

# GENERAL COUNCIL

## SECTION 1

**Tuesday – 2.30 pm**

Convener: Very Rev Dr RL CRAIG

Secretary: THE CLERK

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On behalf of the General Assembly, the General Council has been conducting its business through eight General Assembly Committees and fourteen Task Groups. The Council has met three times in the past year (October 2017, March and April 2018).
2. In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul, the Apostle, writes that his propose in writing is that Timothy might know “how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household.” In the past year much of the business of the General Council has been an outworking of how the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is to conduct herself in the world in which she currently bears her witness. For an ease of understanding, a general overview of the business of the General Council is presented under three headings although much of this business is overlapping.

#### **PCI and Government Legislation (Data Protection, the Eighth Amendment)**

3. The General Data Protection Regulation has come into force in the UK since last year’s General Assembly; as a consequence a new Task Group was appointed to produce advice and guidelines across all levels of the denomination (see pages 102-104).
4. Within the Republic of Ireland there was much debate on the Eighth Amendment in advance of the referendum which was held on (end of May) 2018. Although there is some divergence between the position of PCI and that of the Eighth Amendment, the Task Group which has been acting on behalf of the General Assembly has recommended that the Eighth Amendment be retained, in preference to its abolition (see page 135).

#### **PCI and Social Changes (Abortion, Transgender, Homosexuality)**

5. The debate on the Eighth Amendment is but one of the several social changes which has shaped the work of the General Council. A new

Task Group has been established to assist an appropriate pastoral response on the pressing matter of human identity (see pages 77-78). Alongside this the Dialogue and Resources Task Group has in the past year continued a pastoral conversation for ruling elders (see page 77).

### **PCI and Inter Church and Inter Faith Discussions**

6. In an attempt to ensure more meaningful relationships with other denominations within the UK, delegations from PCI have met with representatives of the United Reformed Church and have continued contact with the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland (see pages 96-98). Alongside this conversation the Doctrine Committee has considered and reported on two matters of faith and practice. First there is a report concerning the sacraments and those who are same-sex attracted (see pages 84-89); second, there is a report concerning involvement in multi-faith civic events (see pages 89-93).

### **Debate on General Council Business**

7. The report of the General Council to the General Assembly is the longest of the Annual Reports and to facilitate the ordering of business in the Assembly, the General Assembly Business Committee will report in its own right at the beginning and the end of the Assembly (10.30am on Tuesday and 1pm on Friday respectively). As over the past few years, the main General Council report will then be considered in five separate sections, as follows:

#### **Section 1 (2.30pm on Tuesday, 5th June):**

- Executive Summary
- Support Services Committee
- United Appeal Committee
- Guysmere Centre Task Group
- Priorities Committee
- Memorial Record

#### **Section 2 (3.30pm on Wednesday, 6th June):**

- Moderator's Advisory Committee
- Dialogue and Resources Task Group
- Human Identity Task Group

#### **Section 3 (4.30pm on Wednesday, 6th June):**

- Doctrine Committee
- Relationship with other Denominations TG
- Church Relations Committee

**Section 4 (8pm on Thursday, 7th June):**

- General Data Protection Regulation TG
- Engagement and Consultations TG
- Central Prayer Coordination TG
- Use of Congregational Property TG
- Charity Registration TG
- Holding Trustees TG

**Section 5 (Friday morning 8th June, approx. 10am):**

- Nominations Committee
- 2017 Special Assembly TG
- Review of Moderator's Year TG
- Reformation Celebration TG
- Historical Archiving TG
- Ad-Hoc Business:
  - Calls
  - Healthcare Chaplaincy
  - Peacehaven transfer
  - Eighth Amendment Task Group
  - Congregational Contacts
  - CCLW Structures
  - PHSI Report

**Retiring Conveners**

8. The length of the report of the General Council in itself is a witness to the unstinting service of so many conveners, committee and task group members. Too many to name in person, they have once again given of themselves both to the Lord and His Church. At this Assembly two Conveners conclude their service:
  - (a) The **Rev David Irvine** has convened the General Assembly's United Appeal Committee since his appointment in June 2015. David brought to this task both a mind capable of understanding the often complex financial aspects of the Committee's work and also a vision for and commitment to the wider mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. During his convenership new ways have been developed of promoting the work of the United Appeal for Mission throughout PCI and the General Assembly's mission agencies have been adequately funded to carry that work forward.
  - (b) **Mr John Hunter, CB**, was appointed Convener of the former Board of Finance and Personnel in June 2009, serving until that Board was thanked for its services and discharged on 31st December

2014 as a result of restructuring. At that point John agreed to accept the convenership of the new Support Services Committee of the General Council from 1st January 2015 onwards, thereby bringing a degree of important continuity to these significant areas of work as restructuring was bedding down. John has brought to both of these convenerships undoubted expertise in good governance combined with a love for and commitment to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and its Lord. He has attended countless meetings and has enabled the new Support Services Committee and its five Panels to get up and running. He hands over his convenership after a work well done.

9. In conclusion, the General Council has been faithfully served and guided by Rev Trevor Gribben, the General Secretary and Rev Jim Stothers, Deputy General Secretary. Our thanks to both of them for their time, support and wisdom. In the past year both of them have put in many extra hours in their service for the Lord. Likewise, the staff in the General Secretary's Department has been efficient as ever in overseeing so much administration on behalf of the Council

*The Rev Trevor Gribben writes:*

10. This Assembly sees the retirement of the Very Rev Dr Rob Craig from his role as Convener of the General Council. At the time of restructuring Rob convened the General Assembly's Finance and Staffing Commission for two years from June 2014, tasked with the job of implementing the structural changes agreed in principle by the 2014 General Assembly. Early in that task, Rob further agreed to step up to the mark and on 1st January 2015 he took on the new role of Convener of the General Council, the former General Board having been convened by the Clerk of Assembly. Rob's work load in this new role has been both heavy and diverse, with overall responsibility not just for the Council's eight General Assembly Committees and ever-increasing range of ad-hoc Task Groups (14 reporting to this Assembly), but also giving leadership in fulfilling the General Council's role of co-ordinating the overall work of the General Assembly's Councils and dealing with exceptional matters on behalf of the Assembly. All of this has meant not just many miles and numerous meetings, formal and informal, but also the need often to deal with sensitive and challenging issues. To all of this Rob has brought a sharp mind and his characteristic gracious and winsome personality. Along with many others, I, as Clerk and Secretary of the General Council, am thankful to Rob for this service so willingly given to his Church and his Lord.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

### INITIAL REPORT

**Tuesday morning – 10.30 am**

1. The Business Committee has continued to review the work and arrangements of the General Assembly.
2. **A Draft Order of Business for 2018** was agreed and approved by the Committee. This includes the following:
  - (a) As on the last two years, a Friday morning has again been included.
  - (b) As agreed at last year's General Assembly there will two evening business sessions as well as the Evening Celebration on the Wednesday: these will be held on the Tuesday and Thursday. Assembly business will start at 10.30 am on the Tuesday morning and there will be no business session on Thursday morning, starting instead after lunch with business followed by worship.
  - (c) In addition to 'Listening to the Global Church' on the Wednesday afternoon, there will be 'alternative presentations' on the Tuesday evening and Thursday afternoon featuring the work, respectively, of the Council for Social Witness and the Council for Training in Ministry.
  - (d) Attendance at the Tuesday Communion Service has been growing in recent years and so, in addition to the ground floor, Communion will be served in the central section of the gallery.
  - (e) Permission has been given so that signing for the hearing impaired be provided for the Council for Social Witness business on the Friday. There will be opportunity for assistance needs to be declared when registering for the 2019 Assembly.
3. The **Arrangements Panel** has appropriate matters in hand and a budget of £20,000 has been agreed for recommendation to the Assembly.
4. As agreed last year, congregations have been invited to send one additional communicant member or ruling elder, aged 30 or under, to sit and deliberate alongside the representative elder.
5. **Registration Procedure.** While it had been hoped to enable electronic registration of Representative Elders this year, this had not proved possible. However, in place of including Commission forms along with the General Assembly Minutes, ministers have been sent the form by email, and given the option, having printed them out and had them filled in, of returning them by post or scanning them and returning

them by email. A suitable form for registering the names of the additional 'under 30' person has been included, for return by either method following appointment by the Kirk Session.

6. **Youth Assembly input** to Assembly. The Youth Assembly has taken place and will provide input to the General Assembly.
7. **The Wednesday Evening** event will be addressed by Rico Tice and, at the invitation of the Moderator, he will also speak at the Wednesday and Thursday **afternoon worship sessions**.
8. Reports from those attending other Assemblies etc are contained in the committee Appendix.
9. **Appointment of Delegations to other Assemblies etc.**
  - (a) Delegates have been appointed to other Church Assemblies and meetings:
    - Church of Ireland Synod in May 2018: The Very Rev Dr Frank Sellar and a local elder;
    - The Methodist Conference in June 2018: The Very Rev Dr Noble McNeely and a local elder.
  - (b) The Clerk, in consultation with the Convener of the General Council, has been authorised to appoint a representative to attend the 2018 Ireland Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. The following recommendation is made to the 2018 General Assembly:
    - That the Right Rev Dr Charles Mr McMullen and his wife be appointed to attend the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Wales in July 2018.
  - (c) Consideration of an appointment to the 2018 United Reformed Church General Assembly and the 2019 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will this year take place as part of the report of the Relating to other Denominations Task Group.

## INITIAL REPORT – APPENDIX

### Reports from other Church Assemblies etc.

#### **Methodist Conference – Lisburn June 2017**

*Mr Roger Thompson (Elder in Railway Street) reports:*

1. As an observer from PCI, I found the Conference interesting, informative and enjoyable and I feel honoured to have been invited to attend as a representative of PCI, along with the Very Rev Dr Frank Sellar. The experience provided a deeper insight into a sister Christian denomination and helped to reveal more fully the many

similarities as well as the various differences between Presbyterianism and Methodism. Most notably it indicated the common challenges that we all face, as parts of the Church of Jesus Christ, in presenting the message of the Gospel in an increasingly secular and materialistic society with little or no evident interest in God.

2. I, along with the other observers and representatives, greatly appreciated the very warm and friendly welcome that members of the conference extended to us over each of the days and Dr Sellar had opportunity of bringing fraternal greetings from our General Assembly.
3. Although the regular events took place in Trinity Methodist Church in Lisburn, the opening service was in Fisherwick Presbyterian Church. Rev Bill Mullally gave his reflections on the past year and the new President Rev Dr Laurence Graham was installed for the year 2017-18. He delivered an uplifting and inspiring address, based on Christ's meeting at the well with the Samaritan woman, with praise led by a mainly black worship group from Dublin Central Mission where he is Superintendent. Dr Graham spoke again towards the end of the conference on his chosen theme 'The Rhythm of Grace, Meet Jesus – Share Jesus'.

### **Opening Devotions**

4. Each day commenced with a time of worship and Bible Study and the meditations focussed on humankind's responsibility as stewards of God's creation. Guest speakers contributed from personal experiences, a minister from Ghana spoke of the serious and damaging effects of climate change on his country, and a refugee from Syria escaping from ISIS now living in N Ireland, recounted numerous difficulties, fears and uncertainties that he has had to face since leaving his homeland. Their stories were profound and disturbing.

### **The Substance of the Conference**

5. The publication prepared for the conference 'Reports and Agenda' covers comprehensively the broad range of the work of the missions, boards and committees of the Methodist Church.
6. Due to the death and funeral of Rev Margaret Ferguson, much respected Superintendent of East Belfast Mission, the start of conference was postponed until the afternoon of the first day. Therefore, the printed agenda had to be revised and rescheduled to include the evening of that day.
7. Reports were well presented and contributors to debates made their points in a clear and orderly manner. Notably, throughout the conference, one of the recurring themes was that every follower of Jesus is called to 'Go and make disciples' or, in other words, all church members, have a vital and active role in ministry.

*Inter Church Relations and Covenant Council (Report P60)*

8. While the ICR committee has a broader remit in this field, the Council's main involvement is in ongoing meetings between the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland to discuss ways in which the two denominations can work more closely together.

**Conversation on the Work of God**

9. This section contains detailed reports from all eight districts of the Methodist Church in Ireland and it provides much interesting information on what has been happening in church work across south and north. There was opportunity for delegates to share how God is at work in their area and this was so popular the chairman had to restrict each contributor to two minutes!

**General Committee - Connexional Structures**

10. This report from a working party contained details of proposals for a major reorganisation within the church; the joining of the eight current districts into three geographical and numerically viable districts, each with a full time Superintendent to provide oversight, leadership support and vision for the ministry and mission of societies, circuits and ministers. After the report had been presented there were speeches and questions from the floor. Although the motions were passed by a significant majority, further work is required. A substantive motion will be put to conference next year.

**Faith and Order**

11. Separate reports by this committee were presented on the two distinct subject areas.

12. **Human Sexuality and Christian Belief and Practice**

During the presentation, conference members were reminded of and encouraged to make use of the specific materials (booklets and study guides) that had been produced by the Committee on this subject.

13. **The Theological Basis for Itinerant Ministry**

This working paper was not included in the 'Reports and Agenda' conference book, however there was a lengthy verbal presentation. At its conclusion, many speakers from the floor came and contributed many differing points of view on the content of the paper. While conference accepted it, more work and progress are required.

**Council on Social Responsibility**

14. A substantive report and three supplementary hand-outs were supplied for this presentation and the topics covered in the report included alcohol, abortion, migration, the political situation in Northern Ireland and issues relating to Brexit. The handouts dealt with firstly, the principles governing relationships between Northern Ireland and



the Republic of Ireland and between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom; secondly, the treatment of children and the vulnerable in society in the Republic of Ireland; and thirdly, where the church stands on the Brexit negotiations. It was noted that during the presentation the point was stressed that the church needs to speak into the social and political world on a variety of issues. The reports were given approval.

### **Board of Ministry**

15. The Board consists of two constituent committees, the Ordained Ministry Committee and the Lay Ministry Committee. In addition to the comprehensive report which includes information on the work in each of these areas, there was a supplementary hand-out entitled ‘A Strategy for the development of Lay Ministry in the Methodist Church in Ireland’. The Board has also been engaged in an ongoing review of ministerial formation and theological education. The message that underlies the work of the Board is, again, that ‘All people are called to minister’. The report, covering each of these areas, was received but all require further work and progress.
16. The Very Rev Dr Frank Sellar attended a breakfast organised by the Headway Ireland group in Vic-Ryn Café where Peter Lynas of NI Evangelical Alliance gave a stimulating address on ‘Envisioning the Future – the Church of Tomorrow’.
17. The Rev William (Billy) Davidson of Newtownabbey Mission, Rathcoole, was nominated President elect and Mrs Lynda Neilands Lay Leader for 2018-19.
18. The Conference concluded with an impressive ordination service again in Fisherwick.
19. It was a privilege for us to experience the life and vibrancy of the Methodist Church in Ireland and a sense of God at work among the people in many ways.

### **The Society of Friends**

*The Rev Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie reports:*

1. The Society of Friends describe themselves as; “sharing experience of silent worship, seeking to practice Christ’s message of love and compassion unites us. We know ours is not the only path to God, but believe it is the right one for us. Quakerism is rooted in Christianity. We are formally known as the Religious Society of Friends. Currently, there are just over 1,500 members in Ireland.”
2. I had the privilege to represent PCI at the Irish Yearly Meeting again, on this occasion in Rathgar, Dublin, from 20th to 22nd April 2017, a time in which the Quakers from across Ireland meet together. It is always interesting observing how IYM move through business. Reports are read and then time is given for reflection before questions, debate

and decisions made. Special interest groups also take the time to work through issues. Two were of great interest at this year's meeting. The first was Eco issues for local meetings. How can people make changes and a difference in their own environment. It was an extremely practical discussion with goals chosen together. The second was a discussion on tax equality in our world today. The discussion was led by a person from Christian Aid who has great experience in this area. Once again the discussion was very practical, with an explanation of the broader issues followed by how we can make a difference in our own decision making.

