfast
Gareth McFadden	Lucan	Dublin & Munster
Richard S J McIlhatton	Downshire	Carrickfergus
Philip L McKelvey	Sixmilecross	Omagh
Martin D McNeely	Bloomfield	East Belfast
John D Montgomery	The Mall	Armagh
Roderick A Mulholland	1st Portglenone	Ballymena
Kenneth Nelson	Hill Street, Lurgan	Armagh
Scott A Woodburn	McQuiston Memorial	East Belfast

9. That the following grants be paid from the Incidental Fund:
- | | |
|--|--------|
| June Summer School & Phase I Interview | £1,065 |
| Pre-Term College Retreat | £1,680 |
| Applicants' Study Day | £295 |

Licentiate Courses	£95
Meetings for students and spouses	£400
Honoraria for Extern Examiners	£300
Teaching Communication Skills for students outside Ireland	£100
	<hr/>
TOTAL	£3,935

10. That the Board of Studies and Christian Training, together with the appropriate working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 285 of the Code as follows:-

COMMITTEE ON THE RECEPTION OF MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES

1. During the year the committee received a total of eight applications from ministers living on four continents. The applicants were divided equally between denominations within and without the World Alliance of Reformed Churches although two of the denominations which were not members of the WARC were Presbyterian in their church government and reformed in their theology.

2. Two of the applications were not supported by the committee because the applicants had not been ordained in terms of the Code of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, one decided not to proceed, one withdrew on receiving a call from a congregation of the United Reformed Church and one has not yet supplied the committee with the information needed to come to a decision. The remaining three applications are under consideration.

3. A particular problem this year was the number of applications which came to the committee late in the year, with the result that this report is being written before the outcome of the applications has been decided.

Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie

4. The memorial of the Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, BTh, a minister of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa will come before the General Assembly. The committee's interview panel will meet Mrs Kennedy-Ritchie and a verbal report of the outcome will be given to the Assembly.

Rev Jane Dasher

5. The committee is considering the application of the Rev Jane Dasher, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, USA. Born 20 September 1962, she holds the degrees of BSc (Ohio) and MDiv (Columbia theological Seminary) and was ordained on 26 September 1993, since when she has held various appointments in the PCUSA.

6. To allow time for orientation the Committee recommends that she be declared eligible for an Ordained Assistantship.

Applicants from within the World Alliance of Reformed Churches

7. At the last two meetings of the General Assembly reference has been made to the modifications which are being made to the way in which the Church of Scotland receives ministers from other denominations, including our own. The recent experience of the committee suggests that the PCI also needs to make alterations in its procedures to meet the current circumstances of the world wide Church.

8. When the present paragraphs of the Code were written, members churches of the WARC were presbyterian churches in doctrine and government and their ministers could be assumed to be familiar with the ethos of the PCI. Today many WARC denominations are the result of unions with churches which are not presbyterian and the presumption of familiarity is no longer valid. On the

other hand some churches which are outside WARC have more in common with the PCI than those within it.

9. It is the committee's opinion that it would be beneficial if there was a single application process for all applicants. It is not our intention to seek to modify the Code at this stage, but to request the permission of the General Assembly to interview all applicants for a trial period of three years.

10. The committee places it on record that this is not 'retaliation' against the Church of Scotland nor a questioning of the churches of the WARC, the validity of their ordination or the worthiness of their ministers.

Health certificates

11. The committee was consulted by the Board of Ministry and Pensions about the implications of the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund (if approved) for its assessment of the health of the applicants who come before it.

12. The committee decided that it would apply to applicants the same standard of health as the Board of Studies and Christian Training requires from candidates for the ministry.

13. At present applicants seeking eligibility under Par 193 of the Code are required to produce a health certificate and former licentiates or ministers without charge who wish to be restored under Par 219(4) must also provide a health certificate, but ministers from churches not within the WARC applying to become ministers without charge under paragraph 219 (5) are not specifically required to provide any documentary evidence of good health. An overture will be brought to the General Assembly to amend the Code and end this anomaly.

R BRIAN SAVAGE, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Committee for the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates be authorised to interview all applicants from outside the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for a period of three years.
3. That Rev Jane Dasher be declared eligible for an Ordained Assistantship in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 219(5)(a) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 219(5)(a) of the Code after the words, 'produce to a Presbytery' there be inserted the words 'credentials of health'.

R BRIAN SAVAGE

MEMORIAL TRANSMITTED

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to meet in Belfast on the 2nd day of June, 2003.

The Memorial of the Reverend Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie Respectfully Showeth:

That she is 33 years of age; that she was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, and moved to Dublin, Ireland in 2000; that she was regularly ordained to the Christian Ministry in September 1999 by the Baptist Union of Southern Africa; that she is a minister in good and regular standing with her church body; that she is in full accord with the Doctrinal Standards of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

That she holds the following degrees: BA in Theology from the University of Zululand; Licentiate in Theology from the Baptist College Randburg; MA in Biblical Studies from the Rand Afrikaans University.

That she served as an assistant minister in Grace Baptist Church, Kempton Park, South Africa for eight years; that she has been a member of Lucan Presbyterian Church under the supervision of the Reverend Dr Trevor W J Morrow and the Reverend Keith McCrory.

That she is desirous of being accepted as a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

That she applied to the Committee on the Reception of Ministers and Licentiates; that, if accepted, she will undertake any additional studies required by the Board of Studies and Christian Training.

Memorialist therefore prays your Venerable Assembly to receive her as a Minister without Charge and to place her under the care of the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster.

And Memorialist as in duty bound will ever pray.

LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE
Dated the Third day of March, 2003

Licensed by the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster at its meeting in Dublin on 4th March, 2003, and transmitted simpliciter.

SAMUEL MAWHINNEY, Moderator
JOHN FARIS, Clerk

Transmitted simpliciter by the Synod of Dublin at its meeting in Mullingar on 11th March, 2003.

NANCY CUBITT, Moderator
MERVYN BURNSIDE, Clerk

COMMISSION ON TRUSTS

1. Attention is drawn to the Capital Account of the General Investment Fund. The Commission advised the acceptance of the Trust Funds.

A J RANKIN, Convener

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Commission on Trusts for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 130 of the Code as follows:-

BOARD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Convener: Mr FRANKLIN ADAIR

1. The Board met four times during the year.
2. The Board, at the time of writing, is reviewing with Custom and Excise whether the Church's central activities should be registered for VAT and whether there is a liability for past tax. A separate report on the issue is provided in Appendix A to this report.
3. As a Board we have valued the service faithfully given over the years by many of our members who are now retiring and we thank them for that service. No one has been more valuable than Rev Harold MacConnell whose ready grasp of the issues and presiding skills have assisted greatly the decision making process when he has chaired the Board and its Committees. We shall miss his wise counsel.
4. The Board once again records its appreciation for the excellent and progressive work done by Clive Knox, Financial Secretary, Eileen McClenaghan, Head of Personnel, Harry Orr, Buildings Manager, and all the staff in the areas of accounting, personnel, reception and property management during the past year. The issues that are arising are becoming more challenging each year and therefore the professional expertise and commitment of our staff become even more important. The Board wishes Miss Lorraine Smyth, who has served in the Financial Secretary's Office for nearly 30 years, a long and healthy retirement and thank her for her valuable contribution.
5. The Board has decided that a booklet on Wills should be produced. It was agreed to proceed with a Presbyterian Church in Ireland branded version of a similar booklet produced by the Bible Society and to include a section on intestacy. The Bible Society has agreed to this approach and a donation will be made to the Bible Society in recognition of the investment that they have put into the booklet.
6. Issues of Health and Safety are becoming more important for organisations each year. The Board therefore decided that it needed to allocate responsibility for these issues to the Finance and Staffing Committee to act in consultation, where appropriate, with the Assembly Buildings Committee. A Health and Safety policy document is being prepared.
7. As reported to the General Assembly in June 2002 a Handbook for Treasurers has been produced to assist congregations. It is an important reference source to help ensure that there are consistent accounting standards in all congregations. The Board was concerned that there were some congregations that had not purchased a copy. Therefore in the interest of best practice the handbook was issued to the remaining congregations through Presbyteries with a payment request that was not a demand but was left to the discretion of individual Congregational Committees. The first update to the handbook has been completed and is being distributed.

8. At the General Assembly in 2002 it was reported that following a couple of incidents of falling masonry it had been decided that the walls and roofs of the Assembly Buildings complex should be renovated. As the remedial work has proceeded it has become clear that the repairs need to be more extensive. The Board decided that any renovations necessary to ensure safety should be carried out. Work is currently in progress and the cost of this is being funded by a grant from the Environment and Heritage Service and from rental income through the Assembly Buildings Account.

9. The issue of determining where rights and liabilities lie in relation to contracts of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was raised at the General Assembly in 2002. Action has been taken to prepare Guidance Notes for Board and Committee members and these are included under Appendix B. Training will be introduced from September 2003. A proposed insurance policy to provide indemnity cover for Board and Committee members was received and discussions were ongoing at the time of writing to try to ensure that it provided a reasonable level of cover. A resolution is appended regarding an indemnity for Board and Committee members. The issue of the creation of a company limited by guarantee, under the name 'Presbyterian Church in Ireland', to execute particular contracts is still under discussion but has been made more complicated by the issue regarding VAT covered in this report.

APPENDIX A

1. VAT POSITION OF THE CHURCH

A. Background

At present there is generally no UK VAT registration for the central activities of the Church. Familybooks Limited and Fisherwick Management Services Limited are limited companies and are separately registered for VAT. The Irish Mission has a UK registration. The Presbyterian Mutual Society recently registered to allow VAT on a property acquisition to be reclaimed.

B. VAT Registration

The current registration threshold is £55,000 and organisations with taxable outputs above that figure need to register.

C. The Ernst & Young Report

Ernst & Young, our Auditors, were commissioned to prepare a report on Value Added Tax and how this might apply to the activities undertaken centrally by the Church. The report concluded that certain activities undertaken by the Church (cafe, coffee bar, hiring of halls and advertising) are vatatable if they exceed the annual threshold. In addition, where an option has been exercised to tax a property, commercial rents from trading units would also be vatatable. As a result there probably is a requirement to register for VAT and there may be a liability for VAT for earlier years.

On their own the value of some of these items does not exceed the VAT threshold but Customs & Excise may consider that all such activities fall under

the authority of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (the General Assembly) and therefore the Church rather than the individual activities should be registered.

D. Congregations

The report from Ernst & Young covered the central activities of the Church only. Individual congregations should register if their taxable activities exceed £55,000 in any tax year.

If the central activities of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland were registered this would potentially mean that any services provided by the centre to local congregations would attract VAT which the individual congregation, not being registered, would not be able to reclaim. VAT would not apply to the collection of assessments or stipend.

E. Other Churches

The position in relation to other churches varies, with apparently some being registered and some not.

F. The way forward

The Board decided, among other things, the following:

- (i) The issue needed to be recognised and addressed; it should not be ignored.
- (ii) If there was a VAT liability for the past then the Church should meet it.
- (iii) The Church should take the initiative and raise the issue with Customs and Excise.
- (iv) The Church should seek to have past reclaims/repayments recognised as well as liabilities.
- (v) Consultants needed to be appointed to advise the Church.

G. Action Taken

A meeting has been held with Customs and Excise. At the time of writing they are reviewing the position.

Ernst & Young, have been appointed as advisers and consultants and are further assessing any potential liability for arrears of tax and the appropriate case to be made to the authorities.

APPENDIX B

Guidelines for Board Members

Legal Liability

1. Persons serving on a Board or Committee should be aware of their individual responsibilities and liabilities. Boards and Committees conduct interviews and enter into contracts of employment and contracts for the supply of goods and services, and while conducting their affairs equitably cannot be immune from disputes and claims. Liability would fall on members of Boards and Committees in the first instance. The General Assembly will therefore be

asked to approve an indemnity for members of Boards and Committees where they have acted in good faith, within authority limits and in accordance with the law. Where the General Assembly is joined in an action those authorised to appear on its behalf will be similarly indemnified. An insurance policy will be arranged to reimburse the Church for any outlay incurred.

Structures

2. Between annual General Assemblies the oversight of the central work of the Church is delegated to various Commissions, Boards and Assembly Committees, all being appointed by the Assembly and accountable to it. Boards may also appoint other committees, eg a Finance Committee or a Standing Committee to deal with certain items of business, and Assembly Committees may similarly appoint sub-committees to deal with specified matters. No body can delegate powers which it does not itself possess, and no body may act outside its remit. A Commission is in a special position in that it has authority to make final decisions on behalf of the Assembly; all other bodies must either act within the provisions of the Code or in accordance with instructions previously given them by resolution of Assembly. Failing that they must bring any other proposals before the Assembly by way of resolution.

3. Because of the wide range of matters dealt with by different Boards and Committees (e.g. United Appeal Board, Nomination Board, Board of Finance and Administration, Business Board, Judicial Commission) it is not feasible to give detailed guidance to all in a short paper, but there are some basic principles that are of general application:-

- (i) Board members should know what the remit of their Board or Committee is. A summary of the duties of the various Boards is set out in Code Pars. 272 to 288, while the index lists further references to particular Boards found in other paragraphs.
- (ii) Members should also be familiar with the basic rules of Church procedure as set out in Pars 141 – 160 of the Code. A Board (or any other body) is only committed to the resolutions it passes, not to the content of speeches or reports.
- (iii) Members should discharge their duties with the same prudence and diligence as prudent and diligent persons would use in the management of their own private affairs. In particular they should be regular in their attendance at meetings and should carefully read minutes, reports and resolutions being submitted.
- (iv) Generally speaking, the primary work is done in Committees, while the Boards are intended to be mini-Assemblies rather than maxi-Committees, ie their main responsibility is one of supervision and scrutiny of major proposals submitted by Committees.
- (v) If Board members have a particular interest in, or special knowledge of, the work of a subordinate Committee, they should let the Board or Committee convener know. In due course they may be nominated to that Committee when a vacancy arises.

Conflict of interest

4. It is the duty of Board members to disclose any pecuniary interest (direct or indirect) that they may have in any transaction affecting their Board, and they should withdraw from the meeting while such matters are being discussed and voted on. Other types of conflict may arise in situations where there may be the appearance of such a conflict, eg in competitive interview situations. It will sometimes happen that interviewers and candidates are slightly acquainted: where the acquaintance is more than that, the Board members should withdraw from the process, eg Board members should not interview close relatives nor ministers members of their own congregations. Any appearance of a conflict of interest is to be avoided.

Church House Staff

5. While some Boards rely mainly on honorary conveners and Board members to carry out their work with only minimal support from eg the General Secretary's Office, others have their own office and administrative staff, usually with a Board Secretary appointed by the Assembly. The honorary Convener should liaise closely with the Board Secretary to ensure that the work of the Board proceeds smoothly. Certain administration matters, as detailed in Par. 286 of the Code, are the responsibility of the Board of Finance and Administration rather than any other Board.

Between Meetings

6. Meetings of Boards and Committees take place on only a few days in the year with long gaps in between, so it is inevitable that, in addition to routine on-going administration, matters (both major and minor) that have not been foreseen will arise between meetings. At such times a Board Convener or Secretary is presumed to speak and act for the Board; they should exercise discretion as to whether they proceed to act on their own, consult with one or more colleagues or convene a meeting. When the Board or Committee eventually does meet they should sustain reasonable action taken in good faith on their behalf.

7. Some Boards appoint a Standing Committee. Standing Committees can usefully deal with:

- (i) matters referred to them by the Board (with or without power to issue);
- (ii) the agenda for the next Board meeting; and
- (iii) urgent non-controversial matters that have arisen, where it is reasonable to suppose that the Board will later sustain the action taken.

However, the Standing Committee of a Board cannot act for a General Assembly Committee, so in some situations of urgency the Assembly Committee should be called to deal with the matter. The Standing Committee can then, if so authorised, give approval to the Assembly Committee's decision in the name of the Board.

Conveners

8. Conveners, Board Secretaries and those who are chairing meetings have a special responsibility to ensure that Board remits and the rules of

procedure are observed. While debate, especially in Committees and Sub-Committees, may be less formal than in the Assembly, all resolutions and amendments should be duly proposed and seconded and accurately minuted.

9. Office-bearers should give photocopies of the relevant paragraphs of the Code to their members (both existing members and new members as they join) and update them as necessary. It may occasionally be necessary to furnish other documents as well, eg Cy Pres schemes or government consultation papers, but this will usually be to a specialist sub-committee. If a contentious issue is coming before the whole Board, a short, user-friendly summary with relevant quotations should be prepared.

10. Advice on reports to Assembly is given in other circulars from the Clerk, but Board Conveners and Secretaries can perform a useful function in collecting and editing Committee reports and resolutions, making sure that they will be clear to the general reader and are no longer than necessary.

The Civil Law

11. While recognising the need to preserve the ethos of the Church, particular attention needs to be paid by members, and particularly by the Conveners and Secretaries of the relevant Boards, to subjects like finance, property, contracts, interviewing techniques and employment, both in the interest of a proper and fair process and as these could well involve the Church in time consuming and costly proceedings in civil courts or tribunals.

Employment

12. In 1997 the General Assembly designated a number of Boards as Employing Agencies of the Church (see Minutes 1997 p 79 res 7 and 8), with power to employ “field staff” in their own name. (The Board of Finance and Administration recruits all administrative staff for the Employing Agencies in Church House under the same terms and conditions of employment). It is essential that good practice is followed in the advertising of posts, the selection of candidates and the issuing of terms and conditions of employment. It is also essential that the chair-person of the selection panel is experienced and trained in fair employment practices and that each member of the panel, if not already trained, avails of such training when conducted in Church House.

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

13. When Board or Committee members are involved in the implementation of disciplinary and grievance procedures they should fully acquaint themselves with the purpose and stages of the procedures and be briefed on fair employment practices. Advice should be sought from the Head of Personnel on the implementation and any necessary briefing.

Property

14. Centrally owned property (other than Church Extension sites) is usually vested in the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as a holding body, while management is a matter for the relevant Board. In the event of the sale or purchase of property the Trustees will require a certified minute of the

Board authorising the transaction and they will then execute the legal documents. It is usually the Estate Agent appointed by the Trustees and the General Assembly's Solicitor who act in such matters, while the Financial Secretary acts as the Secretary for the Executive Committee of the Trustees.

Contracts

15. Certain Boards enter into contracts other than those for employment or property, usually for the supply of goods and services. Some contracts will be purely verbal, eg occasional catering arrangements, but others will involve a formal document. The advice of the General Assembly's Solicitor should be sought unless the contract is similar to one previously approved by him. The signing of the contract should be authorised either by the full Board or by a subordinate body duly appointed by the Board. Similarly the signatory should be the Board Convener, the Board Secretary or other senior person expressly authorised by the Board. In the case of major contracts involving large sums of money enquiry should be made through the Financial Secretary to see if the contract should be referred to the Trustees.

Bank Accounts

16. Boards should not open any bank accounts without the prior approval of the Board of Finance and Administration.

Trustees and Officers Liability Insurance

17. No one (however honest and competent) who is concerned in the management or administration of Church affairs can be complacent. Mistakes are made and they may prove, **personally**, very expensive in terms of the costs of an adequate defence regardless of any ultimate liability to make restitution.

18. Any breach of duty by a Trustee or Officer may result in them being held personally liable, jointly and severally, for any loss falling upon the Church as a result of their own errors or omissions.

19. The Church has therefore put in place a policy of insurance that is designed to protect appointed persons.

20. The policy will provide an indemnity to "the Church" and/or the individual as appropriate against:-

- Alleged wrongful acts
- Fraudulent or malicious conduct of an individual
- Negligence, error or omission, libel or slander occurring or committed in good faith arising out of professional services, as defined.

Travelling Expenses

Mileage Allowance

- An allowance, as approved by the Incidental Fund Committee, (currently 12p or €0.20 per mile) may be claimed for travel to and from meetings at Church House.

- An additional 1p (or €0.02) per mile can be claimed for each additional person travelling in the same car who is also attending the meeting.

Train or Bus Fare

- Second class fares will be reimbursed on the presentation of the appropriate receipts.

Travel over 200 Miles

- Where a member has travelled more than 200 miles **TO** a meeting (one way) a claim may be submitted for twice the car allowance rate. This amount is to cover whatever means of transport has actually been used.

Car Parking

- Where a Committee or Board member attends more than 10 meetings in any one year car parking will be reimbursed on presentation of valid receipts.
- Where such a claim is made, the first claim should be for the previous 10 parking receipts. Subsequent receipts may be claimed on an individual basis per meeting attended.

Honorary Assembly Conveners

- Travelling expenses may be claimed on the same basis as for Board and Committee members.
- In addition other costs incurred in connection with the fulfilment of the duties of the position will be fully reimbursed.

ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

1. We are pleased to report that our credit balance had increased to £266,915 by the end of 2002. This will help alleviate the on-going repairs and renovations, which are extensive.

2. Despite the fact that retail trading in central Belfast continues to be difficult, we experienced a more consistent year of trading, and would record our appreciation of the work done by our letting Agents, Lambert Smith Hampton.

3. It is proving more difficult to let the Assembly Hall, due to competition from other conference centres in the city, but we are more than satisfied with the increased usage of the Minor Hall. Our web site www.spiresbelfast.co.uk is receiving a satisfying number of "hits" from the mainland and this is already resulting in new bookings.

4. As in most Shopping Malls there are difficulties in maintaining a perfect cash flow situation and we actively pursue the collection of overdue rent and service charge. This has necessitated resorting to legal action in one case, but we are confident that all monies will be recovered.

5. The Committee has embarked on extensive and essential repairs and renovations to the walls and roofs of the Church House complex. The total cost of the repairs, including VAT and related professional fees, was initially expected to be £1,040,300. We are pleased that we have been able to secure a grant towards the repair costs from the Environment and Heritage Service which should amount to approximately 20% of the cost. During the course of work on the “PWA Corner” it was discovered that the upper wall was in a dangerous state of repair, and this has been repaired. This will result in more expense, but at no direct cost to congregations, as our cash flow projection shows that the entire project can be paid from income over the course of the next couple of years.

6. We have continued a programme of upgrading and renovating the interior of Church House – carpet has been replaced, better security cameras have been installed, walls and ceilings have been repainted, etc.

7. The debt being pursued in the Republic of Ireland has almost been recovered in full.

8. We are investigating the possibility of providing better office space and conditions in certain areas. We have installed comfort cooling in first floor offices and the possibility of extending this to the rest of the building is under longer-term consideration.

9. Mr Harry Orr, his assistants and the reception staff have, yet again, excelled themselves and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

10. We thank especially Mr Ken Best (Architect) of Gordon McKnight Partnership for his advice and support in what has been a very busy year for him, and we acknowledge the professionalism of our Solicitors, Cleaver Fulton and Rankin.

R I A ALLELY, Convener

INCIDENTAL FUND COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on three occasions during the year.

2. The Incidental Fund Account (including General Purposes Fund) confirms a credit balance in general funds at the year end 2002 of £60,686 and a further £20,849 in restricted funds. The Committee considered the balances to be satisfactory.

3. The Ministerial Development Fund Account confirms a credit balance at the year end 2002 of £304,835. The Committee continues to raise its concern with the Board of Studies and Christian Training in relation to the accumulation of funds in this account.

4. The Special Assembly 2004 Account contains a credit balance of £37,880. The Committee considered the accumulation of funds satisfactory.

5. The Committee reviewed applications for funding and recommends that the following grants be allocated in 2003.

	£
Arrangements	15,000
Inter-Church Relations	52,400
Social Witness	3,000
Youth Board	6,500

PCI Holiday	2,000
Peace and Peacemaking	2,500
Historical Society	13,700
Church and Government	12,200
Board of Studies and Christian Training	3,935
Conciliation Panel	3,000
Public Worship	800
Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities	500
	<hr/>
	£115,535
	<hr/>

6. The cost of the overlap period for the Clerk and Clerk-Designate has now ended. The Incidental Fund Committee has agreed from 2003 to cover the printing cost of Report, Minute and Account books required for the General Assembly. Previously Board and Committees contributed approximately £11,000 towards this cost.

7. The Committee recommends that the assessment be maintained at 4.75p/£ for the Incidental Fund Account and at 0.25p/£ for the Special Assembly 2004 Account.

8. Thanks are recorded to all who have served in the Incidental Fund Committee and also to members of staff at Church House for their help during the year.

M FITCH, Convener

FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

1. The work of the Financial Secretary, Clive Knox, and his staff is greatly appreciated by the members of the Committee. The quality and timeliness of the information provided continues to improve.

2. Developments in the field of personnel management and personnel policy are also ongoing and, for this, thanks are due to the Head of Personnel, Eileen McClenaghan.

3. Steps have been taken to provide advice and guidance to Congregations on personnel matters, recognising the increasing number of staff employed at congregational level and the problems that can arise as a result. Discussions are in progress with an external provider and proposals will be brought forward in due course.

4. Statistical and financial data for 2002 are summarised in the appended tables, together with comparative figures for the preceding year.

5. The headline statistics since 1975 are shown by way of line graphs and indicate that the decline is continuing.

6. The givings to specified sources by contributing family since 1996 are shown by way of line graph and indicate that they are rising at a higher rate than overall specified sources, reflecting the faithfulness of our contributing families.

DAVID LAMB, Convener

TABLE ONE

PERSONS AND AGENCIES

	2001	2002	Increase	Decrease
Retired Ministers	209	210	1	
Ministers in Active Duty	415	404		11
Retired Missionaries	4	4		
Missionaries in Active Duty	75	75		
Total Ministers and Missionaries	703	693		10
Licensures	4	3		1
Congregations	560	555		5
Total Families	113,719	113,309		410
Persons of All Ages	279,961	276,117		3,844
Contributors to FWO or Stipend	93,324	92,233		1,091
Baptisms	2,023	1,971		52
Admitted to Lord's Table for First Time	1,744	1,959	215	
Communicants	117,174	115,478		1,696
Attended at Least One Communion during year	75,048	73,805		1,243
Ruling Elders in Kirk Session	7,230	7,158		72
Number on Rolls in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes	32,098	30,905		1,193

TABLE TWO
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

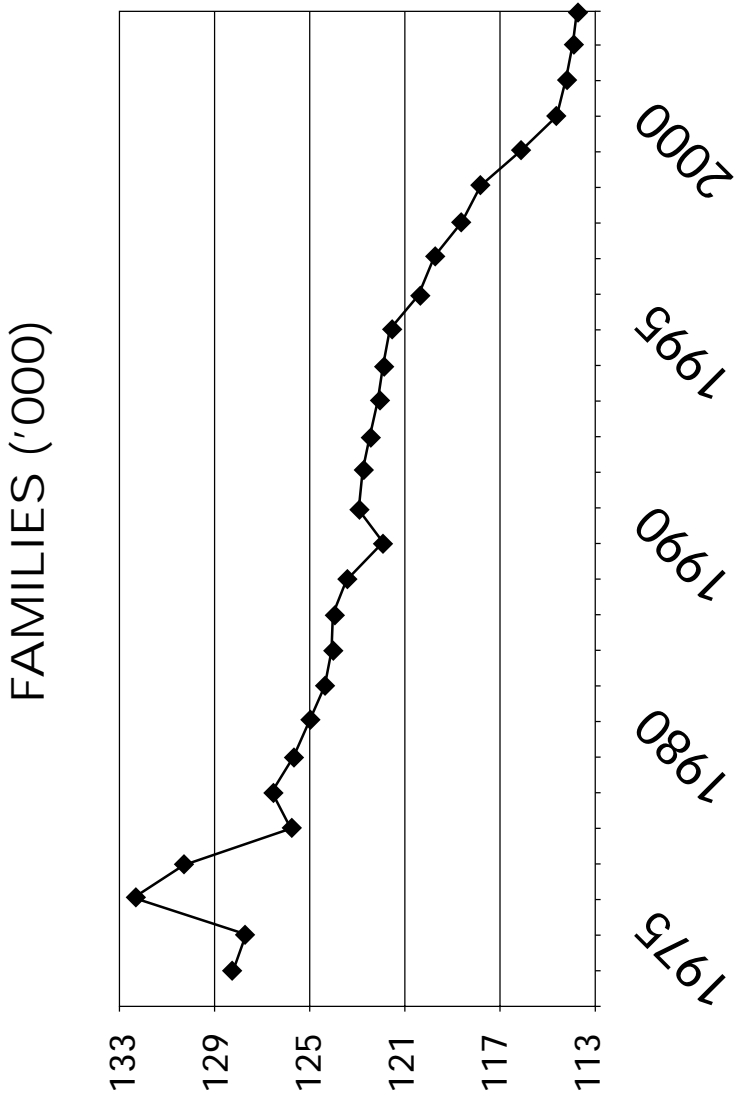
	2001		2002		% Difference	R. of I.
	£	€	£	€		
Specified Sources	23,187,810	1,740,200	24,476,245	2,070,623	N.I.	19.0%+
Building Fund etc.	10,561,315	962,687	11,250,671	1,012,072	5.6%+	5.1%+
“For Others”	5,868,001	433,976	5,912,793	414,320	.8%+	4.5%—
Raised from other sources	4,304,776	805,043	4,443,959	963,049	3.2%+	19.6%+
Bequests etc.	3,369,850	278,804	5,442,336	207,295	61.5%+	25.6%—
Total Receipts	47,291,750	4,220,710	51,526,004	4,667,359	9.0%+	10.6%+
Total Receipts Less						
Bequests etc.	43,921,900	3,941,906	46,083,668	4,460,064	4.9%+	13.1%+
Bequests	798,229	53,183	813,754	49,505	1.9%+	6.9%—