### **Presbyterian Church of Wales**

#### **Eglwys Bresbyteriaidd Cymru, Caerdydd, Gorffennaf 3rd-5th, 2017**

*The Right Rev Dr Noble McNeely reports:*

1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales (PCW) met in the splendid facilities of the Metropolitan University of Cardiff. The delegates and guests arrived on a beautiful sunny Monday afternoon and were well prepared for a long opening meeting and Communion Service as they benefitted from the generous hospitality of the university. The evening worship was held at Eglwys y Crwys in Cardiff and conducted by the Moderator, Prof J Gwynfor Jones.
2. The theme for the Assembly was, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21). The emphasis throughout the worship and business was on mission and generally there was a deep concern among the participants that the decline in their church membership was critical. The PCW claims 602 congregations, 120 (20%) of which have a membership of no more than 10 persons. Two thirds of the churches have 11-50 members in their congregation. The total membership has declined from 30,000 to 20,000 between 2007 and 2016. The congregations are served by 40 ordained ministers.
3. The annual Davies Lecture was presented by Rev Dafydd Andrew Jones, MA, on the subject 'Oasis of Hope'. The lecture included a historical survey of the decline in moral and social standards and considered the popularisation of humanism in a postmodern society. He stated that "the Welsh are the least religious" and despite this the church must not fall into despair but be faithful to its mission and focus on hope.
4. The Ministries Department was allocated an extended time to make a multimedia presentation using Robert Warren's handbook 'Healthy Churches' produced for the Diocese of London. The seven marks of a healthy church included in this publication formed the framework of the presentation: 1. Energised by faith, 2. Outward looking focus, 3. Seeks to find out what God wants, 4. Faces the cost of change and growth, 5. Operates as a community, 6. Makes room for all, 7. Does a few things and does them well.
5. The emphasis throughout the programme was on mission and outreach and reflected what the church is doing and what could be done

throughout the PCW. Special projects and ministries were highlighted. The effective ministry through the retreat centre ‘Trefeca’, a church-planting initiative, outreach to Chinese students and ‘Stori Pwllheli’ a story telling outreach, were some of the inspiring programmes that were well received by the assembly.

6. Reference was made to the visit of the PCW youth leaders to the youth department of the CCLW of our church. It is hoped that the relationship being formed between the two departments of youth will develop and that the sharing of ideas and programmes will benefit both the church in Wales and in Ireland. The staff in Wales are encouraged by the potential of a team of young people from the PCI being involved in outreach in the summer of 2018.
7. Much time was also given to the issue of appointing a General Secretary of the PCW in anticipation of the retirement of Rev Meirion Morris who has completed five years as secretary. Although the relevant task group had advertised and invited applications there were no applicants for this heavy-duty post. Alternative arrangements and proposals were put to the assembly and following extensive debate an amended resolution was agreed to continue to employ Mr Morris until 31st December 2017. It was hoped that this would give further time for continued consideration of a strategy to provide secretarial support.
8. As is the tradition in the Welsh church the business and the worship was conducted in the indigenous language with welcomed translation for the representatives from British churches and the Presbyterian Church in India. The three hundredth anniversary of the birth of William Williams Pantycelyn, Wales’s most famous hymn writer was acknowledged particularly through the singing of his hymns at the services of worship. These hymns were sung with reverence and the vigour you expect from a gathering of gifted Welsh singers. To hear the familiar and the not so familiar hymns sung in the Welsh language was quite a moving experience. The assembly also included an excellent lecture by Dr W Gwyn Lewis on the life and works of William Williams, Pantycelyn entitled ‘Williams has it...’.
9. The Moderator’s successor for 2017-18 Rev Brian Huw Jones, BEd., BTh., was installed on Tuesday evening of the Assembly. The Moderator elect for 2018-19, Rev Brian Matthews, was elected at the opening meeting following a vote between two candidates.
10. Florence and I thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship we shared with a warm hearted inclusive body of Christ-honouring people who were keenly interested in the health and life of the PCI. There is much we have in common in regard to reforming our church’s approach, in order to address the challenges we face, in an increasingly secular society. Rev Dafydd Andrew Jones in his lecture said, “the church is on the border of modern society”. In the power of the Spirit of God we have to work at how we can break through the border and be where God wants us to be in the service of His kingdom.

**Waldensian Assembly (Italy) 2017**

*The Very Rev Dr Ian McNie reports:*

1. Like the early Church the Waldensian Church was born in an atmosphere of persecution and they have often been described as 'Protestants before the Reformation'. Their Confessions of 1120 and 1655 resonate closely with much of our Confession of Faith. At the Synod of 1532 the Waldensians voted to join with the Genevan Reformation, a decision which intensified persecution and drove them to live in the Alpine valleys of Northern Italy, now known as the Waldensian Valleys.
2. This Protestant community, primarily based in Italy with a membership of 22,000 have a few congregations in South America, and in 1979 they merged with the Italian Methodist Church that now constitutes 20% of its membership.
3. The Synod, comprising of 180 members meets annually in Torre Pellice, Northern Italy, is presided over by the President, and the business is determined by the 'Scrutiny Committee', deciding which topics should be given priority. The business of each day is completed before the close of Synod, which commences at 9.30 am and could continue until midnight, or after if necessary.
4. Corresponding delegates were based in the Synod Guesthouse, hospitality was generous and fellowship limited due to the fact that most people spoke Italian and only a few of us were English speakers. Having said this, the translation facilities at the Synod were excellent, enabling us to understand most of what was going on.
5. On Sunday, the first day of the Synod, we were taken by bus into the valleys where a service was held on the site of the signing of an agreement between the Waldensians and the Genevan representatives. This open-air service, even without translation, was not without meaning in so far as many of the hymns were recognised through traditional tunes, and all were able to sing in their own language. Being the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, much was made of the significance of the site and the connection with Geneva. After the service guests were invited to the Waldensian High School for a reception and a talk was given by the Headmaster on the school's unique ethos.
6. The Synod officially opened on Sunday afternoon with an act of worship, during which five new candidates for the ministry were ordained and the invited guests were welcomed. The business started on Monday morning and the presence of regular visitors who attended from England and Scotland enabled us to understand its workings without difficulty. While there were many similarities regarding the conduct of business, it became apparent that the Waldensians were very conscious to avoid the trappings of authoritarianism as practiced by the established church around them, to such an extent that they avoided at all costs the possibility of clerical or centralised imposition.

7. As a denomination the Waldensians are involved in extensive social outreach. This is due to the fact that in Italy all tax payers can opt to ask the Government to give 0.08% as 'gift aid' from their tax contributions. In recent years the Roman Catholic Church has benefited to the tune of over 1 Billion Euros, which it has used to fund the payment of clergy and assist in the repair of church buildings. While there are only 22,000 Waldensians, in recent years, 600,000 Italians have opted to gift aid the Waldensian cause. This enthusiasm is primarily because the Waldensians publish their accounts in the national newspapers and have chosen to use this money for local projects, such as residential homes, funding health care, hospitals, schools, radio and television stations, alongside some global projects in the developing world. This transparency is obviously applauded and appreciated. While these projects in themselves are very commendable, much of the Synod's time was taken up discussing these matters to the extent that other significant spiritual issues appeared to be overlooked. During one afternoon as delegates we visited a residential home to view the work first hand, and on another morning were treated to a lecture and question time on the subject of euthanasia.
8. Italy as a Roman Catholic country does not permit same-sex marriages within the church. After a two-day debate the Waldensians opened the door for its members who are involved in civil partnership, to officially receive a church blessing. This was regularising something that had been previously permitted on an ad-hoc basis, and while the outcome was determined by a significant majority, a few pastors from some of the larger cities who were reaching out to the African communities, expressed deep disapproval, but at times their contribution was received with a less than charitable response.
9. The Synod acknowledged with gratitude the financial contributions the Waldensians receive from local support communities in England, Scotland and the United States. This support assisted pastors who were involved in in-service training and students who were required to complete a compulsory year abroad in the United Kingdom. One such annual visitor and supporter from Scotland, Rev Mary Cranfield, daughter of the famous New Testament scholar, C.E.B. Cranfield, saw to it that the Irish Presbyterians were well looked after.
10. Prior to my attendance at the Synod I was asked to submit an eight-minute speech highlighting issues discussed at our own Assembly. Since some of the Waldensian churches had welcomed refugees and asylum seekers, I highlighted the work of our own International Meeting Point. Recognising in the past the significant history of the persecution of Waldensians I sought to raise awareness of the persecuted church in Syria and Lebanon and spoke of our partnership with churches in India, Pakistan, the Middle East and parts of Africa, and how that it was necessary to not simply acknowledge their plight, but to bring encouragement to those who might feel forgotten.

11. The third area that I alluded to was the whole issue of same-sex marriage and the fractured relationships that this debate created between church and society and even between churches. I highlighted the statement now included in our own wedding ceremony: 'Since the beginning of creation, God in His gracious purpose provided marriage as the accepted way in which a man and a woman may come together as husband and wife. This is the only basis on which marriage can take place within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.' In expressing thanks, the President of the Synod commented, 'that the theological division between the Waldensians and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was as great as the geographical division between our two countries'. I wasn't given an opportunity to respond to this, but I think I would not disagree with what was said.
12. In respect of inter-church relations, generally speaking it could be said that relationships between the Waldensians and the Roman Catholic Church are cordial. The local bishop was welcomed to the Synod. Having said this, due to the circumstances of the past there is still a keeping of each other at arms-length, and a clear understanding on the part of the Waldensians, that neither in the short or long term will there be an absorption of the Waldensians into the state church.
13. The subject of evangelism, as we would understand it, was not discussed at the Synod, but in a recent publication, 'The Waldensian Story' by Prescot Stephens, he graciously speaks of the Waldensian's involvement with the 'Federation of Evangelical Churches', and the Federation's weekly programme aiming at presenting a Protestant viewpoint on current issues. He claims that in Italy 'there is an intense interest in non-Catholic alternatives, but so far, little commitment to these alternatives'. He speaks of their 'unaggressive' approach. While aggression can be counter-productive, an insipid presentation of truth can be neither helpful or effective. From my observation within the Synod it would appear to me that the few churches that are making the greatest impact have a multi-cultural congregation seeking to worship in a meaningful way, where there is an elevation of God's Word over and against a 'maintenance model', that simply seeks to preserve the past.
14. I spent two evenings with a Waldensian pastor from England, currently serving in Milan with his Ghanaian wife, who ministers within a congregation of ten different nationalities. This young man at times was discouraged and he spoke of some of the challenges he faced within his congregation as he sought to integrate new members into the traditional church, new members whose styles of worship were varied. His personal passion was to see people won for Christ, and I felt that one of my most worthwhile opportunities during my visit was to encourage him within his ministry, I took the opportunity to pray with him and I know that he and his family greatly appreciated it.

15. All in all, my visit to the Waldensian Church was interesting, informative and challenging. Anne and I greatly appreciated the opportunity to be present, but it would be only fair to state that the experience was not the most encouraging, and the comment from the Waldensian President about ‘our theological and geographical division’ was possibly an adequate summary in respect of the emphases our two churches.

ROY PATTON, Convener

## **SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

### **Introduction**

Since the autumn of 2017 the Support Services Committee met on two occasions. Both meetings considered reports from its Finance, HR, Property, IT and Creative Production Panels. Given the wide range of issues considered by the Committee this report necessarily focuses on key issues only.

### **FINANCE PANEL**

1. The meeting of the Committee on 10th October reviewed the projected accounts for the various assessment funds for 2017, which were slightly better than anticipated, and considered and agreed budgets and assessment rates for 2018, endorsing the recommendations of the Finance Panel. While the assessment rates for 2018 are unchanged from 2017, there have been some fluctuations in individual budgets, including increases in the Assembly Building Repair Fund and the Prolonged Disability Scheme, as set out in Support Services Appendix 1. The increase in the Repair Fund reflects the cost of the work approved by the General Assembly in 2016, to be completed in April 2018 (May 2018 in the case of the new accommodation for the PHSI) and is designed to reduce the repayment period by one year. A substantial reduction in the Students’ Bursary Fund reflects reduced student numbers. No assessment has been included for a future Special Assembly pending a review. Following a review of budgets for the Incidental Fund in 2017, the Committee agreed allocations for 2018, including the transfer of the cost of the Press Officer to the Incidental Fund (associated with the transfer of the post to the General Secretary’s Department), as set out in Support Services Appendix 2. The Committee agreed to maintain the assessment for the Pension Fund at the level of the employer’s pension contribution rate of 24.0%.
2. The Committee also agreed an increase in the Sterling and Euro Basic Ministerial Minimum of 2% and 1% respectively for 2018, the differential reflecting different inflation rates in the two jurisdictions.

The new rates are set out in Support Services Appendix 3. Similar percentage increases were agreed to the levels of Family Grants and to the levels of grants from the Retired Ministers Fund, the Widows of Ministers Fund and the Prolonged Disability Fund.

3. The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Panel on the pros and cons of a change in the Church's financial year end from 31st December to 31st August – the latter to coincide with the end of the 'church year'. Given that the considerable disruption that would result from a change, the Committee agreed with the Panel's advice that a review should be undertaken into the implications of retaining the existing year end but revising the timetables for the preparation of end year accounts and statistical returns in the light of necessary approval requirements and the filing of accounts with the Charity Commission. That review continues. However, the Committee agreed in principle to a splitting of the annual return for congregations into a statistical part and a financial part, with the completion of the former due by 30th April. The date for the latter will emerge from the outcome of the continuing review. Collated information on the statistical returns was not available to the Panel at its 29th March meeting, due to delays in filing reports on the part of some Presbyteries. They were presented directly to the General Council at its meeting on 10th April and summaries are included in Appendices 4 and 5.
4. The Finance Panel met on 29th March primarily to consider the draft accounts for the General Assembly for the year ended 31st December 2017. The Panel was pleased to note that no issues, which would require a change to the figures, had been identified to date by the auditors, although some additional disclosures or notes might be necessary. Panel members noted the significant pension credit in relation to the PCI Pension Scheme (2009), as determined under the Accounting Standard FRS 102, accompanied by detailed notes in the accounts. The General Council subsequently approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2017 on the understanding that there were no significant audit issues and that the auditors would state that the accounts give a 'true and fair view'.
5. During the year, there were no pre-65 retirements. Since the last General Assembly the following were granted leave to retire at or over age 65 by their Presbyteries: Rev Stephen Williams (Union Theological College); Rev Ivan Neish (Abbot's Cross); Rev John Noble (Balteagh and Bovevagh); Rev Elizabeth Hughes (Whitehouse); Rev Alastair Bill (Saintfield Road); Rev Donald Patton (Ballygilbert); Rev Amanda Best (Ramelton and Kilmacrennan) and Rev Robert Buick (Carlisle Road and Crossroads). The Rev Robert Bell (Ballyclare) has sought permission to retire on or after his 64th birthday and an appropriate resolution is appended.
6. Other issues considered by the Finance Panel included the need to strengthen arrangements for managing risks, not least in regard to mitigating actions. The Committee also approved new Guidance



Notes and Template Accounts for congregations designed to help them meet the filing requirements of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

## HR PANEL

7. The Committee endorsed a recommendation from the Panel at its October meeting for an increase in the sterling and euro salary scales of administrative and executive staff of 2% and 1% respectively – the same increase as in the Basic Ministerial Minimum. An outline of current staffing levels is outlined in Support Services Appendix 7.
8. The Committee welcomed a new policy agreed by the Panel in respect of ‘Dignity at Work’, designed to prevent bullying in the workplace. It also confirmed the existing policy in regard to Career Breaks and a Protocol for Severe Weather. In regard to the review of the contract with Peninsula Business Services for HR and health and safety advice, the Panel received legal advice on the timing of a new tendering exercise, namely at the end of the current contract in 2019. It noted the need to review personnel policies, procedures and practices in the light of the new GDPR set to come into force in May 2018.
9. The Committee followed up a previous agreement to introduce a new Staff Support and Development Scheme for executive and administrative staff in Assembly Buildings, by reviewing draft documentation for the scheme. Following the completion of task lists for all staff, the new system is due to be introduced in 2018 with appropriate training of all those involved.
10. Finally, the Committee commended the work of the Personnel Department in regard to the employment issues associated with the transfer of Ard Cluan and York House to a new facility, Trinity House, Garvagh.