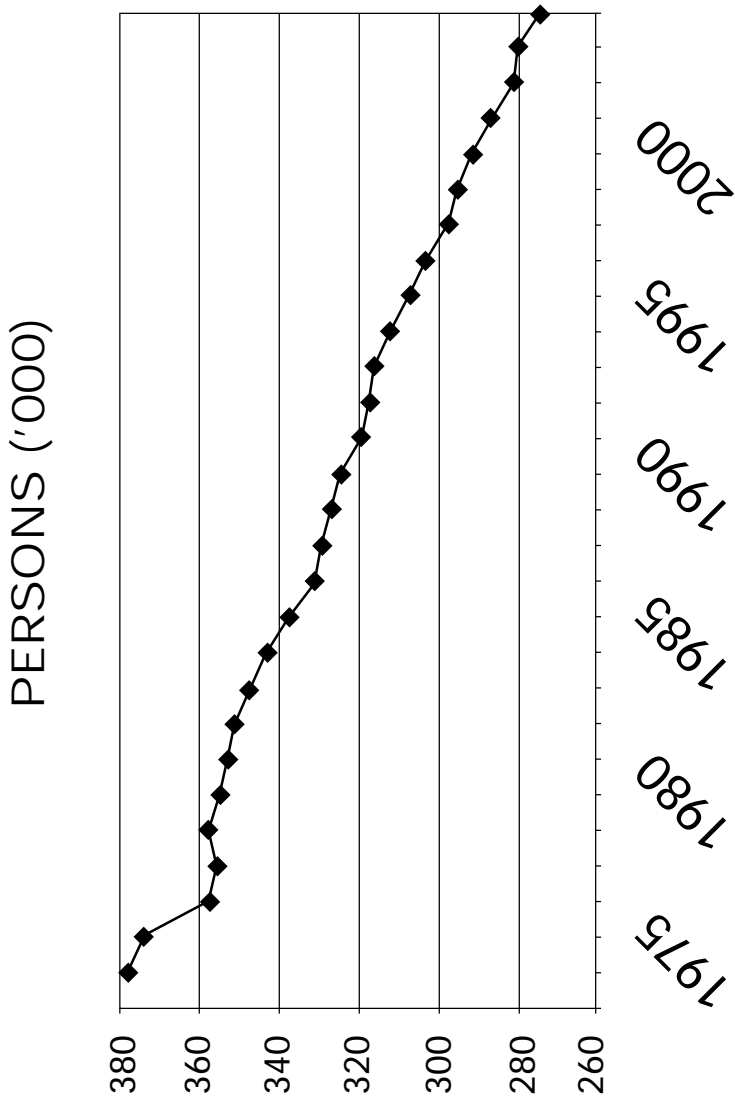
TABLE THREE
CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE

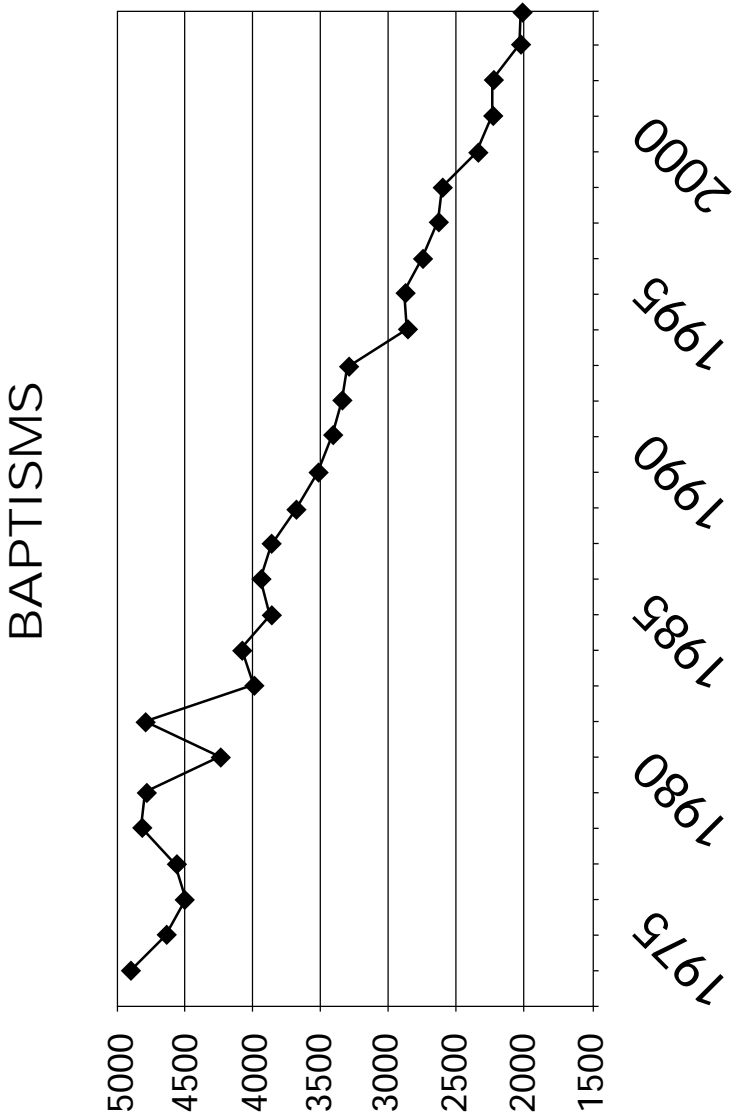
	2001		2002		% Difference N.I.	R. of I.
	£	€	£	€		
Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others	12,458,969	1,043,702	12,928,289	1,126,224	3.8%+	7.9%+
Payments under Assembly Assessments	4,704,809	384,640	4,830,808	410,752	2.7%+	6.8%+
Building, Repairs, etc.	11,069,309	975,763	13,483,863	1,026,870	21.8%+	5.2%+
United Appeal Schemes	2,748,905	155,501	2,895,737	171,943	5.3%+	10.6%+
Supplementary Schemes						
Other Religious and Charitable Objects	3,956,479	369,664	3,986,004	446,041	.7%+	20.7%+
General Expenses	6,499,414	742,696	7,261,566	866,691	11.7%+	16.7%+
Total Payments	41,437,885	3,671,967	45,386,267	4,048,521	9.5%+	10.3%+

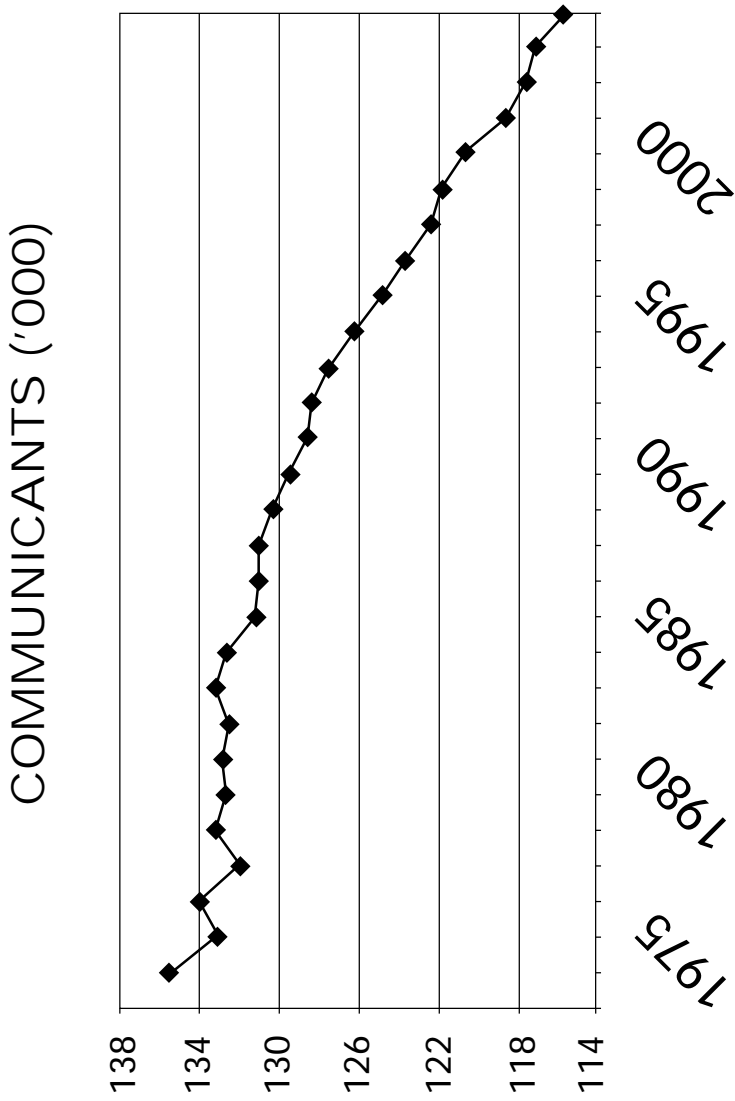
TABLE FOUR
CONGREGATIONAL BALANCES

	Closing 2001		Opening 2002		Closing 2002		% Difference N.I.	R. of I.
	£	€	£	€	£	€		
Credits	25,139,629	2,511,796	25,287,960	2,588,956	26,756,738	2,915,304	5.8%+	12.6%+
Debits	2,734,819	59,050	2,844,275	50,423	2,999,029	63,078	5.4%+	25.1%+
Net Credits	22,404,810	2,452,746	22,443,685	2,538,533	23,757,709	2,852,226	5.9%+	12.4%+

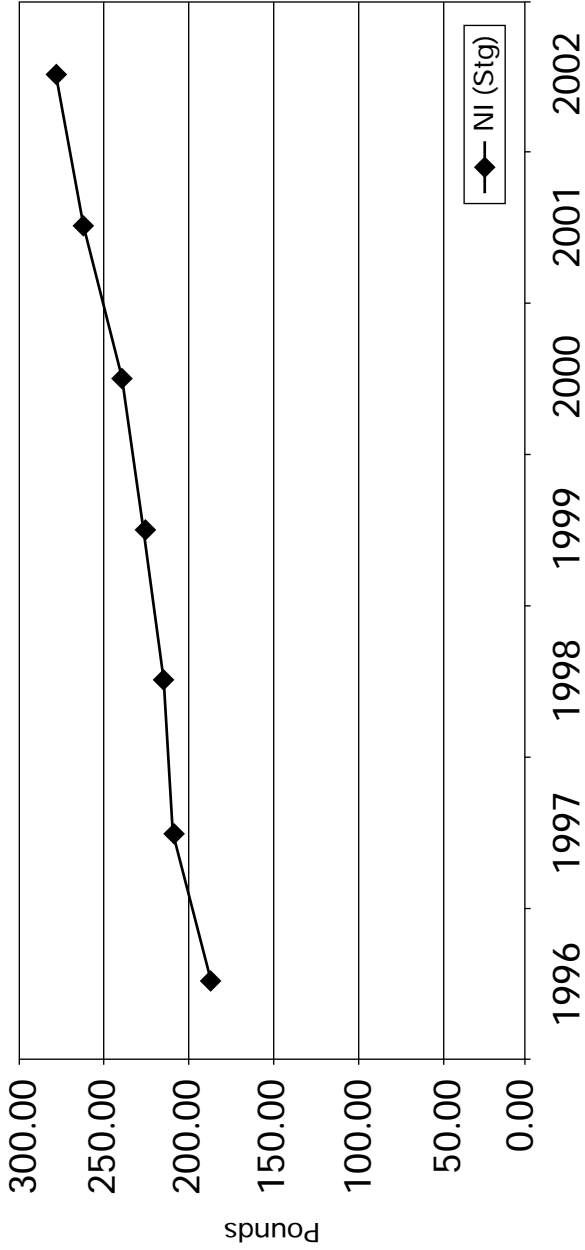








SPECIFIED SOURCES x CONTRIBUTING FAMILY



APPENDIX C

Salary Scales of Executive and Administrative Posts. (The undernoted figures are inclusive of a discretionary 3% increase applied as from 1 January, 2003 following the annual review).

EXECUTIVE POSTS**Scale 1 (£18,411 - £22,032)**

Youth Development Officer
Programme Officer
Payroll & Assessment Manager

Scale 2 (£20,901 - £25,311)

Director of Nightlight
Financial Manager
Assistant Residential Services Manager
Finance & Office Manager
Project Manager, Willowbrook
Buildings Manager & Safety Officer
Youth Centres Director

Scale 3 (£23,484 - £28,803)

Executive Secretary, PWA
Secretary for Education in Mission
Executive Officer, Overseas Personnel
Director of Evangelism
Sunday School Organiser/Christian Education Secretary
University Chaplain
Minister & Superintendent, Kinghan Mission

Scale 4 (£25,968 - £32,649)

Youth Officer
Superintendent of Irish Mission
Residential Services Manager
Head of Personnel
University Chaplain
Senior Financial Accountant

Scale 5 (£28,803 - £35,280)

Director of Ministerial Students
Information Officer
Director of Christian Training

Scale 6 (£30,996 - £37,944)

Deputy General Secretary

Executive Secretary, Overseas Board
Director of Social Service
Clerk-Designate

Scale 7 (£35,280 - £45,618)

General Secretary
Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS

Scale 1 (£9,612- £11,817)

Junior Secretary
Telephonist/Receptionist
Clerical Officer
Handyperson

Scale 2 (£10,953 - £12,798)

Secretary
Telephonist/Receptionist
Information & Technology Assistant
Clerical Officer
Financial Assistant
Copy Writer
Graphic Designer

Scale 3 (£12,393 - £14,460)

Senior Secretary
Deputy Building Manager
Senior Clerical Officer
Wages Clerk
Payroll & Clerical Assistant
Administrative Assistant, Personnel BSW

Scale 4 (£14,154 - £16,425)

Personal Secretary
Administrative Assistant
Personnel Assistant
Departmental Secretary

Scale 5 (£15,564 - £18,096)

Personal Secretary
Computer Controller
Production Manager
Senior Secretarial Assistant
Year Team and Volunteers Co-ordinator
Financial Assistant

Assistant Accountant
Personal Assistant, BSW
Personnel & Administrative Assistant, BSW

Scale 5 (enhanced) (£17,274 - £19,866)

Senior Administrative Officer

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the Guidelines for Board members be approved.
3. That an indemnity be provided for members of Boards and Committees where they have acted in good faith, within authority limits and in accordance with the law.
4. That where the General Assembly is joined in a legal action it shall normally be represented by the Clerk of Assembly and the Financial Secretary, but the General Board may make other arrangements in any particular case.
5. That Ernst & Young, LLP be appointed as auditors for all the Committees, Boards, Trusts, Commissions and Agencies of the General Assembly for the year 2003.
6. That the assessment for the Incidental Fund for 2003 be 5.0p in the £ of stipend.
7. That the Board of Finance and Administration, with its associated working committees for the ensuing year, be appointed in accordance with Par 286 of the Code as follows:

UNITED APPEAL BOARD

Convener: Mr HAL STEWART

Secretary: Very Rev Dr SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

1. The Board wishes to express its thanks to all congregations who supported the United Appeal in the year 2002. We are especially pleased to note that 220 congregations (169 in 2001) were able to exceed their target, in some cases by considerable amounts. The Board is also pleased to report that the Appeal for 2002 was £46,128 over target (£1131 short in 2001). This tremendous result was achieved in spite of the fact that 28 congregations with a target of £47,299 (37 congregations in 2001) failed to make a return in time to be included in the accounts for 2002. We are however pleased to note the continuing trend by congregations and treasurers to endeavour to file their returns in good time. Readers will also note the inclusion in the accounts for 2002 of contributions totalling £78,348 in respect of the year 2001.

2. The Board was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants for the year 2002.

3. The requests for grants for the year 2004 were 22% higher than the amounts allocated to boards and agencies in the year 2003. After examining the budgets and accounts of each agency and interviewing representatives where necessary we have been able to reduce the amounts requested. In addition where in previous years we requested an addition to the target to cover contingencies this year we are able to release £100,00 from reserves. The net effect of all these adjustments is a target for the year 2004 as set out in Schedules III and IV of £2,967,600 which is 5.38% higher than the previous year.

4. Following our decision last year to take account of Specified Sources of Income when setting Presbytery Targets, 20% of the target for 2004 will be assessed in this way leaving 80% still based on contributing families. Over a five year period we intend to move to a position where 50% of our Target will be allocated on the basis of Specified Sources leaving 50% as to Contributing Families. We would also commend this basis to Presbyteries when setting congregational targets.

5. In the year 2000 the Board commenced a process of paying grants to agencies on a more timely basis. This process moved over three years from 10% quarterly to 15% quarterly and finally last year to 6% monthly (72% for the year). For the year 2003 we propose to move to paying 7.5% of grants each month (90% for the year) leaving only 10% delayed until the final accounts of the Board are prepared. This continuing improvement in the cash flow of agencies will further reduce their need to hold large sums of cash or to borrow from central funds, thereby reducing their interest costs.

6. The payment of grants to agencies on a timely basis has only been possible as a result of the build up of the capital of the Board. Ideally we would wish to be able to release part of this fund over a period of years to reduce the target set each year. We appreciate the efforts so far by some congregations to forward monies on a timely basis. Some have moved to monthly envelopes and

other to standing orders. However last year 64% of the target was received after the end of November and some too late to be included in the accounts for 2002. We would again encourage congregations to forward monies on account as soon as these are available.

7. Mr Stephen Lynas continues to serve us well in the production of the Spring and Autumn editions of the "United Appeal Briefing". Accepting that there are many demands on his time every effort is made to have these available at the end of January and August each year. The "Briefings" are undated and can therefore be distributed by congregations at times most suitable to them. The Board will continue to consider how best it can improve its literature, and educate and encourage members to improve their contributions to the United Appeal. Comments and suggestions, preferably in writing, would be welcomed by the convener.

SCHEDULE I

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2001	Specified Sources 2001 £	United Appeal 2003 £
Ards	9,992	2,435,778	299,691
Armagh	4,035	1,179,262	123,293
Ballymena	7,846	2,219,993	238,892
Belfast North	6,871	1,514,148	204,216
Belfast South	3,845	1,212,851	118,521
Belfast East	8,914	2,300,885	268,842
Carrickfergus	5,978	1,352,759	178,086
Coleraine	4,598	1,347,456	140,537
Derry & Strabane	3,584	890,274	107,688
Donegal	1,291	284,663	38,373
Down	4,723	1,044,456	140,417
Dromore	5,331	1,416,899	161,255
Dublin & Munster	1,211	452,048	38,142
Foyle	2,987	648,311	88,663
Iveagh	3,667	1,041,621	111,698
Monaghan	1,001	238,539	29,960
Newry	2,708	838,570	83,292
Omagh	2,540	662,680	76,688
Route	3,632	892,381	109,016
Templepatrick	4,580	1,142,065	137,665
Tyrone	3,965	1,151,320	121,065
	93,299	24,266,959	2,816,000

90% of the allocation for 2003 has been based on contributing families and 10% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to sterling on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2001 of 1.27.

SCHEDULE II

	Requested	Proposed
	2003	Grant
	2003	2003
	£	£
Home Mission.....	50,000	50,000
Irish Mission	330,000	330,000
Education Board	195,000	195,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	190,000	190,000
Youth Board.....	175,000	170,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	9,000	9,000
Guysmere Centre	9,000	9,000
Lucan Centre.....	15,000	15,000
Social Witness Board.....	120,000	115,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee ..	6,000	6,000
ADE Committee	15,000	9,000
Thompson House	15,000	11,000
PCI Enterprises	10,000	5,000
Carlisle House.....	15,000	15,000
Residential Trust	30,000	15,000
Kinghan Mission.....	47,500	45,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	15,000	5,000
Overseas Board.....	960,000	930,000
Department of Communications.....	240,000	225,000
Union Theological College.....	308,000	298,000
Chaplains Committee	9,000	9,000
	2,763,500	2,656,000
Contingencies		160,000
	2,763,500	2,816,000

SCHEDULE III

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2002	Specified Sources 2002 £	United Appeal 2004 £
Ards	9,839	2,581,997	312,706
Armagh	3,915	1,240,627	129,338
Ballymena	7,868	2,377,831	257,272
Belfast North	6,601	1,617,538	207,154
Belfast South	3,752	1,259,842	125,585
Belfast East	8,492	2,419,690	274,298
Carrickfergus	5,856	1,436,803	183,816
Coleraine	4,633	1,420,459	151,960
Derry & Strabane	3,579	939,228	113,749
Donegal	1,286	327,988	40,654
Down	4,788	1,116,087	148,941
Dromore	5,227	1,511,337	169,342
Dublin & Munster	1,264	597,692	46,297
Foyle	2,943	665,830	91,084
Iveagh	3,672	1,092,257	119,667
Monaghan	985	255,603	31,239
Newry	2,697	870,419	89,462
Omagh	2,593	702,111	82,910
Route	3,696	952,066	117,057
Templepatrick	4,583	1,198,233	145,556
Tyrene	3,964	1,193,494	129,513
	92,233	25,777,132	2,967,600

80% of the allocation for 2004 has been based on contributing families and 20% on Specified Sources. Specified Sources for congregations in the Republic of Ireland have been converted to euro on the basis of the average exchange rate for 2002 of 1.5917.

SCHEDULE IV

	Requested 2004 £	Proposed Grant 2004 £
Home Mission.....	300,000	300,000
Irish Mission	275,000	225,000
Evangelism & Divine Healing.....	50,000	50,000
Education Board	265,000	235,000
Students Bursary Fund.....	393,000	393,000
Youth Board.....	274,000	270,000
Rostrevor Centre.....	6,500	6,500
Guysmere Centre	9,000	9,000
Lucan Centre.....	15,000	0
Social Witness Board.....	85,000	80,000
Social Issues & Resources Committee..	5,000	3,000
ADE Committee	18,000	15,000
Thompson House	5,000	2,500
Carlisle House.....	15,000	15,000
Residential Trust	5,000	2,500
Kinghan Mission.....	70,000	65,000
Marriage & Family Project.....	1,000	1,000
Shankill Road Mission.....	20,000	2,500
Overseas Board	950,000	950,000
Department of Communications.....	176,000	164,000
Union Theological College.....	281,000	265,000
Chaplains Committee.....	13,600	13,600
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,232,100	3,067,600
Allocation from reserves		(100,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,232,100	2,967,600
	<hr/>	<hr/>

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the United Appeal for 2004 be as set out in Schedules III and IV.
3. That the United Appeal Board for the ensuing year be appointed in accordance with Par 287 of the Code as follows:

BOARD OF MINISTRY AND PENSIONS

Convener: Rev D S GRAHAM

1. It was with regret that the Board learned during the year that Rev Derek Boden had decided to resign as Co-Convener of the Retirements and Pensions Committee. Since he was appointed in 1999 he has made a significant contribution to the work of the Committee and the Board. We warmly thank him for his services. We are also indebted to Mr John Millar for his willingness to continue as sole Convener.

2. Rev Leslie Casement was appointed as Co-Convener of the Retired Ministers House Fund in 1997, but in view of his nomination as Convener of the Board he has decided to submit his resignation as Convener of the Committee. We thank him for his input into this work and for the caring and yet professional way in which he handled the business of this Committee. He has earned the gratitude of the Board and of the many beneficiaries of this Fund.

3. The Board has continued to implement the decisions of the 2001 Assembly with regard to the Tyrone Memorial and, after having heard a number of views, made certain alterations in an effort to “fine tune” the application of the legislation.

4. The Board has continued to investigate the possibility of introducing a Fund for the Prolonged Disability of Ministers. The proposals are included in this report.

REV D S GRAHAM

Rev Leslie Casement writes:

1. Rev Selwoode Graham has been Convener of the Board for the past six years, and it was with regret that the Board learned of his resignation in view of his impending retirement.

2. During his convenership a number of important changes took place, including the implementation of the Tyrone Memorial and the setting up of the fund to support ministers with long term disability problems.

3. The assessments paid by congregations to the Central Ministry Fund also decreased significantly during his term of office. In these matters in particular, and in the work of the Board in general, his experience of church affairs and his knowledge of financial matters were of great benefit. His calm and unflappable nature enabled him to guide the various committees through many difficult questions with relative ease.

4. We will miss his efficient conduct of the meetings of the committees, his wise advice, and not least the brevity and succinctness of his reports. We thank him for his work, and wish him well in what we hope will be a long and satisfying retirement.

CENTRAL MINISTRY FUND COMMITTEE

1. At the end of the year, the CMF had a retained balance of £2,911,900, a small increase on 2001, despite a further reduction in the level of assessment.

2. The Basic Ministerial Minimum for 2003 has been increased by 4% to £17,700, rising to £20,355 after 30 years service.

3. The CMF is proposing a significantly reduced assessment rate of 17p in £ of stipend in view of the proposed introduction of the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund, which it is anticipated will require an assessment of 4p in £ of stipend in its initial year. While CMF should not suffer adversely as a result of this significantly reduced CMF assessment during 2003, it is expected that it will need to revert to a higher rate in subsequent years.

4. The following increases were set by the Board under the Tyrone Memorial scheme:

£0 – 20,355	4%
£20,356 – 25,000	3%
£25,001 – 30,000	2%
£30,001 – 35,000	1%
£35,001 and over	0%

5. The following recommendations were approved by the Board for 2003:

	2003	2002
(a) Ministerial Minimum	£17,700	£17,040
After 5 years service	18,144	17,472
After 10 years service	18,585	17,892
After 15 years service	19,026	18,324
After 20 years service	19,470	18,744
After 25 years service	19,911	19,176
After 30 years service	20,355	19,596
(b) Family Grants 2003	N Ireland	Rep of Ireland
Birth to 10 years	£260	€750
11-15 years	400	1,200
16+At school	600	2,200
At university	2,000	3,800
Bands for joint incomes:		
Reduction £1 for every £5	£20,485-27,555	€32,775-44,085
Reduction £1 for every £2	27,555+	44,085

(c) The grant in respect of any child who is 16 years+ falling into category (b), and who is in receipt of a maintenance or training grant shall be reduced by £1 for every £1 by which such grant or other sponsorship or scholarship exceeds £1,000.

(d) The amount a minister may earn, apart from congregational work, without the augmented grant being affected shall be £3,100 under Par 316(2)(d)(i) of the Code or £1,900 under Par 316(2)(d)(ii). The maximum under the above paragraphs shall be £3,100.

- (e) Bequests: A minister may receive up to £1,050 per annum from bequests received during his/her ministry without grants being affected.
 - (f) That in reckoning augmentation for 2003, the CMF shall not take account of a sum not exceeding the annual bonus, being income from the Commutation, Sustentation and Central Ministry Funds. Code Par 316(2)(e).
6. The Committee has continued to monitor the financial concerns expressed by ministers serving in the Republic of Ireland, concerns arising primarily from fluctuating exchange rates and higher inflation/cost of living levels. After careful consideration of all the matters involved, the Committee agreed on the payment of a Euro Differential, the level of which would be set annually by CMF. The differential for 2003 was set at €1,000.

J HUTCHESON, R J A BELL, Co-Conveners

COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENTS AND PENSIONS

WIDOWS OF MINISTERS FUND

1. The Assessment for 2002 was 7.75p in the £ of Stipend and the Fund showed a surplus for the year of £157,545 and a retained balance of £367,638.

2. The Board approved the following recommendations for 2003.

- (a) Widows' Pension - £4,425
- (b) Widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension - £4,425 plus £475
- (c) Widows not in receipt of Northern Ireland State Pension or PWFA - £4,425 plus £500
- (d) Widows whose husbands were not eligible for Northern Ireland State Pension - £4,425 plus £3,926*.

*2003/04 rate not yet announced by Government

3. If the Overtures anent Pars 326(1)(b) and 326(1)(c), having lain on the books for one year, are enacted as rules of the Church, benefits will be calculated on 27.5% of the Basic Ministerial Income from 1st July, 2003. The Widows' Pension quoted above at £4,425 will become £4,867.50.

4. Following the decision of the CMF Committee to introduce a Euro Differential of €1,000 per annum for 2003 the Board agreed that:

- (i) monthly payments should be converted from Sterling to Euro at the rate used by CMF in paying Stipends to the Republic of Ireland.
- (ii) a Euro Differential should be applied to payments from RMF and WMF based on the percentage that the CMF Euro Differential (€1,000) is of the current Basic Ministerial Minimum.
- (iii) those in receipt of amounts which were retained on a 'no worse off' basis after the reduction of the Euro Differential to nil in 2001, will not

receive a Euro Differential unless it is to their benefit to discontinue the old Eire Differential and receive the Euro Differential instead.

Presbyterian Widows' Fund Association

All ministers join this Association at ordination.