## PROPERTY PANEL

11. Much of the work of the Property Panel during the year concerned the refurbishment of the ground floor of Assembly Buildings to provide new conference and exhibition space, plus accommodation for the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland. The new facilities are due to be handed over by the contractor by the middle of April in the case of the conference and exhibition space and the middle of May in the case of the PHSI accommodation, at a cost of £1.1m plus VAT. It remains to develop the new Visitor Exhibition in the reception area, before a relaunch of the new facilities in the late autumn of 2018. Associated with the relaunch, a sub-committee has been appointed to develop a rebranding of the new facilities, replacing the current logo. Consideration is also being given to the development of a new

marketing strategy, not least in order to compensate for the loss of income from the closure of the retail facilities on the Mall and a reduction in room hire as a consequence of the refurbishment.

12. The Committee welcomed a request from Carnmoney Presbyterian Church to use the new facilities on the ground floor for Sunday afternoon worship as part of their planned outreach in the city centre and Cathedral Quarter.
13. Finally, the Committee received an update on the development of a new structure for the Buildings Department and expressed its thanks to Mr Harry Orr, who retired at the end of March, for his work in Assembly Buildings over the last 29 years.

## IT PANEL

14. The Committee is very conscious of the importance in the day-to-day running of the Church of its IT Department. It is aware of many pressures on the department from different parts of the Church as it seeks to prioritise competing demands, some of which arise at short notice. Better planning would help all parties to programme the work of the department in developing necessary IT services. In that regard, the Committee requested the Priorities Committee to add to their documentation a checklist of Support Services Departments that must be consulted when major projects are proposed.
15. Arrangements are in hand to recruit an additional member of staff to the small team. In respect of policy development, work has begun on the development of an updated version of the Acceptable Use Policy covering the use of hardware and software. Finally, the Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Panel that meeting data protection regulations should be a key risk recorded on the General Council's Risk Register.

## CREATIVE PRODUCTION PANEL

16. The Committee agreed a new Magazine Policy, designed to enhance the *Presbyterian Herald's* attractiveness to readers, which had been the subject of extensive consultation with Councils. It also agreed to a new Writing Style Guide to ensure consistency in all formal communications from departments in Assembly Buildings, to be introduced with appropriate training for staff immediately after the 2018 General Assembly. The Committee noted that further work was required on Design Guidelines covering fonts, size of titles etc. Consultation also took place on a new Web Policy. Finally, the General Council approved an increase in the cover price of the *Presbyterian Herald* from £1.00 to £1.50, to reflect increased production costs and the increased size of the magazine to include content from the old *Reach Out* magazine.

**FAMILY GRANTS TASK GROUP**

17. The Committee agreed a recommendation from the Family Grants Task Group on a more equitable allocation of the monies available in support of eligible families. The Committee confirmed the current division between Child Allowances and Tuition Grants, with the latter only being payable in Northern Ireland in respect of those in Further and Higher Education. In the case of the Republic of Ireland, Tuition Grants would continue to be payable at all levels (in the absence of appropriate fee-free education at primary and secondary levels). In both jurisdictions the provision of Tuition Grants would be subject to there being an actual fee incurred. Family income would continue to be taken into account on the same banding principle as at present. The scheme adopted by the General Council is set out in Appendix 7.

JOHN HUNTER, Convener

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### 2018 ASSESSMENT RATES AND ALLOCATIONS

The proposed rates of Assessment for 2018 are:

| Assessment Band | Assessable Income (£/€) |           | Assessment Rate |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                 | From                    | To        |                 |
| 1               | 0                       | 10,999    | 0.00%           |
| 2               | 11,000                  | 64,999    | 14.50%          |
| 3               | 65,000                  | 129,999   | 10.75%          |
| 4               | 130,000                 | 194,999   | 7.25%           |
| 5               | 195,000                 | 259,999   | 3.50%           |
| 6               | 260,000                 | and above | 0.00%           |

*(Note: the above is unchanged from 2017)*

It is proposed that amounts collected through the assessment system are allocated on the following percentages

| Assessment Fund              | Projected Allocation for 2018<br>£ | Projected Allocation for 2018<br>% | Actual Allocation for 2017 |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Central Ministry Fund        | £1,800,000                         | 41.29%                             | 41.76%                     |
| Retired Ministers Fund       | £425,000                           | 9.75%                              | 9.28%                      |
| Widows of Ministers Fund     | £400,000                           | 9.17%                              | 9.86%                      |
| Prolonged Disability Fund    | £75,000                            | 1.72%                              | 0.58%                      |
| Incidental Fund              | £750,000                           | 17.20%                             | 15.55%                     |
| Church House Repairs Fund    | £525,000                           | 12.04%                             | 10.90%                     |
| Special Assembly             | –                                  | –                                  | 0.58%                      |
| Ministerial Development Fund | £125,000                           | 2.87%                              | 2.32%                      |
| Sick Supply Fund             | £10,000                            | 0.23%                              | 0.35%                      |
| Students Bursary Fund        | £250,000                           | 5.73%                              | 8.82%                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>£4,360,000</b>                  | <b>100.00%</b>                     | <b>100.00%</b>             |

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 2

#### 2018 INCIDENTAL FUND BUDGET

| Payments to or on behalf of Councils           | £      | £              |
|--|--------|----------------|
| (i) <b>General Council</b>                     |        |                |
| General Work                                   | 3,500  |                |
| Dialogue Resources Task Group                  | 2,500  |                |
| GDPR Compliance                                | 22,500 |                |
| Assembly Arrangements                          | 20,000 |                |
| Church Relations Committee                     |        |                |
| – Irish Council of Churches                    | 22,167 |                |
| – Irish Inter-Church Meeting                   | 10,918 |                |
| – Conference of European Churches              | 5,600  |                |
| – Comm Protestant Churches Europe              | 1,300  |                |
| – World Comm Reformed Churches                 | 13,000 |                |
| – General Church Relations (expenses)          | 5,000  | 106,485        |
| (ii) <b>Council for Public Affairs</b>         |        |                |
| General Work incl conferences                  | 1,500  |                |
| Education Grants                               | 11,000 |                |
| Dealing with the past project                  | 2,500  | 15,000         |
| (iii) <b>Linkage Commission</b>                |        |                |
| General Work                                   | 6,500  |                |
| Church Architecture and Manses Panel           | 8,250  | 14,750         |
| Moderator expenses allowance                   |        | 30,000         |
| Printing for General Assembly                  |        | 10,000         |
| Postage, , admin and other                     |        | 12,500         |
| Insurance                                      |        | 7,000          |
| Travel General Assembly and Councils etc.      |        | 9,500          |
| Allowance to Congregations re Conveners        |        | 9,500          |
| Legal fees                                     |        | 25,000         |
| Costs of General Secretary's Department        |        | 352,485        |
| Support Services Charges                       |        | 103,000        |
| UK Borders Agency                              |        | 500            |
| Presbyterian Historical Society                |        | 22,250         |
| Youth Link                                     |        | 10,500         |
| Churches Legislation Advisory                  |        | 2,575          |
| Peninsula Employment Law and Health and Safety |        | 17,300         |
| <b>Total</b>                                   |        | <b>748,345</b> |

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 3

#### 2018 RATES AND ALLOWANCES

##### 1. Basic and Appropriate Ministerial Minimum

|                           | Northern Ireland |        | Republic of Ireland |        |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
|                           | 2018             | 2017   | 2018                | 2017   |
|                           | £                | £      | €                   | €      |
| Basic Ministerial Minimum | 26,172           | 25,659 | 39,557              | 39,165 |
| After 1 years' service    | 26,434           | 25,916 | 39,953              | 39,557 |
| After 2 years' service    | 26,696           | 26,173 | 40,349              | 39,949 |
| After 3 years' service    | 26,958           | 26,430 | 40,745              | 40,341 |
| After 4 years' service    | 27,220           | 26,687 | 41,141              | 40,733 |
| After 5 years' service    | 27,482           | 26,944 | 41,537              | 41,125 |
| After 6 years' service    | 27,744           | 27,201 | 41,933              | 41,517 |
| After 7 years' service    | 28,006           | 27,458 | 42,329              | 41,909 |
| After 8 years' service    | 28,268           | 27,715 | 42,725              | 42,301 |
| After 9 years' service    | 28,530           | 27,972 | 43,121              | 42,693 |
| After 10 years' service   | 28,792           | 28,229 | 43,517              | 43,085 |
| After 11 years' service   | 29,054           | 28,486 | 43,913              | 43,477 |
| After 12 years' service   | 29,316           | 28,743 | 44,309              | 43,869 |
| After 13 years' service   | 29,578           | 29,000 | 44,705              | 44,261 |
| After 14 years' service   | 29,840           | 29,257 | 45,101              | 44,653 |
| After 15 years' service   | 30,102           | 29,514 | 45,497              | 45,045 |
| After 16 years' service   | 30,364           | 29,771 | 45,893              | 45,437 |
| After 17 years' service   | 30,626           | 30,028 | 46,289              | 45,829 |
| After 18 years' service   | 30,888           | 30,285 | 46,685              | 46,221 |
| After 19 years' service   | 31,150           | 30,542 | 47,081              | 46,613 |
| After 20 years' service   | 31,412           | 30,799 | 47,477              | 47,005 |

**2. Family Grants**

|                          | 2018              | 2017              |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Birth to 10 yrs          | £369 (€1,059)     | £362 (€1,049)     |
| 11 to 15 yrs             | £557 (€1,675)     | £546 (€1,658)     |
| 16 yrs and over          |                   |                   |
| At school                | £836 (€3,097)     | £820 (€3,066)     |
| At university            | £2,783 (€5,166)   | £2,728 (€5,115)   |
| Bands (joint incomes),   |                   |                   |
| Reductions Nil up to     | £29,743 (€44,295) | £29,160 (€43,856) |
| Up to (£1 for every £5)  | £40,015 (€59,579) | £39,230 (€58,989) |
| Above ( £1 for every £2) | £29,160 (€43,856) | £39,230 (€58,989) |

**3. Retired Ministers, Widows of Ministers and Prolonged Disability Funds**

Retired Ministers Fund maximum retirement pension for 2017 is £12,487.

Widows of Ministers Fund maximum retirement annuity for 2017 is £6,867.

Prolonged Disability Fund maximum grant for 2017 is £12,558.

[-----INCOME-----] [-----EXPENDITURE-----]

|                        | Opening Balance | Assessment | Other   | Total Income | Presbytery Clerk | Other Staff | Insurance | Other     | Total Expenditure | Surplus (Deficit) | Closing Balance |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------|--------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Ards                 | 18,938          | 19,647     | 180     | 19,827       | (11,804)         | (6,850)     | (137)     | (1,610)   | (20,401)          | (574)             | 18,364          |
| 2 Armagh               | 3,929           | 11,925     | 4       | 11,929       | (10,234)         | (300)       | (221)     | (828)     | (11,583)          | 346               | 4,275           |
| 3 Ballymena            | 9,490           | 18,510     | 3,571   | 22,081       | (11,860)         | (3,560)     | (221)     | (6,111)   | (21,752)          | 329               | 9,819           |
| 4 Belfast North        | 7,953           | 17,287     | 4,700   | 21,987       | (8,492)          | (3,212)     | (462)     | (3,680)   | (15,846)          | 6,141             | 14,094          |
| 5 Belfast South        | 13,678          | 14,001     | 12,551  | 26,552       | (9,125)          | (2,133)     | (1,745)   | (13,823)  | (26,826)          | (274)             | 13,404          |
| 6 Belfast East         | 54,621          | 23,027     | 1,689   | 24,716       | (13,225)         | (1,600)     | (221)     | (15,376)  | (30,422)          | (5,706)           | 48,915          |
| 7 Carrickfergus        | 7,635           | 12,885     | 11      | 12,896       | (9,685)          | (551)       | (137)     | (2,197)   | (12,570)          | 326               | 7,961           |
| 8 Coleraine & Limavady | 40,973          | 13,115     | 2,031   | 15,146       | (11,493)         | (300)       | (220)     | (4,325)   | (16,338)          | (1,192)           | 39,781          |
| 9 Derry & Donegal      | 43,447          | 20,937     | 132,515 | 153,452      | (12,004)         | (1,348)     | (221)     | (51,413)  | (64,986)          | 88,466            | 131,913         |
| 10 Down                | 26,985          | 10,961     | 55      | 11,016       | (9,575)          | (2,000)     | (307)     | (5,339)   | (17,221)          | (6,205)           | 20,780          |
| 11 Dromore             | 5,543           | 14,186     | 5,180   | 19,366       | (9,386)          | (2,125)     | (221)     | (2,484)   | (14,216)          | 5,150             | 10,693          |
| 12 €Dublin & Munster   | 53,081          | 27,641     | 25,722  | 53,363       | (12,271)         | (22,787)    | (165)     | (13,569)  | (48,792)          | 4,571             | 57,652          |
| 13 Leigh               | 18,500          | 9,915      | 8,006   | 17,921       | (12,795)         | (500)       | (221)     | (5,553)   | (19,069)          | (1,148)           | 17,352          |
| 14 Monaghan            | 66,761          | 5,295      | 9,368   | 14,663       | (2,300)          | (2,539)     | (642)     | (12,476)  | (17,957)          | (3,294)           | 63,467          |
| 15 Newry               | 8,439           | 10,329     | 22,907  | 33,236       | (7,657)          | (300)       | (137)     | (2,149)   | (10,243)          | 22,993            | 31,432          |
| 16 Omagh               | 14,850          | 10,912     | 602     | 11,514       | (7,814)          | (1,875)     | (221)     | (1,723)   | (11,633)          | (119)             | 14,731          |
| 17 Route               | 159,043         | 12,767     | 90,280  | 103,047      | (9,708)          | (869)       | (221)     | (7,635)   | (18,433)          | 84,614            | 243,657         |
| 18 Templepatrick       | 49,767          | 16,391     | 39,018  | 55,409       | (8,736)          | (2,938)     | (306)     | (78,360)  | (90,340)          | (34,931)          | 14,836          |
| 19 Tyrone              | 6,031           | 12,132     | 46      | 12,178       | (9,646)          | (1,000)     | (137)     | (1,165)   | (11,948)          | 230               | 6,261           |
| <hr/>                  |                 |            |         |              |                  |             |           |           |                   |                   |                 |
| <hr/>                  |                 |            |         |              |                  |             |           |           |                   |                   |                 |
| Sterling               | 489,822         | 248,927    | 323,346 | 572,273      | (173,239)        | (31,461)    | (5,356)   | (203,771) | (413,827)         | 158,446           | 648,268         |
| <hr/>                  |                 |            |         |              |                  |             |           |           |                   |                   |                 |
| Euro                   | 119,842         | 32,936     | 35,090  | 68,026       | (14,571)         | (25,326)    | (807)     | (26,045)  | (66,749)          | 1,277             | 121,119         |