The annual membership subscription remains at 1.0% of the Basic Ministerial Minimum for active ministers and 0.2% for retired ministers. An additional 0.1% is charged to ministers not serving under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Membership provides an annuity to widows, which is presently £1,164 per annum.

RETIRED MINISTERS' FUND

1. The Assessment for 2002 was 11p in the £ of Stipend and the Fund showed a surplus of £145,234 for the year and a retained balance of £693,521.
2. The Board approved the following recommendation for 2003.
 - (a) Basic Retirement Allowance - £8,850
 - (b) Supplemental Grant for those living in the Republic of Ireland with no State Pension – currently £6,276 (married), £3,926 (single) (2003/04 rates not yet announced by Government).
3. See Par 4 under Widows of Ministers Fund above.

MINISTERS' PENSION SCHEME (1978)

1. The Trustees Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 2002 are included in the published accounts.
2. The Trustees awarded a discretionary increase of 1% on pensions in payment (pre 1997, in excess of the guaranteed minimum pension) for the year commencing 1st April, 2002.
3. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire by Presbyteries: Revs James Brogan (Clontarf, Ormond Quay & Scots), Samuel Robert Conkey (Raffrey), Thomas Crawford Ballentine (Grange), Samuel James Gray (Faughanvale and Gortnessy), David Irwin (McCracken Memorial), Robert Lockhart (Elmwood), James McGregor (Donemana), Samuel John Millar (Hazelbank), George Moffett (Tullycarnet), Thomas Pollock (Randalstown), Joseph Thompson (The Mall, Armagh) and Denis Raymond Whitley (Kirkpatrick Memorial).
4. Unanimous approval was given to Rev F A C Wilson (Armagh Road, Portadown) to retire on 31st December, 2002, on the grounds of ill-health.

PROPOSED MINISTERS' PROLONGED DISABILITY FUND

1. The Church has, on occasions in past years, examined the possibility of providing a Fund or insurance to provide some measure of assistance to those Ministers forced to give up their work due to prolonged sickness or disability. Regrettably, whilst the need was acknowledged, it was never considered to be affordable.
2. In early 2000, the Board of Ministry and Pensions decided that the absence of some specified level of support should be re-examined and set up a

Working Party to do this.

3. This has been a long drawn out exercise as we sought to address conflicting issues; one to provide a vehicle for support and the other to ensure that we would only make proposals where costs would be manageable.

4. After long consideration and debate, the Working Party decided to propose an in-house Fund rather than an insured scheme. This will allow more flexibility on costs and benefits and proposals for benefits are at levels that can be adjusted in the light of experience.

5. **The Board is now proposing that a Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund should be established.**

6. Some of the features of the proposed Fund are as follows:-

(i) Benefits shall be paid from the Fund at the absolute discretion of PCI and will be available to approved eligible Members of MPS (1978), including Licentiates, Ministers who are Missionaries and College Professors.

(ii) The Fund's finances will be raised by a new Assessment. If the General Assembly agrees to establish the Fund and approves its Rules, there will be a proposal to fix an Assessment to the Fund for 2003 of 4 pence in the £ of Stipend. There will be a corresponding reduction of 4 pence in the £ in the proposed CMF Assessment.

Consideration was given to a contribution being sought from Ministers but in view of the desire to retain flexibility in the levels of Benefits, especially in the early years, it was decided not to seek such a contribution at this stage.

(iii) Benefits will be:

(a) an annual flat rate benefit, payable monthly, and fixed by the Board on the recommendation of the Committee on Retirements and Pensions. For 2003, the Board has fixed the level of Disability Benefit at £9,000 per annum. Ministers in the Republic of Ireland may receive in addition a sum equal to the UK Incapacity Benefit less any money received in respect of the incapacity from the UK or Irish Governments

(b) the payment of contributions (the Church's and the Ministers') to MPS (1978) on a notional amount (initially, probably the Basic Ministerial Minimum) to be fixed by the Board on the recommendation of the Committee. The Board has fixed this for 2003 as the Basic Ministerial Minimum ie £17,700 per annum. This will ensure that the beneficiary will continue to accrue pension and have Life Assurance Cover whilst qualifying for benefits.

The Benefits will apply until age 65 or, in certain cases set out in the Rules, an earlier date. Ministers retiring early will not be able to receive benefits from the Fund.

Proposals of Benefits will be presented to the General Assembly.

(iv) The Fund is aimed at **prolonged** sickness or disability and benefits will only come into consideration after the Minister resigns and is received as Minister without Charge under the care of a Presbytery.

(v) Benefits will only be paid after a deferred period of at least 12 months.

- (vi) All ministers contributing to MPS (1978) at the commencement of the Fund will be eligible to apply for benefits. Discussions are taking place with appropriate Conveners re the introduction of proposals requiring prospective students, returning Ministers and Ministers from other churches to be subject to appropriate medical examination before acceptance into PCI.
 - (vii) Claims for benefit and ongoing payments of benefit will be subject to medical evidence and examinations.
7. The above points **give an indication only** of the provisions of the Fund. For full details and procedures refer to the Proposed Rules set out below in Appendix A.
8. In February, 2003 the General Board considered these proposals and gave approval in principle to the Proposed Rules of the Fund.

J MILLAR, Convener

APPENDIX A

Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund

RULES

The provision of benefits under these Rules, and their alteration and withdrawal, are entirely at the absolute discretion of the Board of Ministry and Pensions (the Board) of the General Assembly (the Assembly) acting by the Committee on Retirements and Pensions (the Committee) or such committee or officers as the Board, with the approval of the Assembly, may determine; and, on appeal at the absolute discretion of the Judicial Commission.

No Minister or Licentiate who may, in accordance with these Rules, fulfil the criteria to be eligible to benefit shall be entitled as of right to do so.

These Rules are subject to the absolute discretion of the Board and, as the case may be, on appeal to the absolute discretion of the Judicial Commission, and should be so read and interpreted.

1. The Object

The object of the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund (the Fund) is to provide benefits according to these Rules to approved eligible Ministers and Licentiates of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) who are unable to fulfil their calling due to prolonged sickness or disability.

2. Property and Assets

The property and assets of the Fund shall be held by (and on behalf of) the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (as defined in Par 122 of the Code).

3. Administration

The administration of the Fund shall be supervised by the Board acting by the Committee or such committee or officers as the Board, with the approval of the Assembly, may determine. The expenses of setting up and administering the Fund shall be paid out of it.

4. Resources of the Fund

1. The Fund shall be made up of contributions assessed on congregations and agencies, bequests, donations, endowments and other income received for the benefit of the Fund.

2. Each congregation or agency of the Church shall pay a contribution to the Fund in respect of each eligible Minister and Licentiate serving in that congregation or agency at a rate which shall be determined annually by the Assembly on the advice of the Board.

3. If, in the judgement of the Assembly, the Fund shall no longer be required to meet the object in Rule 1 above, any remaining assets shall be transferred to the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) or, at the request of the Board, such other Fund as the Assembly shall decide.

5. Rules of the Fund

The Rules of the Fund are made by the Assembly and no amendment shall be made unless notice of such amendment has been received by the preceding Assembly and the proposed amendment is thereafter approved by the Assembly.

Amendments required as a matter of urgency may be submitted to the Assembly for adoption as an Interim Act under the Code Par 112(9).

6. Eligibility to apply for Benefits

Ministers or Licentiates who are contributing members of the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) and are under 65 years of age are eligible to apply for benefits from the Fund provided that, due to prolonged sickness or disability, they

- (a) resign or offer to resign any chaplaincy or other remunerated post (Code Par 221(1)); and
- (b) resign and are received as Ministers Without Charge under the care of the Presbytery (Code Par 220(4)).

An individual will cease to be eligible on the earliest of the following:

- (i) the date on which he* ceases to be a Minister of the PCI
- (ii) the date of his 65th birthday
- (iii) the date he dies
- (iv) in the case of an applicant receiving benefit from the Fund, the date he undertakes any other work without the knowledge and written consent of the Committee.
- (v) the date he retires and receives benefits from the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

* Throughout these Rules 'he' and 'his' refers to male or female

BENEFITS

7. Incapacity Benefit

Incapacity Benefit will be paid to approved applicants. The rate(s) of benefit shall be fixed each year by the Board on the recommendation of the Committee: but will not be related to the applicants' previous PCI remuneration or other emoluments.

8. Pension Contributions and Life Assurance Cover

Contributions to the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) will be paid by the Fund on behalf of approved applicants who are in receipt of Incapacity Benefit from the Fund. The level of income upon which the contributions will be based shall be fixed each year by the Board on the recommendation of the Committee made in the light of monies available in the Fund or reasonably to be expected; and

Life Assurance Cover will be maintained under the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) for those applicants in receipt of Incapacity Benefit from the Fund subject to such cover in respect of the particular applicant or claimant continuing to be available at reasonable cost.

9. Deferred Period

1. The deferred period (the deferred period) is one during which no benefit will be payable to an approved applicant. The deferred period will run until the latest of:

- (a) 12 months from the first day of incapacity
- (b) the applicant resigning his charge due to prolonged sickness or disability and having been received as Minister Without Charge under the care of the Presbytery (Code Par 220(4)) and
- (c) the cessation of any payment to the applicant during his incapacity by the congregation, Central Ministry Fund or any other source within the PCI

2. The deferred period will normally be a period of continuous absence, but the Committee may link periods of absence of at least 4 weeks' duration through incapacity from the same cause provided that the deferred period is completed within two years of the commencement of the first absence due to that incapacity.

3. During the deferred period specified in 9.1 above an application may be made for a special arrangement under Code Par 226(b).

10. Payment of Benefit

Benefit becomes payable to an approved applicant on the first day after the end of the deferred period. Benefit is paid in arrears in equal calendar monthly instalments. A proportionate payment will be made for a period of less than a month.

Benefit will be paid to an approved applicant for the duration of the incapacity, as long as the individual remains eligible and is under 65 years of age.

Benefit is payable in pounds sterling to the beneficiary's account in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland. If a beneficiary requests payment in Euro, this will be based on the rates of exchange ruling on the dates of payment.

11. Notification of Changes

Anyone in receipt of benefit from the Fund must notify the Committee immediately of any change in his condition or circumstances, which would, or might, affect payment of benefit. For example, changes that must be notified would include:

- (a) the beneficiary taking on any work or employment whether paid or not
- (b) any change in the beneficiary's health, medical condition or prognosis

12. Proportionate Benefit

If an incapacitated beneficiary, with the written approval of the Committee, is able to carry out any work on a reduced basis, he is entitled to a Proportionate Benefit.

The amount of Proportionate Benefit in any calendar year shall be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(\text{Basic Ministerial Minimum} \text{ minus } \text{Actual Earnings}) \times 100}{\text{Basic Ministerial Minimum}} = \%$$

In this Rule:

'Basic Ministerial Minimum' means the amount set under Code Par 314; and

'Actual Earnings' means all income from any work.

13. Linked Benefit Claims

In the event of a beneficiary returning to work and then being absent from work within 26 weeks of his return, benefit will resume from the date of the resumption of incapacity provided that the Committee is satisfied that both periods of incapacity are due to the same or a related cause.

14. Benefit During Retraining

Where, with the agreement of the Committee, a beneficiary undertakes retraining, benefit will continue to be payable for as long as the Committee at its discretion deems appropriate.

CLAIMING BENEFIT

15. Notification of Absence

An applicant or prospective applicant is required to notify the Committee, in writing, of his prolonged absence, due to incapacity, at least 12 weeks before the end of the deferred period. This will ensure that the process of claiming can commence. No benefit will be paid for any period of time before written notice of the incapacity is received by the Committee.

16. Making A Claim

Claims must be submitted in the form requested by the Committee and must be made at least 6 weeks before the expected end of the deferred period. Benefits arising from approved claims will be paid from the end of the deferred period or the date of approval, if later due to late submission of claims.

17. Evidence Required

An applicant must provide the Committee with all information requested at any time by the Committee to enable his claim to be investigated and/or to be reviewed from time to time. The information requested shall include the following:

1. proof of age
2. medical evidence to substantiate incapacity and continuing incapacity, including:-
 - (a) evidence that the impairment is of sufficient severity and duration to satisfy the test of incapacity in Rule 18
 - (b) evidence that the applicant/prospective applicant is under the continuing care of an appropriate medical practitioner
 - (c) evidence which demonstrates to the satisfaction of reasonable medical opinion that all appropriate treatment options have been thoroughly investigated and appropriately explained to the applicant/prospective applicant.

The applicant or beneficiary may be required to undergo medical examination by such medical practitioners or consultants at such times and places as the Committee may determine. He will provide samples for any tests, including blood and saliva tests, if required. The Committee shall be entitled to accept responsibility for the cost of any medical examination and the costs incurred by the applicant or beneficiary in attending the examination.

Failure to comply with the provisions of this paragraph will entitle the Committee to decline a claim or cease benefits or take such other steps as it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

18. Incapacity

An applicant will be deemed to be incapacitated if the Committee is satisfied that:

- (a) he is unable, by reason of illness or injury, to fulfil the material and substantial duties of his office in the PCI, and
- (b) he is unable, by reason of illness or injury, to follow any occupation for which he is reasonably fitted by virtue of his training, education or experience (whether as a Minister or Licentiate or otherwise).

19. Appeal

Where an application for benefit has been declined or entitlement to an existing benefit has ceased or has been altered, then, notwithstanding the absolute discretion of the Committee, the applicant whose application for benefit has been declined by the Committee, or whose entitlement to an existing benefit has been determined by the Committee to have ceased or to have been altered,

may appeal to the Judicial Commission against the decision of the Committee within 21 days of the date of the notification that the application for benefit has been declined or that entitlement to existing benefit has ceased or has been altered. The notification of appeal shall state the grounds thereof and shall be accompanied by documentary evidence. The Committee and Applicant shall if requested by the Judicial Commission submit any additional documentary evidence. A dissenting member of the Committee may similarly appeal to the Judicial Commission against the Committee's decision within 21 days of the notification of the decision to the applicant.

The decision of the Judicial Commission on appeal shall be final and binding.

20. Administration and other Rules

- (a) Payments in respect of incapacity are made without any admission of legal liability in respect of such incapacity on the part of the PCI or any of its congregations or agencies
- (b) All correspondence in respect of this Fund shall be sent to:
The Committee on Retirements and Pensions
c/o The Financial Secretary,
Church House,
Fisherwick Place,
Belfast,
BT1 6DW.

21. Interpretation

Headings are for ease of reference only.

RETIRED MINISTERS' HOUSE FUND

1. During the year loans amounting to £188,500 were advanced to seven applicants. Most of these are short term loans. The ceiling for loans of less than five years is £30,000. The maximum allowable for longer loans is £25,000. With the reduction in the bank rate in February the interest rate charged by the fund has been reduced to 2.88%.