## SUPPORT SERVICES

### APPENDIX 5

#### SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONS ANNUAL STATISTICAL RETURNS AND GRAPHS

TABLE ONE

##### PERSONS AND AGENCIES

|   | 2016    | 2017    | Increase | Decrease |
|---|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Retired Ministers                                     | 240     | 233     | 0        | 7        |
| Ministers in Active Duty                              | 371     | 375     | 4        | 0        |
| Retired Missionaries                                  | 16      | 16      | 0        | 0        |
| Missionaries in Active Duty                           | 39      | 35      | 0        | 4        |
| Total Ministers and Missionaries                      | 666     | 659     | 0        | 7        |
| Licensings during year                                | 12      | 12      | 0        | 0        |
| Congregations   | 538     | 537     | 0        | 1        |
| Total Families  | 95,895  | 94,112  | 0        | 1,783    |
| Persons of All Ages                                   | 220,478 | 217,363 | 0        | 3,115    |
| Contributors to FWO or Stipend                        | 73,391  | 71,849  | 0        | 1,542    |
| Baptisms  | 1,336   | 1,330   | 0        | 6        |
| Admitted to Lord's Table<br>for First Time            | 1,575   | 1,542   | 0        | 33       |
| Communicants  | 97,943  | 96,217  | 0        | 1,726    |
| Attended at Least One<br>Communion during year        | 59,738  | 58,699  | 0        | 1,039    |
| Ruling Elders in Kirk Session                         | 5,903   | 5,741   | 0        | 162      |
| Number on Rolls in Sunday<br>School and Bible Classes | 17,500  | 18,666  | 1,166    | 0        |
| Attending Non-Uniformed<br>Organisations for Children | 20,628  | 20,593  | 0        | 35       |

TABLE TWO  
CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

|                           | 2016       |           | 2017       |           | % Difference |         |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
|                           | £          | €         | £          | €         | N.I.         | R.of I. |
| Assessable Income (gross) | 35,972,865 | 3,852,720 | 36,929,769 | 4,065,460 | 2.7%         | 5.5%    |
| Building Fund etc         | 16,754,333 | 1,348,702 | 17,300,156 | 1,227,342 | 3.3%         | -9.0%   |
| Missions and Charities    | 7,515,712  | 479,513   | 7,794,578  | 521,976   | 3.7%         | 8.9%    |
| Raised from other sources | 6,257,829  | 1,411,461 | 6,857,453  | 680,909   | 9.6%         | -51.8%  |
| Organisational Income     | 5,914,038  | 238,001   | 5,606,012  | 233,810   | -5.2%        | -1.8%   |
| Total Receipts            | 72,414,777 | 7,330,397 | 74,487,968 | 6,729,497 | 2.9%         | -8.2%   |

**TABLE THREE**  
**CONGREGATIONAL EXPENDITURE**

|   | 2016       |           | 2017       |           | % Difference |         |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
|   | £          | €         | £          | €         | N.I.         | R.of I. |
| Paid to ministers, other salaries and wages, allowances to ministers and others | 19,060,597 | 1,588,296 | 19,238,287 | 1,510,063 | 0.9%         | -4.9%   |
| Payments under Assembly Assessments   | 6,094,203  | 670,493   | 6,192,215  | 702,875   | 1.6%         | 4.8%    |
| Building, Repairs etc.  | 14,362,399 | 971,513   | 12,543,020 | 1,088,739 | -12.7%       | 12.1%   |
| United Appeal Schemes   | 3,162,260  | 235,729   | 3,281,877  | 238,578   | 3.8%         | 1.2%    |
| Supplementary Schemes   |            |           |            |           |              |         |
| Other Religious and Charitable Objects  | 6,955,035  | 717,044   | 7,683,975  | 750,298   | 10.5%        | 4.6%    |
| Organisations   | 5,822,025  | 365,716   | 5,515,274  | 257,428   | -5.3%        | -29.6%  |
| General Expenses  | 10,752,713 | 1,497,291 | 11,712,938 | 1,802,283 | 8.9%         | 20.4%   |
| Total Payments  | 66,209,232 | 6,046,082 | 66,167,586 | 6,350,264 | -0.1%        | 5.0%    |

TABLE FOUR  
CONGREGATIONAL FUND BALANCES

|                     | Opening 2017 |            | Closing 2017 |            | % Difference |          |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|----------|
|                     | £            | €          | £            | €          | N.I.         | R. of I. |
| Unrestricted Funds  | 29,563,572   | 2,932,990  | 31,841,732   | 3,032,478  | 7.7%         | 3.4%     |
| Restricted Funds    | 93,027,692   | 8,471,028  | 100,174,767  | 8,791,689  | 7.7%         | 3.8%     |
| Total Fund Balances | 122,591,264  | 11,404,018 | 132,016,499  | 11,824,167 | 7.7%         | 3.7%     |

**TABLE FIVE****MINISTERS' INCOME AND ALLOWANCES (SEE NOTES)**

|                          | 2016<br>£  | 2017<br>£  | % Difference |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Total Ministerial Income |            |            |              |
| (active Duty - Note2)    | 11,607,735 | 11,775,980 | 1.4%         |
| Stipend Paid             | 10,340,800 | 10,295,374 | -0.4%        |
| Allowances               |            |            |              |
| Light, Heat, etc         |            |            |              |
| Ministerial Duties       |            |            |              |
| Total                    | 2,630,561  | 2,614,245  | -0.6%        |

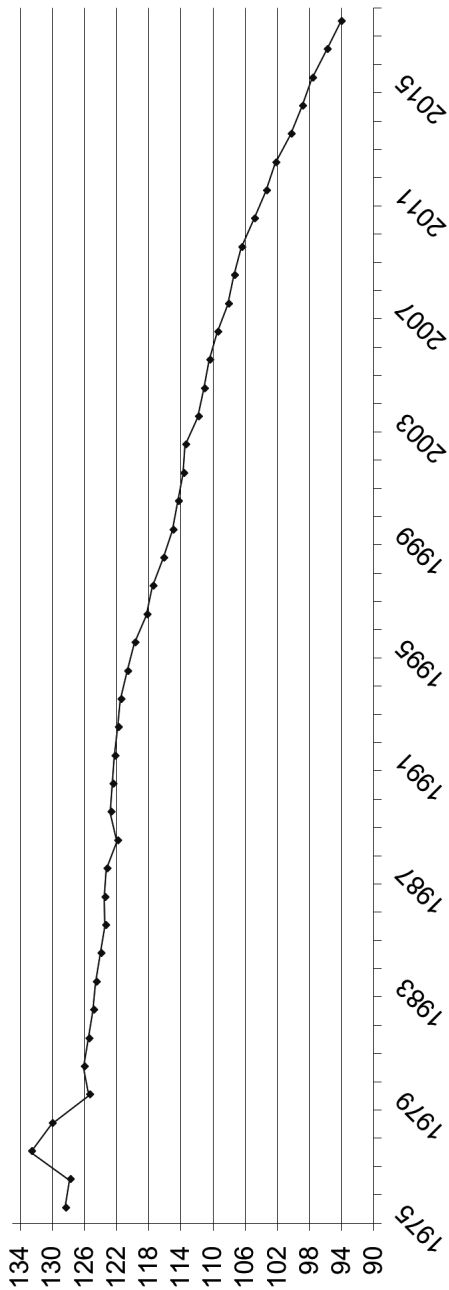
Note 1 Figures for the Republic of Ireland have been converted into £STG using the average value of the Euro for the relevant year (£1/€1.1413)

Note 2 This refers only to 327 ministers in charge of congregations, excluding Assistants, Chaplains, Missionaries, Professors, Administrative Officers and Ministers in recognised service in special work.

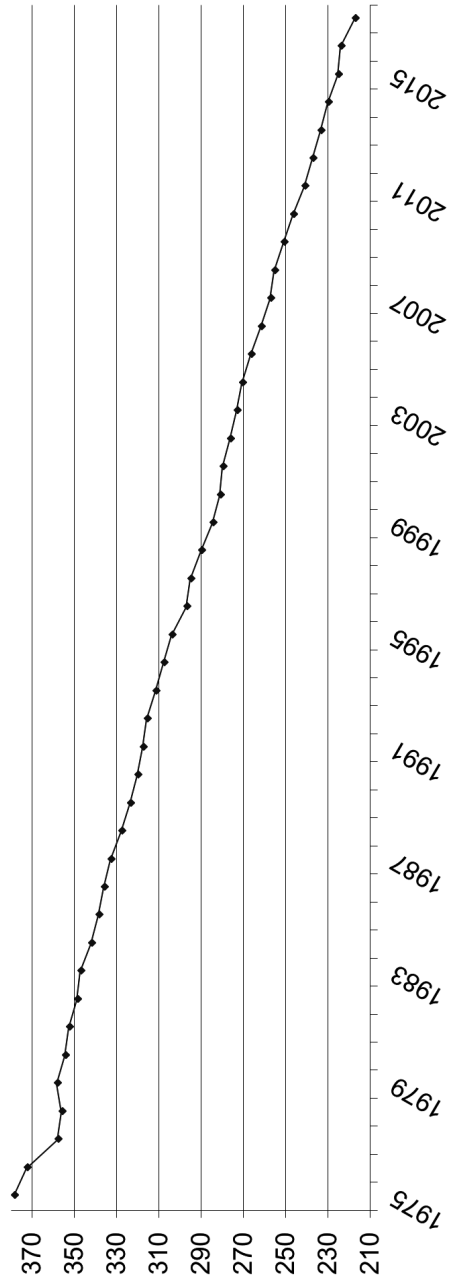
**TABLE SIX****PERSONS**

|  | 2016   | 2017   |
|--|--------|--------|
| Persons who are aged 18 and under            | 39,959 | 37,473 |
| Average attendance at Sunday Worship         |        |        |
| – Morning                                    | 71,250 | 69,748 |
| – Evening                                    | 17,035 | 16,388 |
| Average attendance at Bible Study/Fellowship | 20,347 | 20,962 |

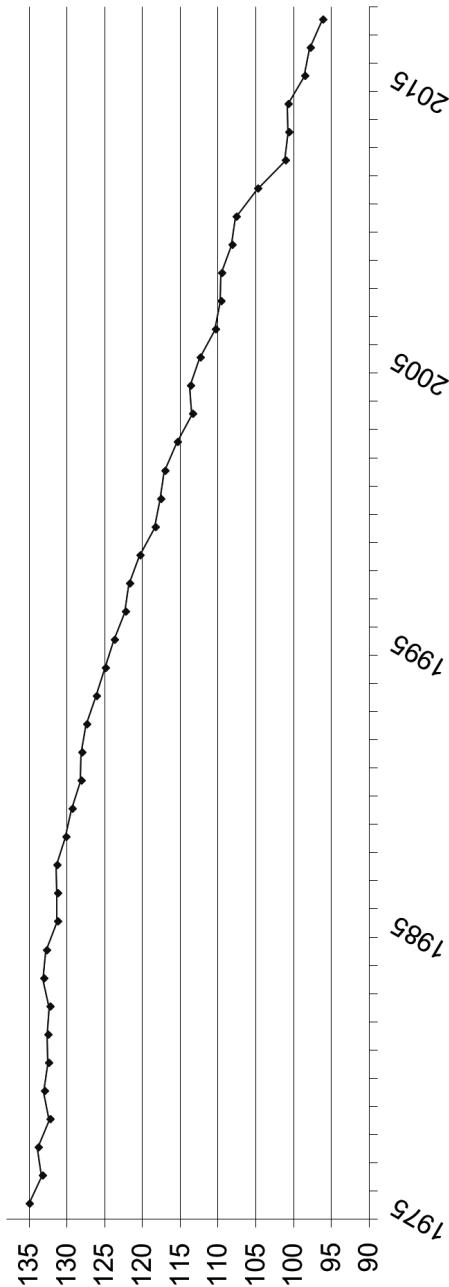
FAMILIES ('000)



**PERSONS ('000)**

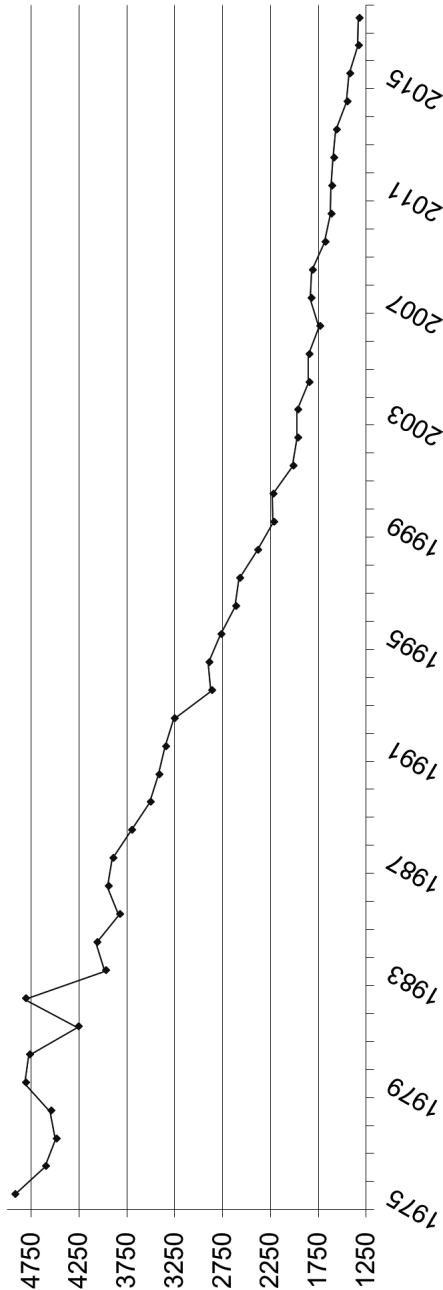


COMMUNICANTS ('000)





**BAPTISMS**





## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **APPENDIX 6**

#### **OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STAFFING**

##### **Sterling salary scales of posts in Assembly Buildings on 1st January 2018**

#### **EXECUTIVE POSTS**

##### **Scale 1 (£24,745 - £29,399)**

IT Support Manager, (ITD)

Presbyterian Women Support Officer (CCLW)

##### **Scale 2 (£27,945 - £33,616)**

Property Support Officer (0.8 post) (FSD)

Children's Development Officer (CCLW)

Finance Manager (FSD)

Creative Production Support Officer (including Editorial Responsibilities) (CPD)

Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer (CCLW)

Finance Manager (FSD)

Creative Production Support Officer (Press and Web) (CPD)

Payroll and Assessment Manager (FSD)

Personnel Support Officer (PD)

Youth Development Officer (CCLW)

"Taking Care" Programme Co-ordinator

Discipleship Development Officer (CCLW)

Mission Support Officer (Partnership) (MD)

##### **Scale 3 (£31,267 - £38,108)**

Assistant Residential and Supported Services Manager (CSW)

Mission Support Officer (Member Care) (MD)

Head of Creative Production (CPD)

Programme Development Officer (CCLW)

Public Affairs Officer (GSD)

Training Development Officer (CCLW)

Building Manager (PSD)

Mission Development Officer (CCLW)

**Scale 4 (£34,462 - £43,054)**

Senior Finance Manager (FSD)  
 Head of Personnel (PD)  
 IT Development and Support Manager (ITD)  
 Residential and Supported Services Manager (CSW)

**Scale 6 (£40,928 - £49,862)**

Deputy Clerk of Assembly and Deputy General Secretary  
 Secretary of the Council for Mission in Ireland  
 Secretary of the Council for Social Witness  
 Secretary of the Council for Global Mission  
 Secretary of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness

**Scale 7 (£46,438 - £59,733)**

Clerk of Assembly and General Secretary  
 Financial Secretary

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS****Scale 1 (£14,084 - £16,266)**

Telephonist (0.4 post) (PSD)

**Scale 2 (£15,154 - £17,526)**

Administrative Assistant (CCLW)  
 Administrative Assistant (0.7 post) (FSD)  
 Personnel Assistant (0.74 post) (PD)  
 Administrative Assistant, PW (CCLW)  
 Administrative Assistant (Job Share) (MD)  
 'Taking Care' Administrator (CSW)  
 Administrative Assistant (0.68 post) (Purchase Ledger) (FSD)  
 Handyperson (PSD)  
 Personnel/Administrative Assistant (0.8 post) (PD/CSW)  
 Assistant Receptionist and Telephonist (PSD) (higher salary protected)

**Scale 3 (£17,005 - £19,663)**

Administrative Assistant (GSD)  
 Administrative Assistant (Sales Ledger) (job share 0.4 post)  
 Senior Personnel Assistant (Job Share) (PD)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (job share 1.2 post) (CSW)  
 Senior Administrative Assistant (0.5 post) (MD)  
 Deputy Buildings Manager (PSD)

Senior Administrative Assistant, PW (CCLW)  
Information Officer/Receptionist (0.6 post) (PSD)

**Scale 4 (£19,268 - £22,189)**

Senior Administrative Assistant (Partnerships) (MD)  
Senior Administrative Assistant (Member Care) (MD)  
Payroll and Administrative Assistant (1.77 posts) (FSD)  
Senior Administrative Assistants (x 2 job share) (CCLW)  
Senior Communications Assistant (Press and Web) (0.6 post) (CPD)  
Senior Administrative Assistant (0.6 post) (FSD)  
Senior Communications Assistant (Pub) (2 x 0.6 post) (CPD)  
Senior Administrative Assistant (CCLW)

**Scale 5 (£21,081 - £24,338)**

Senior Creative Production Technician (CPD)  
Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (MD)  
Assistant Accountant (FSD)  
Senior Personnel Administrator (PD)  
Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (job share) (GSD)  
IT Support Officer x 2 (ITD)  
Financial and Administrative Assistant (0.74 post) (FSD)  
IT Support and Development Officer (0.8 post) (ITD)

**Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,282 - £26,615)**

Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CCLW)  
Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (MD)  
Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CSW)

**Scale 5 (Enhanced pt 25-33) (£23,282 - £28,694)**

Senior Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (GSD)

## **Sterling salary scales of posts in other locations on 1st January 2018**

### **EXECUTIVE POSTS**

#### **Scale 2 (£27,945 - £33,616)**

College Registrar/Bursar, Union College  
 College Librarian, Union College  
 Minister/Ministry Co-ordinator, Kinghan Church (CSW)  
 Chaplain in Residence (MD)  
 University Chaplain UUJ, (MD)  
 Lecturer in Historical Theology, Union College  
 Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Union College

#### **Scale 4 (£34,462 - £43,054)**

Dean of Ministerial Studies and Development (Union College)

#### **Scale 5 (£38,108 – £46,438)**

Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Director of Post-Graduate Studies, Union College

#### **Scale 6 (£40,928 - £49,862)**

Professor of Church History, Union College (higher salary protected)  
 Professor of New Testament Studies, Union College (higher salary protected)  
 Professor of Practical Theology, Union College (higher salary protected)  
 Professor of Systematic Theology, Union College

#### **Scale 7 (£46,438 - £59,733)**

Principal of Union Theological College

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS**

#### **Scale 1 (£14,084 - £16,266)**

Clerical Officer (3 p/t) OPS (CSW)  
 Receptionist (Term Time), Union College

#### **Scale 2 (£15,154 - £17,526)**

Clerical Officer - Carlisle House (part time) (CSW)  
 Clerical Officer, (3 FT and 1 PT) OPS (CSW)  
 Clerical Officer, Kinghan Church (part time) (CSW)  
 Custodian, Union College  
 Library Assistant (part time), Union College

**Scale 3 (£17,005 - £19,663)**

Marriage and Guidance Co-ordinator (CCLW)  
Administrative Assistant (part time), Union College  
Senior Clerical Officer (part time), Carlisle House (CSW)  
Senior Secretary, Union College (0.6 post)  
Senior Secretary, Union College

**Scale 4 (£19,268 - £22,189)**

Administrator, Derryvolgie (MD)  
Senior Secretary, Union College  
Deputy Librarian, Union College

**Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,282 - £26,615)**

Assistant Chaplain, QUB (MD)  
Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale) (CSW)

SUPPORT SERVICES

APPENDIX 7

PROPOSED FAMILY GRANT ARRANGEMENTS

Family Grant Scheme

This scheme was approved by the General Council in 2018. It provides “Child Allowance Grants” and “Tuition Grants” to eligible ministers subject to the conditions set out in the scheme.

1. Eligibility to Apply

The following are eligible to apply for Family Grants

- Ministers in active duty in congregations
- Licentiates
- Retired Ministers under the care of Presbytery

Ministers without charge, Ministers appointed to positions in Assembly Buildings or to positions under a Council of the General Assembly are not eligible.

2. Grants Payable

The following grants are payable for the academic year 2018/19.

| Grant Category   | Northern Ireland   | Republic of Ireland  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Birth to final year primary school  | Child Allowance £375<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant £Nil         | Child Allowance €575<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant up to €475     |
| 2. Secondary School  | Child Allowance £550<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant £Nil         | Child Allowance €850<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant up to €800     |
| 3. Further and Higher Education<br>(claimable up to and including the academic year in which the student becomes 24) | Child Allowance £825<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant up to £2,000 | Child Allowance €1,250<br>PLUS<br>Tuition Grant up to €4,000 |

*The above grants will be reduced if gross family income exceeds the levels as set out in section 4.*



The level of grants will be determined annually by the Support Services Committee of the General Council on the recommendation of its Finance Panel.

### 3. Processing of Claims

- (a) A Claim Form will be issued by the Financial Secretary's Department in June at the end of the academic year i.e. the grants are paid retrospectively.
- (b) The Claim Form should be returned to the Financial Secretary's Department as soon as possible but no later than 30th September.
- (c) Grants will be paid in October through the payroll system. All grants are deemed to be taxable. In Northern Ireland the grants will be paid with tax and national insurance accounted for. In the Republic of Ireland ministers should declare the grants via their annual tax return.
- (d) Claims for Tuition Grants must be supported by evidence of payment and the maximum Tuition Grant that will be paid is the lower of the amount of the grant or the amount of fees incurred.
- (e) Further and Higher Education includes any course at a University or College of Further Education. Where a student resits GCSE/A Level exams at(?) such the Secondary School tuition grant is claimable.

### 4. Grant Reductions for Family Income

The above grants will be payable in full if Total Family Income, as defined below, falls below the Appropriate Ministerial Minimum (AMM) for 20 years' service. Where total family income is above this amount the following reductions will apply (2018 rates shown)

| Total Family Income                                 | Reduction  |
|---|--|
| Up to 20 year AMM i.e. £31,412/€47,477              | Nil  |
| Above AMM up to AMM plus 1/3rd i.e. £41,883/€63,303 | £1/€1 for every £5/€5 i.e. maximum reduction £2,094/€3,165 |
| Above AMM plus 1/3rd i.e. £41,883/€63,303           | £1/€1 for every £2/€2                                      |

Total Family Income is regarded as:

- A minister and spouse's taxable pay for the relevant tax year ending within the academic year for which a claim is made. This includes any taxable pay as shown on the end of year tax form issued by the Financial Secretary's Department plus any other taxable income which will be declared on a tax return such as other earned income, bequest income, endowment interest, rental

income (less allowable expenses), personal investment income, interest, taxable Social Security Benefits and any other income subject to income tax. In summary the total taxable income for the relevant tax year.

- For ministers in **Northern Ireland** the figures should be for the tax year ended 5th April which falls within the academic year (i.e. for the 2018/19 academic year it would be the tax year ended 5th April 2019).
- For ministers in the **Republic of Ireland** the figures should be for the tax year ended 31st December which falls within the academic year (i.e. for the 2018/19 academic year it would be the tax year ended 31st December 2018).

## 5. Scholarships

Grants payable will be reduced by £1/€1 for every £1/€1 over £1,000/€1,500 received by way of scholarship or other monetary grant (not including student loans) per child at Further or Higher Education.

## 6. Tuition Grants

All claims for tuition grants must be supported by evidence of payment i.e. a copy of a receipt or invoice. The maximum grant which will be paid is the lower of the amount specified in 2 or the amount paid by the minister.

Only tuition fees will be paid, voluntary or other contributions that may be payable do not count as a tuition fee.

# UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

1. The Committee met on the following dates:
  - (a) Friday, 8th February 2018 – to review the 2017 accounts, the response to the 2017 Appeal and to confirm grants to Councils for that year.
  - (b) Friday, 23rd March 2018 – to prepare for meetings with Councils in relation to their 2019 grants requests.
  - (c) Monday, 26th March 2018 – to meet with Councils and discuss their budget submissions and then to consider recommendations to the General Council for the 2019 Appeal.

## The 2017 Appeal

2. The Committee wishes to express its thanks to the congregations who supported the United Appeal in 2017. When contributions for the 2017 Appeal were closed at the end of January 2018 £3,301,553 (2017: £3,218,252) had been received from congregations towards the

Appeal Target of £3,460,000, a shortfall of some £158,467. Once late contributions for the 2016 Appeal, trust fund income and donations were taken into account the excess against budgeted income was £8,983 (2017 shortfall of £53,984).

3. During 2017 the Council for Congregational Life and Witness returned previously allocated grants of £150,000. This was primarily due to savings in staffing costs as a result of vacancies and the timing of appointments.
4. In 2017 420 congregations (2016: 406) met or exceeded their target of honour, 106 congregations (2016: 121) did not achieve their target and 14 congregations (2016: 8) had made no contribution when the accounts for 2017 were closed. The Committee would remind these congregations of their obligation under the Code Par 42.
5. The Committee was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants of £3,610,000 to Councils for 2017.
6. The Committee has appealed to congregations, through presbyteries, to remit the Appeal donations as they are received. The Committee has to report that 59% of 2017 donations (2016: 59%) were received by the Financial Secretary's Department in December 2017 and January 2018. Congregations should be aware that the United Appeal is distributed to the Mission Councils on a regular basis, spread throughout the year. In order for the Committee to meet its obligation to fund the running of the Mission Councils and prevent them from going into overdraft, a substantial United Appeal cash-flow reserve has to be maintained. A lesser reserve would be necessary if Congregations did not hold on to United Appeal donations until the year end. The Committee again appeals to congregational committees to please remit United Appeal donations as they receive them.
7. A number of years ago the United Appeal Board took the decision to introduce a phased reduction in the use of reserves but this was deferred pending the restructuring of Boards to Councils. Reserves have reduced by around £1m in the last 10 years. In 2017 reserves would have been reduced by £102,128, which was slightly less than the budgeted release of £112,600, but this was offset by the return of £150,000 by the Council of Congregational Life and Witness as referred to above. The Committee realises it will not be possible to continue to use reserves at this rate or to depend on Councils returning grants previously allocated and therefore remains of the view that the level of the Appeal and grants to Councils needs to be brought into line over the next few years.

### **Promotions**

8. The Promotions Panel has carried out a survey of minsters to gauge the awareness of various aspect of the Appeal and this has highlighted several issues which need to be addressed. In particular, the Panel has been discussing the merits of a re-launch of the Appeal. Provisional

costings were in the region of £6,000 to £7,000 for the preparation and production of suitable material. The Committee agreed to reflect on the responses to the survey and whether some professional advice should be sought as to how best to promote the Appeal and whether a re-launch, including a change of Appeal name, is necessary.

9. The Committee expresses its thanks to the Creative Production Department for its help in producing promotional material.

### **The 2018 Appeal**

10. The General Assembly has already agreed to an Appeal of £3,500,000 for 2018 and this is outlined in Schedules I and II of this report.
11. The Council for Congregational Life and Witness has budgeted to return a further £90,000 of previously allocated grants in 2018.

### **The 2019 Appeal**

12. The United Appeal Committee met on two occasions, once to complete some preparatory work and once to meet with the Councils and consider the 2019 budget requests submitted. Having given careful consideration to the budget requests and each Council's presentation, the United Appeal Committee drew up the allocations outlined in Schedule IV which were agreed by the General Council for submission to the General Assembly.
13. The Appeal is to be allocated to presbyteries on the basis of 50% contributing families and 50% assessable income and for 2019 this is outlined in Schedule III. The Committee is aware that while the Appeal increase in recent years has been of an inflationary amount, the impact on presbyteries and congregations (if presbyteries use the same method of allocation) means that a presbytery/congregation allocation can vary from the previous year not only by the increase in the Appeal but also by the movement in its assessable income and contributing families in relation to other presbyteries/congregations. As noted in last year's report the Committee has reviewed the basis of allocation of the Appeal Target to presbyteries. At present the Appeal is allocated to presbyteries on the basis of 50% contributing families and 50% assessable income. The Appeal for 2018 (of £3,500,000) shows an increase over the Appeal for 2017 (of £3,460,000) of 1.16%. However, at a presbytery level (or congregational level if they use the same method) the increase or decrease will depend not only on the overall increase in the Appeal but also on how the number of contributing families or amount of assessable income has changed in comparison to other presbyteries or congregations i.e. not every presbytery or congregational allocation will increase by 1.16%. The Committee have examined four alternative methods ((i) 75% contributing families and 25% assessable income, (ii) 25% contributing families and 75% assessable income, (iii) 100% contributing families and 0% assessable income, (iv) 0% contributing families and 100% assessable income) but all these methods tend to exacerbate the increases/decreases over the previous

year. Therefore, the Committee is not, at this stage, recommending any change to the current method of allocation. The Committee intends to keep the matter under review.

14. Grants to Councils will continue be allocated on the basis of 7.5% each month with 10% withheld pending the response to the Appeal.
15. As reported last year the Committee is aiming to bring the level of grants awarded into line with the Appeal and reduce the use of reserves over the next few years. In doing so the Committee will have regard to the amounts returned by the Council for Congregational Life and Witness which should, in the short term, help to ease any impact on Council grants.
16. The Committee would thank the Financial Secretary's Department for their assistance in every area of the United Appeal's work.
17. The Committee is committed to the need for a United Appeal Sunday, and a suitable resolution is appended. The first Sunday in March is recommended as United Appeal for Mission Sunday. This date is chosen as it is close to the February presbytery meetings when the Spring 'Mission Together' leaflets are distributed.