2. At present a total of 35 borrowers are receiving loans from the fund. In addition we own eleven properties which are rented out to members and a further five are jointly held under the equity sharing scheme.

3. Previously borrowers only paid interest on the sum they had borrowed and this was collected twice a year. This not only restricted the amount of money the fund had to lend but also left the borrower with a large sum to repay on retirement. In January 2003 a new policy was introduced whereby new borrowers will be asked to agree that a minimum of £100 per month be deducted from their salary – for loans of £30,000 the minimum deduction is £150 per month.

4. We are grateful to the late Miss Helen Dick Megaw of Ballycastle who has bequeathed her bungalow to the fund. We hope to gain possession in

the near future and to be in a position to rent it to a retired minister, deaconess, missionary, or other qualified person. We would be keen to hear from anyone in this category who might be interested.

5. The committee expresses its sincere thanks to Mr Ted Jackson who acted as Fund Treasurer for the past number of years. We wish him a long and happy retirement and welcome Mr Ian McElhinny as his replacement. Enquiries about the fund should be made to him in the Financial Secretary's Office or to either of the conveners.

N McLAUGHLIN, L CASEMENT, Co-Conveners

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Central Ministry Fund

2. That the Retired Ministers with pre-1978 service be paid in the current year a special grant, Code Par 315(5), of £15 per month from the Central Ministry Fund.

3. That the rate of assessment for CMF in 2003 be 17p in the £ of Stipend.

Retired Ministers' Fund

4. That the rate of assessment for the Retired Ministers' Fund in 2003 be 11p in the £ of Stipend.

Widows of Ministers Fund

5. That the rate of assessment for the Widows of Ministers Fund in 2003 be 7.75p in the £ of Stipend.

Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund

6. That a Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund be established with immediate effect.

7. That the Rules of the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund as in Appendix A above be approved.

8. That the rate of assessment for the Ministers' Prolonged Disability Fund in 2003 be as follows:

in respect of ministers of congregations 4p in the £ of stipend;

in respect of licentiates and College Professors 4p in the £ of salary;

in respect of ministers who are missionaries 4p in the £ of the Basic Ministerial Minimum.

Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

9. That the rate of assessment for the Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) for 2003 remain at 18.75p in the £ of Stipend as shown in the column 'Stipend paid to Minister' or as fixed by the Union Commission in the case of a vacancy.

General

10. That the resignation of the Rev Derek Boden, as Co-convenor of the Retirements and Pensions Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that Mr John Millar continue as sole Convener.

11. That the retirement of the Rev D S Graham as Convener of the Board be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev J L Casement be appointed in his place.

12. That the resignation of the Rev J L Casement as Co-Convener of the Retired Ministers House Fund Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services, and that _____ be appointed in his place.

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS**Anent Par 326(1)(b) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 326(1)(b) of the Code the words “one quarter” be deleted and that the words “27.5%” be substituted in their place.

Anent Par 326(1)(c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 326(1)(c) of the Code the words “25%” be deleted and the words “27.5%” be substituted in their place.

D S GRAHAM

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED**Anent Par 288(2) of the Code**

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 288(2) of the Code an additional sub-section (f) be inserted as follows:

“(f) administer the Ministers’ Prolonged Disability Fund;”
and that the present sub-section (f) be renumbered as (g).

Anent Par 288(3) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that in Par 288 of the Code an additional sub-paragraph (3) be added as follows:

“(3) Any appeal against a decision of the Committee on Retirements and Pensions regarding the grant, alteration, refusal or termination of benefits from the Ministers’ Prolonged Disability Fund shall be referred within twenty-one days to the Judicial Commission, whose decision shall be final.”

D S GRAHAM

TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Hon Secretary: Very Rev Dr SAMUEL HUTCHINSON
Financial Secretary: Mr CLIVE KNOX

1. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees at their Annual General Meeting held in Church House, Belfast, on 3 April, 2003.

2. The Report of the Executive Committee and the Statement of audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2002 of the following were laid before the Trustees, and were adopted by them:

The General Investment Fund

The Commutation Fund

The Non-Participating Trust Funds

The Magee Fund

The Tops Wilson Trust Fund

The Fire Insurance Trust Fund

The Fortune Mission Bequest

3. Moved by Rev R Cobain, seconded by Mr G McCullagh and unanimously agreed, that the Report and the Statements of Accounts be adopted, signed by three Trustees, inserted in the Appendix to the Minute Book and lodged with the Clerk of Assembly to be laid before the Assembly in June. The Report and the Statement of Accounts were, therefore, signed by Rev James McAllister, OBE, Rev David Clarke and Mr W Cosgrove and lodged in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

4. It was reported that the Executive Committee had also received and examined the audited Accounts for 2002 of the Getty Trust, Union Theological College and The War Memorial Hostel and had accepted these for inclusion in the volume of Accounts to be submitted to the General Assembly. On the proposal of Rev David Clarke, seconded by Rev James McAllister, OBE, this report was received.

5. Three retiring members of the Executive Committee were re-appointed for a further three years, these being Rev W D F Marshall, Mr George McCullagh and Mr John Millar, OBE.

6. Sir Eric McDowell, and Mr David Bell, CB, were nominated members of the General Assembly, according to the provision of the Code Par 97 (h) (iii).

Trust Funds

7. **Mrs A M Davidson Trust:** The total income for 2002 available for distribution is £7,264.65. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Union Theological College	£3,150.00
Church House Repairs	£3,065.65
Youth/Sunday School	£1,050.00
	<hr/>
	£7,264.65

8. **Sir Wm V McCleery Estate:** The total income for 2002 available for distribution is £37,928.94. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Central Ministry Fund	80%
Retired Ministers' Fund	10%
Widows of Ministers' Fund	10%

9. **Estate of Miss Irene Scott:** The total income for 2002 available for distribution is £7,858.59. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

PCI Enterprises	£3,758.59
Church House Repairs	£4,100.00
	<hr/>
	£7,858.59

10. **Estate of Miss Ida Mary McGeown:** The total income for 2002 available for distribution is £5,043.36. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Church House Fabric Repairs	£2,993.36
Learning Disabled Project	
Willowbrook, Coleraine	£2,050.00
	<hr/>
	£5,043.36

11. **Estate of Mr Victor Morrow:** The total income for 2002 available for distribution is £1,067.08. The following recommendation is made to the General Assembly:

Union Theological College	£533.54
Board of Social Witness	£533.54
	<hr/>
	£1,067.08

GENERAL INVESTMENT FUND

12. Declaration of Dividend	15.4.02	15.10.02
Number of shares qualifying	4,902,933	4,750,661
	£	£
Income from investment for distribution and income tax recoverable less administrative charge and Investment Advisers' Fees	628,056	812,819
Dividend per share	12.00p	16.50p

In the year 2002 £28,960 was transferred to the Dividend Equalisation Reserve and the balance on the Dividend Equalisation Reserve at 31 December, 2002 is £665,960.

13. The combined annual Dividend of 28.50p per share is to be compared with 28.00p per share for 2001; 28.00 for 2000; 27.00 for 1999; 25.00 for 1998; 23.50 for 1997; 22.00 for 1996; 21.50 for 1995; 21.00 for 1994; 22.00 for 1993.

14. Valuation	15.4.02	15.10.02
	£	£
Valuation of Investments	30,451,594	26,298,292
Cash on Deposit	1,169,133	(159,778)
Dividend Equalisation Reserve	637,000	665,960
Property and Ground Rents	2,290,000	2,290,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£34,547,727	£29,094,474
	<hr/>	<hr/>
No of Shares Issued	4,924,725	4,752,271
Share Value	£7.0152	£6.1222

General Investment Fund

15. The advisers to the fund have been Cunningham Stewart Ivory, a joint venture between Cunningham Coates and Stewart Ivory. Following a change in ownership of both parties Cunningham Stewart Ivory is to be wound up and therefore will no longer be in a position to provide investment advice. NCL Securities Limited, the owners of Cunningham Coates, have been appointed as an interim measure pending a more detailed review. The Executive Committee of Trustees meet with the Investment Advisers to review investment performance on a regular basis. Rule 21 (3) of the General Investment Fund Scheme, which deals with the Dividend Equalisation Reserve, is being reviewed by the Trustees. A supplementary report may be submitted in Daily Minutes.

Crescent Church Loan Fund

16. Loans totalling £15,333 were approved during 2002. The Committee also reviewed the basis on which interest is charged on loans and agreed with effect from 1 January, 2003 that interest will be calculated at bank base rate on the average balance outstanding over the term of the loan. Prior to this, interest had been charged at 4% on the original amount of the loan over its term.

Pension Schemes

The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension and Life Assurance Plan

The PWA/Overseas Board/Irish Mission Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme.

17. Further to the approval of the proposal at the General Assembly 2002 regarding new Trustees for each Pension Scheme the following have been appointed, with effect from 1st January, 2003, as Trustees of the Schemes.

The Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978)

- Mr Ingram Bill ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Douglas Crowe ⁽¹⁾
- Mr David Dobbin ⁽¹⁾
- Mr John Millar ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Clive Knox ⁽¹⁾
- Rev Leslie Casement ⁽²⁾
- Rev Douglas Armstrong ⁽³⁾
- Rev Mervyn Burnside ⁽³⁾
- Rev Raymond Kelly ⁽³⁾

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension and Life Assurance Plan

- Mr Ingram Bill ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Douglas Crowe ⁽¹⁾
- Mr David Dobbin ⁽¹⁾
- Mr John Millar ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Clive Knox ⁽¹⁾
- Mr David Lamb ⁽²⁾
- Mr Jonathan Kelly ⁽³⁾
- Mrs Linda Wray ⁽³⁾
- Mrs Paula Cooper ⁽³⁾

The PWA/Overseas Board/Irish Mission Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme

- Mr Ingram Bill ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Douglas Crowe ⁽¹⁾
- Mr David Dobbin ⁽¹⁾
- Mr John Millar ⁽¹⁾
- Mr Clive Knox ⁽¹⁾
- Rev Uel Marrs ⁽²⁾
- Mr Nigel Eves ⁽³⁾
- Mrs Marbeth Russell ⁽³⁾
- Mr Nehru Dass ⁽³⁾

(1) 5 "Employer" Nominated Trustees as appointed by the Executive Committee of Trustees

(2) Convener or other nominee of the relevant Board

(3) Member Nominated Trustees

18. Following the introduction of new Trustees for the Ministers Pension Scheme (1978) there will no longer be a requirement for the Pension Liaison Group (Code Par 318(A)(2)(c)).

19. The new Pension Scheme Trustees have undergone training in their responsibilities as Trustees and will be briefed on the rules and procedures of the scheme at the regular meeting of the Trustees.

20. The accounts of the Pension Schemes are included in the book of accounts 2002.

Getty Bequest

21. The allocation of grants out of the income of the Trust Estate of John Getty for the year ending 31 December, 2002 was as follows:

Overseas – Foreign	£2,900
Overseas – Jewish	1,500
Home Mission	3,700
Belfast City Mission	2,900
TOTAL	£11,000

Union Theological College and Magee Fund

22. The Trustees have agreed to provide a loan facility to Union Theological College to assist with the costs of the College refurbishment. A formal legal Loan Agreement has been prepared.

Familybooks Limited

23. The Executive Committee of the Trustees supported the Directors decision to sell the business of Familybooks Limited to Send the Light Limited, a Christian Bookseller with charitable status, who will operate the bookshop within their Wesley Owen division.

24. The transfer of the business is to take place, subject to contract, at the beginning of May and the purchasers are required to take on the existing staff.

25. Familybooks just broke even last year – a profit of £1,211. The Trustees and the Directors realise that it is increasingly difficult for a stand-alone unit to compete effectively, and that it would be better to have the business operated by a dedicated bookseller (who provides about 70% of the books sold by Familybooks), thereby releasing the capital tied up in the business. The Executive Committee of the Trustees is fully supportive of the Directors decision, and is confident that STL, who now operate the 39 Church of Scotland bookshops, will continue and develop the service provided by Familybooks. STL is aware of the Assembly's vision for Familybooks as a mission outreach of the Church (Reports 1985, p 109), indeed their own mission statement is "Advancing the Christian Faith through the Creation, Distribution and Retailing of Christian Resources".

26. The Contract requires STL to operate the bookshop for 5 years (and PCI not to open another Christian Retail Shop for 5 years within a 20 mile radius) and they will negotiate a new 15 year lease, with an option to break after 10 years, of the premises in the Spires. The clause about "another Christian Retail Shop" is not being narrowly construed; the purchaser has agreed that

"PCI may continue to sell Presbyterian Church in Ireland Publications (including but not limited to The Presbyterian Herald, The Christian Irishman, Points for Prayer, Wider World and Church Calendars) and to operate a resource and bookstall facility at Union Theological College."

27. Confidentiality is an important element of a commercial transaction like this but the General Board was advised of developments on 27 February.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the recommendation regarding the Mrs A M Davidson Trust be adopted.
3. That the recommendation regarding the Sir Wm V McCleery Trust be adopted.
4. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Irene Scott Trust be adopted.
5. That the recommendation regarding the Miss Ida Mary McGeown Trust be adopted.

6. That the recommendation regarding the Victor Morrow Trust be adopted.

7. That in accordance with the Will of the late John Getty the following be constituted as the Committee for the “direction and management of the application” of the income from the Getty Bequest:

Very Rev Dr S Hutchinson, Revs Dr D J Watts, J McAllister, OBE, W D F Marshall, R J A Bell, W J Orr; Mr Wilson Ervin, CBE, Sir Eric McDowell, Mr David Bell, CB, Mr A T Ross, Mr John Millar, OBE, Mr J I Bill, OBE.

OVERTURE TRANSMITTED

Anent Par 318(A)(2)(c) of the Code

It is hereby overtured to the General Assembly to enact that Par 318 (A)(2)(c) of the Code be deleted.

SAMUEL HUTCHINSON

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE TYRONE MEMORIAL

Convener: Rev R KELLY

1. The agreed scheme for payment of Ministerial Stipends came into operation on 1 January 2002. Reports from Presbytery representatives indicate broad support for the scheme.

2. Having fulfilled its remit, the Committee encourages the Board of Ministry and Pensions, responsible for the management of the scheme, to continue to authorise stipend increases in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Tyrone Memorial Reports.

3. In a previous report (2001) the ad hoc Committee had suggested that the practice of recording Specified Sources be continued for a few years. As other church agencies are now utilising Specified Sources in their calculations (eg United Appeal), we recommend that congregations be instructed to continue recording their Specified Sources.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That congregations continue to record Specified Sources.
3. That the ad hoc Committee on the Tyrone Memorial be thanked and discharged.