MARTIN HAMPTON, Acting Convener

**UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE****SCHEDULE I**

| Presbytery             | Contributing<br>Families<br>2016 | Assessable<br>Income<br>2016<br>£ | United<br>Appeal<br>2018<br>£ |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ards                   | 6,770                            | 3,596,194                         | 322,848                       |
| Armagh                 | 3,559                            | 2,148,429                         | 181,298                       |
| Ballymena              | 6,897                            | 3,517,370                         | 322,337                       |
| Belfast North          | 4,110                            | 2,148,167                         | 194,425                       |
| Belfast South          | 2,670                            | 1,819,601                         | 145,341                       |
| Belfast East           | 4,880                            | 3,383,452                         | 268,231                       |
| Carrickfergus          | 4,370                            | 1,954,699                         | 191,941                       |
| Coleraine and Limavady | 5,040                            | 2,622,172                         | 237,876                       |
| Derry and Donegal      | 4,708                            | 2,074,805                         | 205,390                       |
| Down                   | 4,207                            | 1,857,065                         | 183,672                       |
| Dromore                | 4,413                            | 2,247,262                         | 206,098                       |
| Dublin and Munster     | 1,086                            | 1,556,759                         | 95,772                        |
| Iveagh                 | 3,331                            | 1,633,305                         | 152,740                       |
| Monaghan               | 1,066                            | 687,679                           | 56,286                        |
| Newry                  | 2,674                            | 1,271,119                         | 120,817                       |
| Omagh                  | 3,253                            | 1,539,345                         | 146,663                       |
| Route                  | 3,254                            | 1,484,969                         | 144,246                       |
| Templepatrick          | 3,692                            | 1,714,431                         | 164,989                       |
| Tyrone                 | 3,411                            | 1,730,944                         | 159,030                       |
|                        | 73,391                           | 38,987,767                        | 3,500,000                     |

50% of the allocation for 2018 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland has been converted to sterling at GBP£1 = €1.2248.

UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

SCHEDULE II

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
|                                 | 2018             |
|                                 | £                |
| MISSION IN IRELAND              | 1,050,000        |
| GLOBAL MISSION                  | 1,050,000        |
| TRAINING IN MINISTRY            | 370,000          |
| CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS | 720,000          |
| SOCIAL WITNESS                  | 245,000          |
| CREATIVE PRODUCTION             | 230,000          |
|                                 | <hr/>            |
|                                 | 3,665,000        |
| Income from donations etc.      | -38,000          |
| Release from reserves           | -127,000         |
|                                 | <hr/>            |
| Appeal to Congregations         | <u>3,500,000</u> |

## UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

### SCHEDULE III

| Presbytery             | Contributing<br>Families<br>2017 | Assessable<br>Income<br>2017<br>£ | United<br>Appeal<br>2019<br>£ |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ards                   | 6,720                            | 3,723,121                         | 329,554                       |
| Armagh                 | 3,511                            | 2,201,318                         | 183,432                       |
| Ballymena              | 6,550                            | 3,638,544                         | 321,639                       |
| Belfast North          | 3,919                            | 2,166,338                         | 191,975                       |
| Belfast South          | 2,546                            | 1,859,801                         | 144,591                       |
| Belfast East           | 4,807                            | 3,346,276                         | 265,741                       |
| Carrickfergus          | 4,279                            | 2,046,113                         | 195,588                       |
| Coleraine and Limavady | 4,958                            | 2,733,297                         | 242,546                       |
| Derry and Donegal      | 4,654                            | 2,214,626                         | 212,253                       |
| Down                   | 4,077                            | 1,924,649                         | 185,262                       |
| Dromore                | 4,345                            | 2,297,298                         | 208,251                       |
| Dublin and Munster     | 1,160                            | 1,804,701                         | 107,930                       |
| Iveagh                 | 3,265                            | 1,721,101                         | 156,261                       |
| Monaghan               | 1,082                            | 813,503                           | 62,464                        |
| Newry                  | 2,715                            | 1,325,342                         | 125,290                       |
| Omagh                  | 3,248                            | 1,615,176                         | 151,188                       |
| Route                  | 3,210                            | 1,557,070                         | 147,697                       |
| Templepatrick          | 3,457                            | 1,704,031                         | 160,255                       |
| Tyrone                 | 3,346                            | 1,717,022                         | 158,083                       |
|                        | 71,849                           | 40,409,327                        | 3,550,000                     |

50% of the allocation for 2019 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for Congregations in the Republic of Ireland has been converted to sterling at GBP£1 = €1.1413



UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

SCHEDULE IV

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
|                                 | 2019             |
|                                 | £                |
| MISSION IN IRELAND              | 1,065,000        |
| GLOBAL MISSION                  | 1,065,000        |
| TRAINING IN MINISTRY            | 375,000          |
| CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND WITNESS | 720,000          |
| SOCIAL WITNESS                  | 245,000          |
| CREATIVE PRODUCTION             | 230,000          |
|                                 | <hr/>            |
|                                 | 3,700,000        |
| Income from donations etc.      | -38,000          |
| Release from reserves           | -112,000         |
|                                 | <hr/>            |
| Appeal to Congregations         | <u>3,550,000</u> |



## **GUYSMERE CENTRE TASK GROUP**

1. The 2017 General Assembly instructed the Task Group to “further investigate economically viable options for retaining the Guysmere site, consulting with the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady (and any other parties the Task Group deems appropriate)....” and then to “..... report to the 2018 General Assembly to enable a decision to be made regarding the sale, or otherwise, of the site.” (2017 General Assembly Minutes, page 63).
2. During the last year the Task Group met on four occasions, seeking to fulfil this remit. It requested papers from a number of groups and individuals, chief among these being the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady, but also including an informal group of individuals operating under the name ‘The Friends of Guysmere’. The Task Group took a full day in October 2017 to meet with interested parties which included representatives of both the Presbytery and the Friends, along with some other individuals.
3. While these meetings produced a number of interesting suggestions, the Task Group’s unanimous view was that they did not deliver any realistic and viable proposals as to how the Guysmere Centre could remain within the ownership and under the control of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Such a proposal would have had to provide, firstly, a feasible means for funding the significant and essential work of upgrading the Centre. Secondly, it would have to provide a sustainable financial model for its operation going into the future and, finally, a realistic indication as to the week-round scale of ministry and mission achievable at the centre that would justify the significant capital, and possibly ongoing revenue, expenditure. These requirements were simply not present in the range of options presented to the Task Group and discussed with the individuals concerned.
4. After these discussions, the Task Group wrote to the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady indicating that it recognised “that it is not a stated priority of the denomination to finance the work of upgrading Guysmere or to cover any ongoing annual deficit in running the centre”. The letter continued, “The Task Group would therefore ask the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady to consider if it is prepared to take on the task of both financing the necessary up-grading of the Guysmere Centre and of underwriting its ongoing running costs”. The Task Group pointed presbytery to a number of other interested parties it might have wished to consult, but stated “...however, the key question is whether the Presbytery is willing to take on and underwrite this commitment”. The Task Group received in return a letter which did not give the requested commitment from the presbytery, but rather posed a number of further questions. The Task Group unanimously feel that further discussions would not arrive at a position where the Presbytery of Coleraine and Limavady would be in a position to take on the task of both financing the necessary up-grading of the Guysmere Centre and of underwriting its ongoing running costs. Indeed the Task

Group feels it would be unfair to ask a presbytery to take on this commitment as it is not a primary role of a presbytery.

5. Following these consultations, and taking all things in the round, it remains the clear and unanimous position of the Task Group, as previously reported both in 2017 and earlier, that redeveloping the Guysmere site as a residential facility for the denomination is not a viable option.
  - (a) The Task Group notes that the demand for a denominational Youth Centre or Conference Centre had previously been surveyed and it was the clear outcome that, while residential ministry of different types remained important, the denomination did not need its own centre. This position remains unchanged.
  - (b) The Task Group notes that in 2012-13 professionals were consulted and asked to provide costs for a re-developed Guysmere. It was reported at that time that costs for a renewed building would be a minimum of approx. £700,000 plus professional fees, plus vat – well in excess of £1million. These costs will have risen some five years later.
  - (c) The Task Group notes that the centre when operational had for many years been subsidised from central funds (on 31st December 2017 the accrued debt was £165,035 – a rise from £154,336 on 31st December 2016) and that any redeveloped centre was unlikely to be economically viable. A continued subsidy from central (United Appeal) funds would almost certainly be required, as mid-week use of the centre would be very limited during most of the year. This position has not changed for the better during the past year.
  - (d) The Task Group notes that in the past doubts were expressed regarding the willingness of PCI's congregations to underwrite these costs through further assessments (for the capital development) or through the United Appeal for an annual subsidy. It was concluded then that a re-development would not be good stewardship, given that little interest had been shown in the denomination for running a residential centre, with none of the General Assembly's Councils expressing a commitment to, or indeed sufficient interest in, using a redeveloped Guysmere Centre. The Task Group continues to concur with this conclusion.
6. As reported to the 2017 General Assembly, there was a desire within the Task Group, if at all possible, to retain the Guysmere site for ministry and/or mission within PCI. Approaches therefore were made (during 2015-17) to the Council for Social Witness (CSW) to see if that Council would be interested or able to develop the site for supported living or some other form of social witness. After detailed discussion, and exploration over an extended period of time of a variety of uses, including consultations with potential funders and partners, the CSW concluded that "the development would not be viable, in this current vacuum within funding streams". This position remains unchanged.

7. As noted above, the Guysmere Centre has an accrued debt at 31st December 2017 of £165,035, which continues to rise as its present ‘moth-balling’ incurs a cost of some £10,000 per annum to keep the buildings secure, insured etc. Therefore, in light of the above, the Task Group reaffirms its previous recommendation, that to keep the ‘spirit of Guysmere’ alive the site should be sold and (after all debts and costs are met) a fund established, under the control of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness, to support ministry, mission and outreach, with particular emphasis on residential ministry among young people. Resolutions are appended to this effect.

IVAN J PATTERSON, Convener

## **PRIORITIES COMMITTEE**

1. The Priorities Committee met once during the year and noted that the 2017 General Assembly had approved the new priorities which the Committee had drawn up during 2016-17. The Committee discussed potential overlaps in remits between two or more Councils. It was noted that this does not involve areas of relating directly to congregations through the provision of resources, training, conferences etc – all of this now normally falling within the remit of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. It was also noted that some Councils have the remit to develop thinking/policy in certain areas to assist the General Assembly to state PCI’s position on these matters, both for the benefit of the Church and of society as a whole. Finally, it was noted that discussions between both staff and conveners was essential to enable any potential overlaps to be discussed and ways forward identified. The General Council Convener and Secretary are available to facilitate such discussions, if that is required.

## **THE PRIORITIES REFERENCE PANEL**

1. The Panel Convener, Mr Martin Hampton, outlined, for information purposes, the proposed process for Councils reporting on both the delivery of the remit given to them by the General Assembly and of the priorities set by the General Assembly (see Code Par 272(6)(c)). The related paper-work was provided, explained and discussed. It was noted that the Code requires the Priorities Reference Panel to report directly to General Council on these matters.
2. The Panel Convener also reminded the Committee of the process for the approval of new projects, staffing posts and major expenditure. Following discussion some additional points of clarification were agreed for addition into the requisite forms and guidelines.

TREVOR D GRIBBEN, Convener

## MEMORIAL RECORD 2018

The Rev Robert Alexander Campbell, BA, MDiv, Minister of Clogher and Glenhoy, died, suddenly, on 5th June 2017, in the forty-seventh year of his age and the twelfth year of his ministry. He was born at Strabane on 26th November 1970, the only son, and second, of four children, to Robert (Bertie) Campbell, a farmer, and his wife, Jean, née Hamilton. The family belonged to the congregation of Corrick and Mr Campbell was educated at Corrick Primary School, 1975-1982, and Omagh High School, 1982 to 1987, where he received the McDowell Cup for the boy who achieved the best 'O' level results. He then attended Loughry College, Cookstown, 1987 to 1990, graduating with a BTEC National Diploma in Science (Technology of Food). This was followed by periods of work at Fivemiletown Creamery, Uniport Ltd., Leckpatrick Dairies, Regal Food Processors and Leckpatrick Foods until September 1993. From 1992 to 1994 he undertook part-time study in two modules, Philosophy and Literary Studies and Social Studies, through the Queen's University, Belfast. From September 1993 to June 1994 he was one of a team of Youth Board volunteers working with young people in various congregations, followed by full-time study at the University of Ulster, Coleraine campus, graduating in 1997 with an honours degree in Modern and Contemporary History. In the summer of 1996 he had worked as a camp counsellor at Camp Overlook, West Virginia, and there met Tonya Le Fever whom he married in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on 29th November 1997. They settled to life there, Mr Campbell working as a laboratory technician and Mrs Campbell as a science teacher. Tragedy struck in May of the following year when Mrs Campbell sustained a brain injury as the result of a car accident. However, in 1999 Mr Campbell was able to begin studying theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, Pennsylvania, as they had earlier planned, and from which he graduated MDiv. They moved to Northern Ireland in 2003 and Mr Campbell completed his studies at the Union Theological College, Belfast, in 2004. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Derry and Strabane on 3rd December 2004 and assigned as Assistant to the congregation of Terrace Row, Coleraine. Two years later, he was called to the joint charge of Clogher and Glenhoy and ordained there by the Presbytery of Omagh on 30th March 2006. Mr and Mrs Campbell, with their son Gershom, settled to ministry in this rural setting, and, in 2006, Joanna was born. Mr Campbell was widely respected for his hard work within his congregations and also in the wider community. He was a member of the Board of Governors of Fivemiletown College and served as Chairman. We give thanks to God for his witness to the saving and sustaining power of the Lord Jesus Christ in his personal life and public ministry, and we extend our sympathy and assurance of our prayers to his wife, Tonya, children, Gershom and Joanna, Mr Campbell's parents, sisters, Hazel, Gillian and Hilary, and wider family circle.

The **Rev John Knox Ferguson Watson, BA**, Minister Emeritus (Released), Ballygrainey, died on 9th June 2017, in the eighty-seventh year of his age and the sixtieth year of his ministry. He was born at Donaghadee on 6th February 1931, the youngest son of the Rev David Watson, Minister of First Donaghadee Presbyterian Church, and his wife, Mary Jane Knox Watson, née Ferguson. His siblings, David Henry Alexander and William James (W.J.) also became Presbyterian ministers. He was educated at Bangor Collegiate School and Regent House Grammar School, Newtownards. He played rugby for the 1st XV and also for Donaghadee. He was accepted as a student for the ordained ministry by the General Assembly in 1950 and he studied at Magee University College, Londonderry, graduating BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1954. He took his theology course at the Assembly's College, Belfast, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Ards on 8th July 1956. He assisted in the congregation of Westbourne, working alongside the Minister, the Rev John Henry Carson, and, also, in McQuiston Memorial, with the Minister, the Rev Samuel Eaton, both in east Belfast. In 1958, he was called by the congregation of Tullylish, near Banbridge, and was ordained there on 27th May by the Presbytery of Iveagh. Also, in that year, he married Hazel Patricia Glenn, at Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church, on 24th June 1958. Mrs Watson pre-deceased him on 22nd December 2012. They had two daughters, Kathryn and Joanne. During his ministry at Tullylish, extensive improvements were made to the Church property. The car park was extended, the church hall was renovated and a new kitchen installed. The meeting-house was re-roofed, the interior redecorated, new lighting installed, and a Minister's room added. In the wider community, he served on the Management Committee of Lurgan Girls' School and also served as chairman of Fortescue Primary School. Mr Watson was much appreciated as a pastor and preacher, and it was with regret that his people learned of his call to Ballygrainey, near Bangor, Co Down, to which he moved in 1971, and where he was installed by the Presbytery of Ards on 18th November. He had a sense of home-coming, for his great, great grandfather had been a foundation member of the congregation. He remained there for twenty-six years until his retirement on 31st May 1997. His organisational skills were again called on as he oversaw the building of the Minor Hall, a new kitchen, renovation in the Meeting-House, and the installation of a new organ and central heating system, all of which was paid for by a variety of fund-raising events supplementing the direct giving of the congregation. He faithfully pastored his people, visiting the families regularly, sharing with them the joys and the sorrows of their lives, ministering to them the hope and comfort of the Gospel, and leading them in the worship of God Sunday by Sunday. His evident interest in, and encouragement of, the youth of the congregation, was seen in his strong support and involvement with the Girls' Brigade, the Boys' Brigade, acting as Chaplain to both, and the Youth Club and the Sunday School. He also served as chairman of the Cotton Primary School, bringing him into contact with many more in the surrounding

community. He was involved in the wider work of the Church as a member of the Board of Publications and Aids to Worship. Mr Watson was greatly gifted with his hands, being skilled in woodwork, DIY, and clock repairing, in which he took great pleasure in his leisure hours. He was also an enthusiastic beekeeper, and was frequently called upon to deal with errant swarms, even on the Sabbath! We share with Mr Watson's daughters, Kathryn and Joanne, and the wider family circle, in giving thanks to God for his long life and committed ministry, and assure them of our sympathy and prayers.

The **Rev Kenneth Smyth, BA**, Minister Emeritus (Released), Drumbo, died on 18th July 2017, in the ninety-second year of his age, and the sixty-sixth year of his ministry. He was born at Fintona, on 20th July 1925, the third of five children, four boys and a girl, to Thomas Smyth, an officer with the Royal Irish Constabulary, and, later, a Sergeant with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and his wife, Anna, née Simpson. The family moved to live in north Belfast and joined the large and busy congregation of St. Enoch's, Carlisle Circus. There, Mr Smyth received his Christian education and committed his life to Christ as a youth. He attended Drumglass Primary School, Dungannon, and the Belfast Royal Academy. He proved to be a valuable member of the Rugby 1st XV and, later, became a member of Malone Rugby Club, maintaining a keen interest in the game throughout his life. In the autumn of 1945 he proceeded to Magee University College, Londonderry, to study for the ordained ministry, and graduated BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1948. He completed his theological studies at the Assembly's College, Belfast, and was licensed, on 26th May 1950, by the Presbytery of Belfast. He served as Assistant to the Rev Kyle Alexander and to his successor, the Rev George Wynne, in the congregation of Seaview, Shore Road, Belfast. Nineteen fifty-two was a notable year for him. He was ordained and installed in the joint charge of Burt and Buncrana by the Presbytery of Derry, on 17th January 1952, and on 11th September, he married Susan Freda Boucher, a member of Belmont congregation, Belfast, where she was actively involved in the life of the church as a Sunday School teacher, leader of the Girl's Auxiliary and organising the Brownies. She quickly adapted to life as a minister's wife and fully supported Mr Smyth in his church work with her warm personality and gift of hospitality. On 14th May 1987 she was installed as Central President of the Presbyterian Woman's Association for a period of two years. After three years in County Donegal, Mr Smyth was called to Glastry where he was installed on 30th June 1955, by the Presbytery of Ards. He ministered there until he was called by the congregation of Drumbo, and installed by the Presbytery of Dromore, on 5th September 1963, where he was to remain for the next twenty-nine years. Mr Smyth was an outstanding example of a dedicated pastoral minister. A big man, physically, he had a big heart and a great love for people. He enjoyed nothing more than to be among people, sharing in their varied experiences of life, and was assiduous in caring for the



sick, the grieving and the dying, and was available to them twenty-four /seven. His warm personality and evident humanity, combined with a ready sense of humour, commended him to young and old, and to people of all creeds and from all walks of life. He was attentive to his pulpit ministry bringing the claims of Christ and the appeal of the Gospel to his hearers Sunday by Sunday. Extensive renovations were made to all the church property during his ministry to accommodate the expanding work and witness at Drumbo. Mr Smyth was a member of, the Council of the Presbyterian Historical Society Ireland for many years, and the Widows and Orphans of Ministers Fund, and acted as Convener of the Shankill Road Mission Committee, 1991 to 1998. He was a well-known figure in the wider community, not least through his membership of the loyal orders. During the nineteen-seventies he served in the RUC Reserve as a demonstration of his commitment to the security of the wider community. Mr Smyth retired on 31st October 1992. He was pre-deceased by his wife, Freda, on 6th May 2008. To their sons, Brian, Michael and Timothy, their wives, Hilary, Joyce and Margaret, and the wider family circle, we extend our sincere sympathy, as, with them, we give thanks for every memory of their father and our brother.

The **Rev Eric Moses Borland, BA**, Minister Emeritus, Burnside, Portstewart, died on 19th August 2017, in the one hundred and first year of his age, and the seventy-sixth year of his ministry. He was born at Londonderry on 15th April 1917, the fourth child of five brothers and sisters, to Moses Borland, merchant, and his wife, Harriet Gertrude, née Cunningham. He was brought up in the congregation of Great James Street, near which the family lived. His father was a Sunday School teacher and a member of the choir. The combination of a Christian home, and the influence of Mr T.S. Mooney, an elder in Great James Street, and founder of the Londonderry branch of the Crusaders, a national Bible class movement for teenagers, led Mr Borland to make a personal commitment of faith in Christ at the age of fourteen. He attended Londonderry Model School, 1922 to 1928, and Foyle College, 1928 to 1934. He pursued further academic study at Magee University College, Londonderry, and graduated BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1938. Obeying the call of God to the Christian ministry he entered the Assembly's College, Belfast, in the autumn of 1938, to study theology. On completion of his studies, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Derry on 2nd June 1940, and served as Assistant to the Rev John Henry Carson in Westbourne, Belfast. WWII was in progress and the Luftwaffe bombed the city in April 1941. The people of the Newtownards Road evacuated to the hills during the night, but Mr Borland camped out in the church building in case it caught fire. The church hall was hit and destroyed, but the meeting-house survived, as did he. Each day he toured the mortuaries to check if any of the congregation had been killed. At about that time he received a call to the congregation of Downpatrick where he was ordained by the

Presbytery of Down on 1st May 1941. Five years later, he was called to Hamilton Road, Bangor, and installed there on 28th March, 1946. His pastoral and organisational gifts were utilised to the full in this busy and growing congregation, which he served faithfully for nine years until he moved to Rosemary, north Belfast, and was installed there on 5th May 1955. A long ministry of twenty-three years ensued. The 'Troubles' broke out in 1969 effecting change in the demography of the area and presenting significant pastoral and leadership challenges to Mr Borland and many other community figures. He formed a warm friendship with the local Parish Priest on the Somerton Road, working together to encourage understanding and restraint in a divided neighbourhood. His role as Clerk of the Presbytery of North Belfast, 1972-1973, added to the expectations of his colleagues and of the wider Church for wise guidance and leadership. Mr Borland rose to the challenge and proved a discerning friend to his people and to his colleagues. His last five years of full-time ministry were spent in Portstewart where he was installed in the church extension charge of Burnside on 5th April 1978, by the Presbytery of Coleraine. The congregation had been meeting in Burnside Orange Hall since 1976, but moved to its own site and building, under Mr Borland's leadership, on 31st March 1979. When Mr Borland retired five years later, on 19th January 1983, he left behind a stable and growing congregation. Mr Borland was involved in a variety of ministries outwith his congregational responsibilities. He served the central church on the Jewish Committee, the Church Extension Consultative Committee, the Assembly Hall Committee, the Boards of Education and Mission, and as Moderator of the Synod of Belfast in 1969. As Secretary of the Presbyterian Widows and Orphans Society he gave much appreciated practical and pastoral help to the families of deceased colleagues in the ministry. In the wider community, he served as District Commissioner for Boy Scouts while in Downpatrick, 1943-1946, and in Bangor, 1946-1952. Also, while in Downpatrick, he served as Officiating Chaplain to the Army Barracks, at Ballykinlar, 1941-1945, and as Chaplain to Downpatrick Workhouse. He found time to write, publishing a pamphlet on the Mormons, 1965, a History of Hamilton Road Presbyterian, Bangor, 1897-1947, and a History of Rosemary to 1956. Reflecting on his ministry at his funeral service, the Rev Anne Tolland said, "Eric sacrificed his time and his gifts to reach out to those who were hurting and in need. He sacrificed his safety and comfort as he went into places that were difficult and unknown. Eric had known God's hand upon his life as a young boy and because he came as a 'living stone' (I Peter 2:4) God used him to bring comfort at some of the darkest times of our history in our province." Mr Borland married Muriel McDowell on 17th February, 1948, who was fully engaged with him in the life and work of the church, and who survives him. To Mrs Borland, their daughter, Lois, son-in-law, Nicholas, and wider family circle, we extend our sympathy, as we give thanks for the faith and service of a loyal servant of Christ.

The Rev Ivan James Wilson, MBE, MA, Ph.D., Minister Emeritus, Cumber and Upper Cumber, died on 3rd October 2017, in the eighty-fifth year of his age and the fifty-seventh year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast on 19th June 1932, only child of Joseph Herbert Wilson, a Textile Manager, and his wife, Florence Isobel, née Carson. Dr Wilson was brought up in connection with the congregation of Bethany, Shankill Road, Belfast. He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution. On leaving school he studied for an H.N.C qualification at the College of Technology, Belfast, which he completed in 1953. He achieved the Shipwright's Prize in 1949 and again in 1952. Responding to the call of God to the Christian ministry he attended Magee University College, Londonderry, and graduated BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1958. He followed this with the study of theology at the Assembly's College, Belfast. On the successful completion of his studies he was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 31st May 1960. He was assigned to the Megain Memorial congregation, Belfast, to assist the Minister, the Rev Eric Vere Stewart. He was ordained there on 1st December 1960 by the Presbytery of Belfast, and continued, full-time, until 1963, when he was installed as Minister of First Kilrea on 4th April 1963 by the Presbytery of Coleraine. He continued to study and in 1964 gained his MA from Trinity College, Dublin. After four years he moved to Belfast, where he was installed as Minister of Nelson Memorial, Shankill Road, on 15th June 1967, by the Presbytery of South Belfast. Three years later he moved to the congregation of Lylehill, where he was installed on 11th June 1970 by the Presbytery of Templepatrick. There he remained until 1976, when he returned to First Kilrea, and was installed on 26th May, by the Presbytery of Coleraine, continuing to minister there until he moved to Scrabo Church Extension charge, Newtownards, and was inducted on 3rd January 1985 by the Presbytery of Ards. Dr Wilson moved to his final charge of Cumber and Upper Cumber in 1988 where he was installed by the Presbytery of Foyle on 24th March. In the wider Church he was Moderator of the Synod of Derry and Omagh, 1997, and Convener of the General Assembly's Church Architecture Committee, 1986-1993, where his early qualification and skills were used to advise congregations of changes to their property and new builds. Dr Wilson expanded his ministry through his chaplaincy work at the Belfast City Hospital. For many years he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Northern Ireland Hospital Chaplains Association. He became Secretary in 1976, and Director of Training in 1984. He was also the Irish Observer to the Joint Council of Hospital Chaplains in the UK. Dr Wilson combined this practical ministry with further academic study, and was awarded a doctorate in 1993, from Trinity College, Dublin, for a thesis on "The relative Theology of Hospital Chaplaincy". He was supported in his ministry by his wife, Carol Grace Wilson, née Douglas, whom he married on 19th September 1962. They had two children, Nigel (now deceased), and Julia. Dr Wilson retired from full-time ministry on 30th September 1998. In his leisure time he enjoyed photography and travel. We give thanks to God for his ministry, and

we extend our sympathy and prayers to Mrs Wilson, daughter Julia, her husband Graeme, and grandchildren Matthew and Jessica.

The Very Rev Howard Cromie, BA, BD, MA, DD, Minister Emeritus (Released), Railway Street, Lisburn, died on 6th October 2017, in the ninetieth year of his age and the sixty-fourth year of his ministry. He was born at Ballydown, Banbridge, on 19th April 1928, to Joseph Thomas Cromie, farmer, and his wife, Margaret, née Herron, the youngest child of a family of six, two daughters and four sons. The family were members of Scarva Street congregation, Banbridge. Dr Cromie was educated at the Abercorn Primary School and Banbridge Academy. The strong Christian ethos of home, and the teaching of his Church, bore fruit in personal faith in Jesus Christ in his early life. He was a member of the Student Christian Movement at the Academy, and he became a communicant member of his Church and a Sunday School teacher. During these teenage years he became conscious of a strong calling to the Christian ministry and, on leaving school, proceeded to the Magee University College, Londonderry, in 1946, graduating BA from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1950. In the autumn of that year, he went to New College, Edinburgh, returning to Belfast in 1951, to study at the Assembly's College. Class prizes through these years show him as a diligent and able student. On returning home he was licensed on 1st June 1952 by the Presbytery of Banbridge. He had already gained ministry experience as Student Assistant in Richmond Craigmillar Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, which prepared him for further ministry in Great Victoria Street, Belfast, where Rev James Rowland Boyd was Minister, (later to become Professor of Practical Training at the Assembly's College in 1963) and also in Saint Enoch's, Carlisle Circus, where the Rev Dr Austin Fulton was Minister. On completion of his assistantship years, he was called to the Scots Church, Enniskillen, where he was ordained by the Presbytery of Omagh on 21st July 1954. This was to be a noteworthy year for him, as the very next month, on 31st August, he married Elsie Kathleen Moore, daughter of the Rev William Moore of Scarva Street congregation, Banbridge, under whose ministry Dr Cromie was raised. Dr Cromie embarked upon a busy ministry in Enniskillen for the next eight years, attending to his pulpit duties and his pastoral care of his people. He became involved in the life of the wider community, serving on several school committees, acting as Chaplain to the recruits at the Training Depot of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and the students at Portora Royal School. In addition, he served as Vice Chairman of the local Hospital Board and was President of the Enniskillen and Sligo District Christian Endeavour Union. Then, in late 1961, he was called by the congregation of Railway Street, Lisburn, and was installed there, on 10th January 1962, by the Presbytery of Dromore. Over the next two years he was involved closely with the refurbishment of the Lecture Hall and redesign of the front of the interior of the Church, to accommodate the choir, organ and communion table. A Service of Re-opening took

place on 5th May 1963 and the improvements were dedicated in memory of two former Ministers, Dr R K Eliot and Professor T H Robinson. Dr Cromie encouraged youth and children's work in the congregation, and a mid-week Bible Study, Young Women's Group, and an Indoor Bowling club, were formed. In the wider Church he was invited to conduct evangelistic missions. He served on the Boards and Committees of Assembly, being a member of the Irish Mission, Panel of Evangelists, the Continental Mission, the Library Committee of Assembly's College, the Presbyterian Historical Society, of which he was a Vice-President, and he was co-Convener of the Irish Mission, 1970-1978, and of Church Extension, 1978-1982. As Co-convener of Church Extension, he led by example, when, owing to population growth and expanding housing development, the congregations of St Columba's, and of Elmwood, Ballymacash, were formed out of Railway Street parish in 1969 and 1976, respectively. More widely, for 32 years he was Officiating Chaplain to the forces at Thiepval Barracks, and for 42 years he served as Chaplain to Thompson House, Lisburn. He found time to write three short books: *David Livingstone of Africa*, *Ulster Settlers in America*, *Why the Reformation?* and, in retirement, another, *Through Changing Scenes*, reflecting on his life and ministry in the 20th century. This devoted serviced was recognised by the Presbyterian Church when he was elected Moderator in 1984, and awarded a DD by the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland. Throughout his long ministry Dr Cromie was constantly supported by his wife, Kathleen, who was especially closely involved with the life and work of the Young Women's Organisation and the PWA. Dr Cromie retired on 31st May 1993, though, like so many retired ministers, he continued to minister in various ways until ill health and infirmity set in. We give thanks to God for his witness to Christ and devotion to the Church, and we extend our sympathy and prayers to Mrs Cromie, to their children and their spouses, Alan and Mary, David and Anne, Gillian and Tim, Fiona and Harold, and to their wider family circle.