RESIDENTIAL ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Co-Conveners: Rev T D GRIBBEN, Rev J H ROBINSON

1. The Committee continues to work towards organising a Residential Assembly Conference, based at the University of Ulster Coleraine from Monday afternoon 9th August to Thursday evening 12th August 2004, that will faithfully reflect the Statement of Purpose as approved by the General Assembly in June 2001, namely:

'Under the Lordship of Christ, guided by God's Word and dependent upon the Holy Spirit, we gather:

- *to focus afresh on God's greatness and grace, so that we may renew and deepen our relationship with him and with each other*
- *to seek to understand better the challenges of the cultures and the contexts in which we find ourselves*
- *to explore how we can engage in, and equip ourselves for, meaningful worship, authentic fellowship and effective witness in today's world'*

2. The various Working Groups of the Committee meet separately to further their specific remits, reporting to the full Committee as necessary. Plans continue to progress for the mornings of the Conference, with Prof Don Carson from USA giving the main input, helping us to face up to the challenges of our rapidly-changing world as we seek to live out and proclaim the unchanging Gospel. In the mornings we also hope to have input that will help bring a degree of reality to our thinking, exploring how we can engage in, and equip ourselves for, meaningful worship, authentic fellowship and effective witness in today's world. In the evening sessions Rev Martin Allen from Scotland will be our main speaker, tasked with both challenging and encouraging us in our service, as he points us afresh to God and his Gospel.

3. Each day of the Conference will pick up one of the three themes of meaningful worship, authentic fellowship and effective witness. The afternoons are being designed to help us earth what we will be learning in our local contexts. Through stimulating and guided interaction with each other, as well as input from a variety of contexts throughout Ireland, we will attempt to unpack the lessons that Prof Carson has brought to us in the morning sessions.

4. The Conference should be very much viewed as a seamless whole. Delegates will be strongly encouraged to be present at all sessions from Monday evening right through to Thursday evening, ideally staying within the locality if possible. Accommodation will be available on the campus, with the north coast area also providing a whole range of possible options.

Proposed Delegate Selection Scheme

5. The proposed scheme for the selection of delegates has been developed taking account of the capacity of the accommodation at the

University of Ulster, Coleraine, (approximately 1000 persons) and the need to ensure that Congregations have the opportunity to take up the major share of the places, approximately 950. As a consequence of this the number of specified posts whose holders can attend as of right would be minimal. A Congregation which is a single charge is, we suggest, entitled to three delegates; where there are two or more Congregations in a charge the entitlement is to four delegates provided that they come from at least two of the Congregations. Delegates need not be confined to persons in positions of leadership such as the Minister or elders but they must be able to commit themselves to attend all of the Assembly. Care should be taken to match the interests/responsibilities of delegates with the programme content.

There will be a two-stage Registration process. The initial stage will allow Congregations to register for places without having to specify the names of their delegates, which can be done at the later, second stage. Registrations will be dealt with on a 'first come, first served' basis.

In addition to the above, a Congregation with any of the following: Associate Minister, Assistant Minister, Licentiate, Deaconess or full-time paid Youth Worker, may register these persons. The balance of approximately 50 places will be available for designated posts in Church House, Union College, the Irish Mission, Conveners of Boards and Committees, Missionaries on furlough and some miscellaneous categories.

Follow-up

6. The Committee is of the firm conviction that the issues with which we hope to grapple at Coleraine in August 2004, are vital for the well-being of our denomination - a glance at the Statement of Purpose clearly shows this to be the case. With only 1000 delegates able to attend the Conference itself, follow-up is critical if what we do is going to impact the whole Church. We view the Conference as the preliminary event in an ongoing process, where whole congregations will be involved, using the follow-up materials provided. These materials will centre on the discussion-starter videos from the afternoon seminars, together with associated resources and workbooks. We invite members of the Assembly to note the availability of these from the Autumn of 2004, and to plan to put them to use for the benefit of our congregations and the pushing back of the boundaries of the Kingdom of God.

Rev Harry Robinson writes:

7. It was with much regret that the Committee learned of the decision of the Co-Convener, the Rev Trevor D Gribben, to stand down due to pressure of Congregational and other wider Church commitments. He has brought to the Committee, since its inception, wise and visionary leadership and has been unswerving in his determination that the 2004 Assembly Conference and its associated process would be a significant event in the purposes of God to ensure our Church's relevance to and impact upon our rapidly secularising society. The Committee remains indebted to him.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly encourage all Congregations to support the 2004 Residential Assembly Conference, and to prayerfully nominate suitable delegates to represent them.
3. That the General Assembly approve the proposed Delegate Selection Scheme, as outlined above.
4. That the resignation of the Rev T D Gribben as Co-Convenor of the Assembly Conference Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that the Rev I F Smith be appointed in his place.
5. That the ad hoc Committee for the Residential Assembly Conference be reappointed for a further year as follows :

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES

Convener: Rev T D GRIBBEN

1. The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities came into being in June 2001, with the basic remit to :

“Draw up a report on the central priorities for PCI taking account of the views of the major spending Boards of the Church.” (*2001 Reports, page 9 Paragraph B, point 2.2*)

2. Following an interim report to the General Assembly in June 2002, giving an outline of key principles and points that had evolved both through interaction with other Boards and from the Committee’s own deliberations, the Assembly passed the following resolution :

“That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities be encouraged to develop the principles and points outlined in Appendix 1, and report further to the General Assembly in June 2003.” (*2002 Minutes, page 74 Resolution 2*)

3. On the basis that setting priorities and seeking to ensure their delivery are inextricably linked, the General Assembly also passed the following resolution :

“That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities take the lead on bringing proposals to the General Assembly with regard to central structures that will better facilitate the work that has to be done at central level.” (*2002 Minutes, page 74 Resolution 3*)

4. The outcome of the Ad Hoc Committee’s deliberations, in seeking to fulfil these two closely linked remits, is presented to the Assembly in the Appendix, accompanied by the appropriate resolutions. It is the result of much prayerful analysis and debate, and follows useful interaction with representatives of many Boards and Committees, as well as individuals, over the past two years.

5. The first section of the Appendix contains ‘The Basic Principles for Central Work’ and is based directly upon the key points and principles presented to the General Assembly in June 2002. The second section, ‘The Priorities for Central Work’, flows from those basic principles in the light of the Ad Hoc Committee’s consideration of both the current work of Boards and Agencies and also of the needs of our denomination as a whole. The final section, ‘The Structures for Central Work’, is an attempt to refine our central structures to better facilitate the delivery of the priorities outlined in the first two sections.

6. The Ad Hoc Committee has also drawn up an ‘Appraisal Checklist’ and a document entitled ‘Procedures for the Approval of new Posts and Projects’. Both these documents will be available to assist individual Boards and funding agencies in their consideration and evaluation of proposals for new posts, projects or areas of work.

7. The Ad Hoc Committee is clear in the conviction that the central work of PCI primarily exists to resource and support the work of our local

congregations in mission and ministry, and to enable the co-ordination and delivery of mission and ministry which would be beyond the ability of the local congregation. This conviction has been to the forefront of the Ad Hoc Committee's thinking from its very earliest meetings, and underpins all that is presented in the main body of our report and in the attached appendix. To ensure the practical outworking of this may involve hard decisions, but is none-the-less a worthy aim as we seek as a denomination to better fulfil the mission that our Lord has given us in His world.

APPENDIX

Section 1 - The Basic Principles for Central Work

Mission and Ministry – The Gospel Imperative

“The PCI ... exists to love and honour God ... and to enable her members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.”

(Mission Statement, 1992)

Mission and Ministry – The Primary Unit

1. Congregations are the primary local mission unit of the Church.
2. Congregational life should be focussed on:
 - 2.1 Worship and Prayer
 - 2.2 Evangelism and Discipleship
 - 2.3 Fellowship and Pastoral Care
 - 2.4 Spiritual Nurture of Children and Young People
 - 2.5 Understanding of, Concern for and Response to our Community and the World

Mission and Ministry – The Role of the Centre

3. Congregations do not exist in isolation, but as part of a Presbyterian structure for government, mission and ministry and through this as part of the one Church of Jesus Christ in the world.

4. These wider relationships are of the essence of what it means to be Church. Presbyteries and the General Assembly (with its Commissions, Boards and Agencies) exist to resource and support the work of the local congregation in the areas outlined in paragraph 2 above. They also enable the co-ordination and delivery of mission and ministry which would be beyond the ability of the local congregation.

The Five Key Principles

5. The focus of the central administration of the PCI therefore should be:
 - 5.1 To develop, implement and keep under review a strategy for the deployment of human resources, the planting of churches and the assessment of current congregational arrangements. In doing this, human resources take precedence over material resources

and congregational mission and ministry takes precedence over that at Presbytery and Assembly level.

- 5.2 To promote and resource, at home and overseas, worship, evangelism, discipleship, fellowship and service. In this work the concentration should be upon things which only the Church can do, its contextualisation within the communities where the Church is found and the integration into it of youth and children's ministry.
- 5.3 To communicate prophetically and explain clearly the Church's message to our society and the world beyond.
- 5.4 To provide and continually review the administrative and management functions which are necessary to effective denominational mission and ministry at all levels. This will include the development of a broad consensus on how United Appeal money should be apportioned between work at home and overseas.
- 5.5 To assess the efficiency of denominational structures in facilitating the above functions and propose ongoing reforms to enhance their effectiveness.

Section 2 - The Priorities for Central Work

Recognising the importance of all the areas of work carried forward at General Assembly level, on the basis of the Basic Principles outlined, and guided by those principles throughout, the following should be the priorities at the central level of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland over the next 5 to 7 years.

(Note: Although the following are grouped, they are not listed in a specific order of priority.)

1. To develop :
 - 1.1 a strategic overview of mission in Ireland
 - 1.2 different models of mission in Ireland and to identify areas of potential new development
2. To encourage and resource :
 - 2.1 the development of the life of existing congregations through worship, teaching, fellowship and strategic evangelism and social witness within their local communities
 - 2.2 an integrated children's and youth ministry at local congregational level
 - 2.3 the training of local church members for ministry, both directly and through other agencies.
3. To review, evaluate and develop our involvement in mission overseas to ensure that it continues to be central to, and appropriate for, the life of our denomination.
4. To further develop structures to ensure that at all levels the Church communicates effectively, both externally and internally.
5. To encourage all relevant Boards and/or Committees, within their area of expertise, to communicate prophetically and explain clearly the Church's message to our society and the world beyond.

6. To proactively facilitate the ordering and management of the work of the General Assembly to ensure that the policies and priorities of the General Assembly are identified and progressed on an ongoing basis.

Section 3 - The Structures for Central Work

A. Introduction

In fulfilling their role the Boards of the General Assembly might usefully be classified by their main functions, as follows:

1. Mission and Ministry Boards

These Boards exist to:

- 1.1 Encourage, facilitate and resource mission and ministry at local congregational level
- 1.2 Enable local congregations to be involved in wider mission and ministry
- 1.3 Act as a pointer to outside agencies that can assist in these functions
- 1.4 Manage and oversee specific mission and ministry in their areas of responsibility

2. Support Boards

These Boards exist to:

- 2.1 Provide appropriate support to the Mission and Ministry Boards, and to a lesser extent, to Presbyteries and local congregations where applicable
- 2.2 Monitor the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the church's administration

3. Management Board

This Board exists to:

- 3.1 Facilitate the co-ordination, ordering and management of the work done by the General Assembly through the Boards providing functions 1 and 2 above
- 3.2 Ensure that the policies and priorities determined by the General Assembly are adhered to
- 3.3 Oversee specific areas of work, or tasks, assigned to it by the General Assembly

4. Other Boards and Commissions

These Boards exist to:

- 4.1 Oversee the specific tasks or areas of work assigned to them by the General Assembly

B. Towards new Structures for Central Work

1. Mission & Ministry Boards of the General Assembly :

- **Board of Mission in Ireland**
(all current areas of work plus responsibility for resourcing congregational life through worship, teaching, fellowship and evangelism , plus oversight of the work of the Shankill Road Mission) [see notes 1 & 2]
- **Social Witness Board**
(all current areas of work plus Chaplains and Forces Committees) [note 3]
- **Overseas Board**
(all current areas of work plus ‘clearly defined’ World Development) [note 4]
- **“Board of Children & Youth”**
(all current Youth Board areas of work, plus area of work currently covered by the Church Education Committee) [note 5]
- **Board of Studies & Christian Training**
(all current areas of work)

2. Support Boards of the General Assembly :

- **Combined Finance Board** (Finance & Administration and Ministry & Pensions combined)
(all current areas of work of the two Boards) [note 6]
- **Communications** (all current areas of work minus Public Worship) [note 7]
- **United Appeal** (to include some of the remit of the Panel on Overview of Funding) [note 8]

3. Management Board:

- **General Board**
(Church and Government, Inter-Church Relations, Global Concerns, Doctrine, Moderator’s Advisory, Recognised Ministries and Priorities for Mission & Ministry) [notes 9, 10, 11 & 12]

4. Other Boards & Commissions of the General Assembly :

- **Union Commission**
(with general direction and priorities set for the Commission by the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Board of Mission in Ireland.) [note 13]
- **Education Board**
(encompassing the two current areas of State & University Education) [note 14]
- **Nomination Board**
- **Business Board**
- **Judicial Commission**
- **Trustees**

- **Commission on Trusts**

C. Notes on New Structures

Note 1:

It is proposed that the Board of Mission in Ireland will have lead responsibility for resourcing congregational life, in line with the thinking emanating from the Board of Mission in Ireland's own review. The Board will have the task of seeking to assist in the development of the life of existing congregations through worship, teaching, fellowship and evangelism. It will include the current remit of the Public Worship Committee, whilst recognising that particular major items of work may have to be carried out occasionally by a suitably constituted ad hoc committee. Specifically, the work of finalising the production of the new Church Hymnal will remain under the Board of Communications until its completion, and could if necessary be completed by a suitable ad hoc committee.

Note 2:

It is proposed that oversight of the work of the Shankill Road Mission will move to the Board of Mission in Ireland to enable that work to be an integral part of our denomination's central support for mission. For an interim period at least, it is proposed that this work be supervised by a designated Assembly 'Shankill Road Mission Committee' (rather than a Commission) under the oversight of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

Note 3:

It is proposed that the two areas of work relating to chaplaincy that are currently under the General Board be placed under the oversight of the Board of Social Witness. This will not only ease the work-load of the General Board, but it will also enable the expertise of Board of Social Witness to be available to these committees, and a pool of expertise to further develop. In line with the practice in all areas of work, major matters relating to any area of chaplaincy work may, if necessary, be referred to the Church and Government Committee or the General Board.

Note 4:

Recognising that development issues are clearly acknowledged to be part of world mission, it is proposed that the World Development Committee come under the oversight of the Overseas Board, which is accepted throughout our denomination as being our board of world mission. This should be on the basis that World Development will continue to function in the manner agreed by the General Assembly, until the Assembly itself decide otherwise ie through the agencies of Christian Aid and Tear Fund, following the existing guidelines.

Note 5:

It is proposed that the work of the Youth Board and the Church Education Committee, (which largely deals with Sunday School work and related matters),

be amalgamated into a new body. Whilst the name of this new Board has still to be resolved, it will nonetheless enable the central encouragement and resourcing of an integrated children's and youth ministry at local congregational level.

Note 6:

It is proposed that a Combined Finance Board will come into being, with a suitable name to be determined. This amalgamation will both enable expertise to be pooled and will also result in a better use of human resources. A new committee structure for the combined board should be actively considered.

Note 7:

It is proposed that the area of public worship will come under the remit of the Board of Mission in Ireland, (see note 1 above).

Note 8:

It is proposed that the United Appeal Board will have an enhanced role, ensuring that funding allocation enables the agreed priorities of the General Assembly to be progressed.

Note 9:

It is proposed, on the basis of the new structure for General Assembly Boards, that the General Board will have an enhanced role in the future. It will both oversee several important areas of work, including some significant areas of wider mission and ministry, and also have a key management function on behalf of the Assembly. It is therefore envisaged that the General Board's format of meeting etc will need to evolve appropriately as it takes on this wider strategic role.

Note 10:

It is proposed that the existing areas of work covered by the Irish Church Relations and World Church Relations Committees be amalgamated into one Inter-Church Relations Committee, and that this be placed under the General Board.

Note 11:

It is proposed that a new Committee come into being under the General Board, to be known as the 'Global Concerns Committee'. This will encompass the work currently undertaken by the Peace and Peace Making Committee, Race Relations Committee and the Panel on the Environment. It is envisaged that these areas of work may be carried forward by appropriate panels under the Committee, and that the General Assembly would be free to add other related areas to this Committee's remit.

Note 12:

It is proposed that a 'Priorities for Mission and Ministry Committee' come into being under the General Board. This Committee would assist the General

Board in its task of both advising the General Assembly on its priorities and also ensuring that those priorities are adhered to and progressed.

Note 13:

Recognising that our use of all resources should, as far as possible, reflect the priorities for mission and ministry that the General Assembly agrees, it is proposed that the Assembly sets specific priorities for the Union Commission, in its work of overseeing the use of human resources throughout our denomination. Acknowledging the central role of the Board of Mission in Ireland, it should take the lead in bringing to the Assembly recommendations relating to both general direction and priorities in our use of human resources for mission and ministry in Ireland.

Note 14:

Recognising the importance of the issues covered by State and University Education, it is recommended that an Education Board, with these two remits, remain in existence, even in light of the proposal to amalgamate Sunday School work into a new “Board of Children and Youth” (see note 5 above).

D. The Further Implementation of Structural Change

1. It is proposed, in the light of the priorities outlined for our central work and the new structures recommended, that a review of the arrangements within each Board included in the new structures be undertaken, prior to changes being made to the Code. This review should include consideration of the number and size of Assembly Committees, Board Committees and Panels that are required, as well as the clear specification of the remit of such Committees and Panels.

2. In the review of arrangements within each Board, consideration should be given to the need to use human resources efficiently. For instance, a group of people gathered together from across Ireland, whether as an Assembly Committee, a Board Committee or a Panel, can obviously, where appropriate, fulfil more than one remit, with perhaps specific ‘agents’ giving the lead on different, though linked, areas of work.

3. It is proposed that a 50/50 balance be permitted between ‘x-line’ and ‘y-line’ representation on General Assembly Committees. This will ensure that the necessary expertise is available to Committees to enable them to fulfil their remits, whilst at the same time maintaining accountability to their supervising Board. The composition of Board Committees and Panels can be much more flexible, though these bodies should of course always remain accountable to their supervising Board.

4. It is recognised that, even within a Presbyterian structure of church government, a vital component of leadership is that which is given by individuals. To ensure that, on an ongoing basis, priorities are both identified and progressed, there is a clear need to empower such leadership within our structures. Conveners, Secretaries and others with specific responsibilities have to be accountable to their respective Boards or Committees, whilst also having the stated expectation that they are leaders and ideas people.

5. It is proposed, in the light of the priorities outlined for our central work and the new structures recommended, that new arrangements be brought into being to further develop both co-ordination and co-operation between the Boards of the General Assembly. These new arrangements should take into account the vital role both of senior full-time staff, who often serve as Board Secretaries, and also of honorary Board Conveners. The new structures for co-ordination should enable creative leadership and co-operation, whilst of course maintaining necessary accountability. The role of the General Secretary is recognised as pivotal in all of this.

RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Report be received.

Priorities

2. That the General Assembly approve the priorities outlined in the Appendix, Section 2 as the priorities for the central work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the next five to seven years.

3. That all relevant Boards take account of the General Assembly's priorities that are applicable to their area of work, and give precedence to those priorities, during the next five to seven years.

4. That the central funding agencies seek to ensure that, as far as possible, funding allocations enable the agreed priorities of the General Assembly to be progressed.

5. That the moratorium on new posts and projects, approved by the General Assembly in June 2002, be lifted with immediate effect.

Structures

6. That the General Assembly approve the amalgamation of the Youth Board and the Church Education Committee to form a new Board, with the name to be decided by the General Board.

7. That the General Assembly approve responsibility for the area of public worship being included within the remit of the Board of Mission in Ireland.

8. That the General Assembly approve moving the World Development Committee to the Overseas Board.

9. That the General Assembly approve the establishment of an Inter-Church Relations Committee and a Global Concerns Committee under the General Board.

10. That the General Assembly approve the amalgamation of the Board of Finance and Administration and the Board of Ministry and Pensions.

11. That the General Assembly approve the remainder of the new Structures for Central Work, as outlined in the Appendix, Section 3 Sub-Sections A, B & C.

12. That appropriate overtures be prepared by the Clerk of Assembly to enable the necessary changes to be enacted to bring the Code into line with the

new Structures for Central Work, as agreed in Resolutions 6 - 11, and that these overtures be presented, where possible, to the General Assembly in 2004.

13. That, in the interim, the General Assembly authorise the operation of the new structures, agreed in Resolutions 6 to 11, beginning in June 2004.

14. That Presbyteries and Synods be requested to nominate members to Boards in 2004 on the basis of the new structures.

15. That, on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities, the General Board be authorised to act on behalf of the General Assembly to deal with any unforeseen matters relating to the changes in central structures.

The further implementation of structural change

16. That the General Assembly approve the proposals on 'The Further Implementation of Structural Change', as outlined in the Appendix, Section 3 Sub-Section D.

17. That the General Assembly direct the Standing Committee, or other equivalent body, of each relevant Board included in the new structures to undertake a review of the arrangements within their Board as outlined in the Appendix, Section 3 Sub-Section D, and, following approval by their Board, to forward the outcome of that review to the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities, by 31st December 2003.

18. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities co-ordinate and facilitate the progression of the proposals agreed in Resolution 16.

19. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities take the lead in co-ordinating the presentation to the General Assembly of agreed changes to the arrangements within each Board.

20. That the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities be reappointed for a further year as follows:

MEMORIALS TRANSMITTED

Kirk Session of Macrory Memorial re amalgamation	77
Presbytery of Belfast East re Manses	78
Presbytery of Tyrone re the Diaconate	29
Rev L Kennedy-Ritchie re reception as a minister	252

OVERTURES ON THE BOOKS

Par 90(1)	29
Par 95(d)	29
Par 132	210
Par 326(1)(b)	295
Par 326(1)(c)	295

OVERTURES TRANSMITTED

Par 93(2)	29
Par 219(5)(a)	251
Par 288(2)	295
Par 288(3)	295
Par 318A(2)(c)	301

MOTION ON THE BOOKS

Re Shankill Road Mission	212
--------------------------	-----

NOTICE OF MOTION

Re Willow Brook	210
-----------------	-----

INDEX TO REPORTS

Accounts 2002 – Preface	1	Church and Government	31
Alternating Ministries	178	Church Architecture	103
Assessments		Church Education	232
Associate Ministers	75	Church Extension	180
Church Extension	70	College and Magee Management	246
Incidental Fund	275	Communications Administration	101
Licentiates	71	Divine Healing	171
Ministerial Development	248	Doctrine	21
Ordained Assistants	74	Europe and Middle East	144
CMF	294	Evangelism	171
MPDF	294	Finance and Staffing	263
MPSF (1978)	294	Forces	22
RMF	294	Historical Society	102
WMF	294	Home Mission	173
Assembly Boards		Incidental Fund	262
Business	90	Irish Church Relations	121
Communications	98	Irish Mission	169
Education	222	Kinghan Mission	198
Finance and Administration	254	Marriage and Family	200
General	9	Media	100
Inter-Church Relations	118	Ministerial Studies	244
Ministry and Pensions	283	Moderator’s Advisory	25
Mission in Ireland	168	Peace and Peacemaking	26
Nomination	117	Personnel and Planning	76
Overseas	139	Priorities	306
Social Witness	190	Public Worship	102
Studies and Christian Training	240	Race Relations	127
United Appeal	276	Reception of Ministers and Licentiates	250
Youth	213	Recognised Ministries	25
Assembly Commissions		Residential Assembly (2004)	303
Judicial	59	Residential Trust	206
Shankill Road Mission	211	Resourcing Christians for Ministry	247
Trusts	253	Retired Ministers House Fund	293
Union of Congregations	61	Retirements and Pensions	285
Assembly Committees		Social Issues and Resources	207
Addiction and Education Services	197	State Education	225
African, Caribbean and Latin America	146	Tyrone Memorial	302
Arrangements	96	University Education	233
Asia	141	War Memorial Hostel	208
Assembly Buildings	261	World Church Relations	120
Assignment	242	World Development Committee	126
Central Ministry Fund	284	Youth Centres	219
Chaplains	24		

Youth Events	214	(80); WJH McKee (11); B McMillen (12); WS Marrs (86);
Youth Home Mission	217	HW Mullan (84); WD Patton (84); SP Swinn (81); RB
Youth Overseas	218	Thompson (84); WJ Todd (80); JT Williamson (87); NM
Youth Training and Resources	215	Williamson (83); JD Woodside (83).
Asylum Seekers and Refugees	128	Inter-Church Consultative Committee 123
Board Member Guidelines	256	Inter-Church Committee on
Boards and Committees Panel	14	Mixed Marriages 124
Candidates Accepted	248	Inter-Church Committee on NI 16
Child Protection Monitoring	194	Inter-Church Meeting 122
Church Hymnary Trustees	114	Invitations to Opening Night 19
Conciliation Panel	15	Learning Disability 196
Conference of European Churches	120	Licensed
Consultations/Visitations	15	DS Henry (82); PE Linkens (87); NSR Lockhart (82);
Conveners Retiring		BJ McCroskery (80).
DJ Boden (283); J Dunlop (38); DS Graham (283);		Marriage Law Reform 35
TD Gribben (304); S Hutchinson (11); EJ Hyndman (214);		Memorial Record 104
RJ Hyndman (214); TJ McCormick (193); JB Moore (169).		Memorials Transmitted 316
Deaths		Ministers' Pension Scheme (1978) 286
AJ Beattie (86); HC Conn (88); MG Evans (82); JA Fulton		Ministers Prolonged Disability Fund 286
(89); A Gardiner (87); J Girvan (80); HA Hezlett (88); FJ		Ministers without Charge etc 25
Kelly (84); CAM Meldrum (85); DEK Mock (85); JC Parke		Ministerial Development Programme 241
(83); SR Watt (88); WK Weir (85); SE Williamson (88)		Ministerial Minimum 284
Delegates' Reports	92	Mutual Society 175
Environment Panel	119	Nightlight 179
Equality Legislation	37	Notice of Motion 316
Europe Convention	53	Old Age Fund 208
Expenses		Ordained
Inadequate	76	C Ebbinghaus (83); LH Eagleson (85); SD Finlay (80); CK
Travel	76	McDowell (83); WJM Parker (82); CA Reid (86);
Familybooks	13, 113, 300	SJ Richmond (88); DJ Steele (80); A Stewart (86).
Family Grants	284	Overtures
General Investment Fund	298	On the Books 316
Getty Bequest	299	Transmitted 316
Globalisation Responses	164	Overview of Funding 12
Home Mission (PWA)	173	PCI Enterprises 196
Irish Council of Churches	121, 123	Pension Scheme Trustees 298
Indigent Ladies Fund	208	Presbytery Reports 80
Inducted		PWA 186
SC Calder (80); DK McCrory (88)		"Quigley" Review 34
Installed		Recognised Ministries
N Agnew (85); BCG Black (81); J Brackenridge (81); TR		BBC Religious Programmes Producer 99
Buick (87); M Casement (81); NE Dorrans (84); RK Graham		Belfast Bible College 118
(86); TI Harte (81); EJ Hyndman (85); R Love (85); PC Lyle		Mediation Network 193

Restoration Ministries	118	Status of Deaconesses	183
Scripture Union	224	Students' Bursary Fund	243
Religious Education Syllabus	226	Students, Schedule of	245
Remarriage Panel Review	201	Supply Fees	76
Resigned		Synod Reports	80
RN Agnew (88); J Brackenridge (84); TR Buick (88); JM Casement (86); NE Dorrans (88); RK Graham (87); TI Harte (85); BA Hunt (87); EJ Hyndman (84); R Love (85); PC Lyle (83); WJH McKee (87); B McMillen (82); DT Moore (89); WD Moore (85); HW Mullan (81); WD Patton (85); WG Stewart (85); RB Thompson (80); WJ Todd (83); JT Williamson (80); NM Williamson (85); JD Woodside (88).		Synods' Future	14
Retired		Thompson House	195
TC Ballentine (82); SJ Gray (87); R Hornby (86); DC Irwin (85); AMcM Kerr (83); GL McAdoo (83); D McConaghy (81); J McGregor (87); T Pollock (84); RFS Poots (84); F Taylor (89); DR Whitley (86).		Trustees of the Church	296
Retired Ministers Fund	286	VAT Position	255
Social Witness Southern Development	194	Widows' Fund Association	286
Statistics	264	Widows of Ministers Fund	285
		Women's Fund	208
		World Alliance of Reformed Churches	120
		Young Womens Groups	189

ANNUAL REPORTS, BELFAST, 2003