The **Rev Victor Whyte, BA**, Minister Emeritus, Macosquin, Coleraine, died on 29th November 2017, in the ninety-first year of his age and the fifty-third year of his ordination. He was born at Little Derry, Limavady, on 28th October 1927, one of ten children, six boys and four girls, to Joseph Whyte, a farmer, and his wife, Agnes Whyte, née Harbinson. He was raised in connection with the congregation of Balteagh, and was educated at Lislane, and Limavady, primary schools, and Limavady Grammar. Mr Whyte left school at the age of fourteen, and served his time to the drapery trade in Tweedy Acheson's shop in Limavady. In 1944, he was converted to personal faith in Christ, and obeyed a strong sense of call to full-time Christian work by training at the Faith Mission College, Edinburgh, for two years. This was followed by two years spent assisting John Moore, who was the Superintendent of the Tent Hall, Steel Street, Glasgow, run by the United Evangelical Association. On returning to Northern Ireland, he served for two years

with the Irish Evangelisation Society. Throughout this time a strong conviction grew that he should train for the ordained ministry of the Church of his upbringing. So, in preparation, he attended Renshaw's College, Belfast, and continued his studies at the Queen's University, Belfast, from which he graduated BA. While engaged in preaching in the district of Ballygowan, he met Muriel Elizabeth Gibson. Love blossomed and they were married at Ballygowan Presbyterian Church in 1955. They had two children, Derek and Sheena. On graduating from Queen's Mr Whyte studied theology at the Assembly's College, Belfast, and was licensed by the Presbytery of East Belfast on 9th June 1963. He served his assistantship in the congregation of Knock, Belfast, alongside the Minister, the Rev Robert Cummings Elliott. The following year, he was called by the congregation of Macosquin, and was ordained there by the Presbytery of Coleraine on 27th October 1964, where he served as a faithful pastor and friend to so many for his 28 years of tenure and beyond. Under God, and through his wise and energetic leadership, the church grew during these years with many coming to faith in Christ. In the pulpit he maintained his evangelist's heart and vision and preached the Gospel of His Saviour with both clarity and simplicity. As a pastoral visitor, Victor Whyte was without equal throughout Presbytery, renowned for his diligence and care to those within the congregation and to those he met throughout the wider community. Under his guidance as Chairman of the Church Committee, much work had been done to maintain, develop and enhance the suite of buildings and material resources of the Church, including the building of the original concourse area, the renovation of the sanctuary and installation of furnishings, and the building and resourcing of a new hall. Outside of congregational responsibilities he exercised a dedicated and fruitful ministry as Chaplain in the Coleraine Hospital, not only ministering to patients in their illness, but also befriending and encouraging staff at all levels. In all he did, he was renowned for his methodical and meticulous approach to detail, an energetic conscientiousness and dependability long into retirement, and a warm-hearted generosity of spirit and a genuine and prayerful interest in people's lives that endeared him to so many. Mr Whyte retired from his role as Minister of Macosquin on 31st December 1992, but he continued to have a fruitful ministry for many years, both as Pastoral Assistant for a time in New Row Congregation, and more widely through his preaching in many churches around Coleraine and beyond. To Mrs Whyte, son Derek and his wife Jill, daughter Sheena and her husband Alan, and the wider family circle, we offer our sympathy, and give thanks to God for the life and ministry of their loved one and our colleague.

**The Rev Ernest Edward Hamilton Porter, BA, BD, Minister Emeritus** (Released), First Broughshane, died on 26th January 2018, in the ninety-second year of his age and the sixty-fifth year of his ministry. He was born at Killynure, Mountjoy, Omagh, one of nine children,

(five girls and four boys) to David John Porter, farmer, and his wife, Violet Helena, née Christie. The family were members of Mountjoy Presbyterian Church where Ernest imbibed the Christian faith, reinforced by the Christian faith and love of his parental home. He was educated at Castletown Primary School, followed by Omagh Academy. Obeying a call to the Christian ministry he studied at Magee College University, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated BA in 1949. He proceeded to the Assembly's College, Belfast, and completed his theological training in 1951, the next year gaining a BD from the Queen's University, Belfast. He proved himself a good student with a particular interest and ability in Greek and Hebrew, which he later used to inform his pulpit ministry. During his final year at Assembly's College he gained practical experience of ministry assisting the Rev Thomas Carlisle, minister of Joymount congregation, Carrickfergus, and, on completion of his studies, became assistant to the Rev James Sheppard Woods, Ebrington, Londonderry. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Omagh on 27th May 1951. While a student at Magee Mr Porter met Irene Stewart, whom he married on 11th September 1951. In the following years Mr and Mrs Porter were blessed by the births of three children, Ross, Donna and Diane, and they enjoyed a close and secure family life. In 1953, he received a call from the congregation of Second Dromara in the County Down, where he was ordained and installed, on 25th March 1953, by the Presbytery of Dromore. After ten years of settled and fruitful ministry in Dromara, Mr Porter was installed in the congregation of First Broughshane on 14th August 1963, by the Presbytery of Ballymena. He was to enjoy a long ministry there of twenty-eight years. He was appreciated as a thoughtful preacher communicating the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ 'from the heart to the heart', and he published a selection of his fifty favourite sermons during his retirement years. He was assiduous in visiting his people and sharing with them in the joys and trials of life, ministering Christian hope and humanity in their need. His farming background gave him an affinity with the people of his two congregations and he kept up his knowledge and interest by keeping livestock and growing vegetables. Mr Porter played his part in the life of the wider community through involvement with local schools, and in the work of the courts and the mission of the Church. He served as Moderator of the Presbytery of Ballymena 1966-1967, and was elected Moderator of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine in 1987. Mr Porter retired on 30th September 1991. Throughout these busy years of full-time ministry, he was constantly supported by his wife, Irene, who took a particular interest in the work of the Presbyterian Woman's Association. Her loyalty was reciprocated, when, in later years of illness, Mr Porter took care of her until her death in April 2014. We give thanks for the life and ministry of our brother who modelled what he preached, that every Christian should be proactive in dedicating their gifts and talents to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. To Mr Porter's son and daughters, and wider family circle, we express our sympathy and assurance of our prayers.



The **Rev Robert (Robin) Archibald Boyd, BA**, Minister Emeritus (Released), Second Ballyeaston, died on 7th February 2018, in the ninety-fifth year of his age, and the sixty-fourth year of his ministry. He was born at Londonderry on 3rd May 1922, the elder of two sons, to William E Boyd, an Office Manager, and his wife, Mary, née, Boyd. Mr Boyd was brought up in the congregation of Ebrington where he early learned to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. On leaving school, he intended to study for the ministry at Magee College, but this had to be postponed due to the sudden death of his father. For some years he worked at the American Air Base on the Limavady Road, and he set aside enough money to enable him eventually to pursue academic study at Magee College, and Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated BA in 1948. He proceeded to the Assembly's College, Belfast, to study theology, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Derry on 23rd July 1950. During his student years he assisted the Rev William John McGeagh, First Larne, and, on completion of his studies continued there full-time. In 1953 he was called to the united congregations of Fourtowns and Poyntzpass and was ordained at Fourtowns on 18th June by the Presbytery of Newry. He brought with him the pastoral experience of tending to the families of the passengers and crew who lost their lives on the ferry, the *Princess Victoria*, sailing from Stranraer to Larne, on 31st January 1953, but which sank in stormy weather five miles north of the Copeland Islands, County Down, with the loss of 133 lives. On 9th September 1955, he married Dorothy Jean Ross, an official with the County Antrim Education Committee, whom he met while living in Larne. They had two daughters, Margaret and Gillian. After thirteen years, Mr Boyd was called to the congregation of Second Ballyeaston where he was installed, on 17th February 1966, by the Presbytery of Templepatrick. Over the next twenty-two years Mr Boyd faithfully attended to the pastoral needs of his people and to his Sunday pulpit ministry. He encouraged the work of the Sunday School and of the Boys' Brigade, often acting as chef and hygiene officer at BB camps. He became involved in the life of the wider community, notably, in the Vintage Tractors Club, which grew out of a series of Country Fairs organised in the 1970s, and which still meets in the church halls. He developed a close relationship with the Minister of First Ballyeaston congregation, the Rev Dr Harold MacConnell, and together they encouraged their people in a neighbourly fellowship. For many years Mr Boyd served as Convener of the Templepatrick Presbytery's Finance Committee, also as Moderator of the Presbytery in 1969, and as Moderator of the Synod of Ballymena and Coleraine, in 1984. Throughout his life he enjoyed country pursuits, fishing, shooting, gun-smithing, which he early learned at the Archibald family home near the River Faughan, as well as singing, literature, and natural history. He contributed letters and articles on several of these interests to magazines. For over fifty years he served as President of the Rifle and Pistol Club. Mr Boyd retired on 30th September 1988. He suffered the loss of his wife, Dorothy, in 2004, and of their daughter, Gillian, in 2012, both of whom he cared for through long illness. To his daughter,



Margaret, and the wider family circle, we extend our sincere sympathy as we give thanks to God for the long life and ministry of the Rev Robin Boyd.

Rev **Samuel (Uel) Armstrong, BSc, BD**, Minister without Charge (Retired), died on 8th February 2018, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the fortieth year of his ministry. He was born at Belfast, the second of four children, to Thomas Armstrong, a storeman, and his wife, Ethel née, Wallace. He was brought up in the congregation of Shankill Road Mission and was educated at Cliftonville Primary School and the Boys' Model School, Belfast. He studied physics at the Queen's University, Belfast. He enjoyed sport and played football for Queen's and also Ballyclare and Crusaders clubs. His lively interest in the world about him took him to Ghana with VSO for a year, while a student, and later to the Holy Land. On leaving Queen's he worked as an engineer with Goodyear, Craigavon, and then at Enkalon, Antrim, where he and Lynne Hooks settled following their marriage on 11th March 1972. Responding to the call of God, he was accepted as a student for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and studied at the Assembly's College, Belfast, 1975-1978, graduating BD. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Templepatrick on 11th June 1978, and he assisted the Rev SEM Brown in Abbey, Monkstown, where he was ordained by the Presbytery of Carrickfergus on 11th January 1979. A year later, on 28th February, he was called and installed as Minister in Lissara by the Presbytery of Down. Mr Armstrong's friendly outgoing personality helped him to make quickly a mark for himself and his ministry among his people, whom he pastored with compassion and kindness. He encouraged the young people and nurtured their faith through the Youth Club and the Oasis Youth Fellowship, and he played an active part in the Presbytery Youth Movement. In addition to his pulpit and pastoral ministry, he led and oversaw an extensive renovation programme of the church property in 1985. He was also a well-known and respected figure throughout the community in Crossgar, intentionally cultivating relationships with various groups. He played with Kilmore Recreation Football Club, and successfully persuaded a number of the players to come to church. He built good relationships with the Roman Catholic community in the village and enjoyed a very strong and deep friendship with a number of the brothers from the Tobar Mhuire monastery just across the road from the manse. The Presbytery owes a debt to him for his work as Clerk from 1984 to 1993. Sadly, this dedicated and fruitful ministry was interrupted by the diagnosis of a brain tumour in 1992. He faced this unwelcome news with faith and courage. In the words of his son-in-law, the Rev Graeme Kennedy, Ballygrainey, speaking at his Thanksgiving Service, "Uel was insistent that he was ready to go... He had a Redeemer. He was looking forward, as Job was, to seeing that Redeemer with his own eyes." However, his home-call was not yet, for, after treatment, Mr Armstrong was able to return to work, until ill-health obliged him

to resign his ministry in 2004. We give thanks to Almighty God for the life and ministry of our brother Uel, and assure Mrs Armstrong, their children, Ruth, Paula and Alison, his sisters Isobel and Sandra, brother, Tom, and the wider family circle, of our sympathy and prayers in their loss.

The Rev William (Billy) Caughey, BA, Minister Emeritus (Released), Kircubbin and Portaferry, died on 11th March 2018, in the ninety-first year of his age, and the sixtieth year of his ministry. He was born at Newtownards, on 18th February 1928, the younger of two sons, to William Caughey, Manager of a Boot and Shoe Firm, and his wife, Grace, née Wilson. His family were actively involved in the congregation of Streatan, where his father was the Clerk of Session, and where, in later years, his brother served as Organist and Choirmaster. He was educated at Model Primary School, followed by Regent House Grammar School, Newtownards. As a teenager he was converted to personal faith in Christ through a Boys' Brigade mission. On leaving school he worked as a Pharmaceutical Chemist but, responding to the call of God to the ordained ministry, he studied at Magee University College, Londonderry, and Trinity College, Dublin, 1949 to 1954, graduating BA. He pursued theological study at New College, Edinburgh, 1955 to 1956, where he was strongly influenced by Professor James S Stewart, and then the Assembly's College, Belfast, 1956 to 1957. As a student, he assisted the Rev John Young, Belmont congregation, Belfast, and, then the Rev David Porter, Richview, Belfast, where he continued full-time following his licensing by the Presbytery of Comber, on 16th June 1957. He was called to the congregation of St Johnston, County Donegal, where he was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Raphoe, on 27th March 1958. On 24th September of the same year he married Eileen Elizabeth (Beth) Robinson. After a short ministry, he moved to Ramoan, where he was installed by the Presbytery of Route on 28th June 1961. He was fully engaged in the work of the congregation and paid particular attention to the young people's work, Boys Brigade, Girls Auxiliary, and the Presbytery Youth Movement. During his ministry the congregation built a new hall and Mr Caughey arranged an evangelistic mission, conducted by the Rev Harold Graham. He served as Moderator of Presbytery in 1964, and he was involved in the healing ministry. In the local community, he became Chairman of the Management Committee of Moyarget Primary School. After a ministry of seventeen years in Ramoan, Mr Caughey was installed in First Boardmills, Second Boardmills and Killaney, on 5th September 1978, by the Presbytery of Down, where he served for six years until he moved back to County Donegal, to be installed in Dunfanaghy and Carrigart by the Presbytery of Donegal on 13th September 1984. He made one final move to Kircubbin and Portaferry, where he was installed by the Presbytery of Ards, on 5th November 1987. In all these spheres of service Mr Caughey earnestly preached the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and faithfully pastored

his people with diligence and humanity. He loved the Word of God and the God of the Word, and he made himself proficient in the biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek. It has been said of him, “His delight is in the law of the Lord...” (Psalm 1) Throughout his years he was loyally supported by his wife, Beth, who complemented his ministry with her own commitment and involvement. Mr Caughey retired on 31st March 1993, and, like so many active retired ministers, continued to supply pulpits for some years, but had more leisure time to enjoy his family and his hobbies, painting and music. In giving thanks to God for Mr Caughey’s ministry, we assure his wife, Beth, and his daughters, Christine, Caroline and Alison, of our sympathy and prayers, and commend them to the comforts of the Gospel which sustained their loved one to the end.